

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2015

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Kevin Knight, Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, gave the invocation. Commissioner Curtis Harvey led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Shoupe seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported that the Fall Festival would be held at the Chattahoochee State Park on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, beginning at 9:00 A.M. He stated there would be music, arts and crafts, and games, and he encouraged anyone interested to attend.

The chairman reported FosterFest would be held Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6:00 P.M. He pointed out this month it would have an International flair with food and other things. Chairman Culver reported this event has grown, and he encouraged those interested to participate.

He reported on September 22<sup>nd</sup> the Dothan Education Foundation would be bringing Hershel Walker to the Dothan Civic Center. He stated Mr. Walker has a tremendous story and he would be sharing it. The chairman pointed out tables and balcony seating are available. Chairman Culver reported it will be an enjoyable evening, and he urged those interested to get tickets.

Chairman Culver reported on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, Landmark Park will be hosting its annual Low Country Boil out at the Park.

He stated so many times people say there is nothing to do, but there are always events going on in our community, and people just have to look around to find them.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Jason LeDuc, Library Director, to come forward. He stated Mr. LeDuc is new to our area, and he asked him to introduce himself. Mr. LeDuc reported he is brand new to the area and he stated this community has given so much support and goodwill to the library system and he pointed out the Library had recently won a national award as a result of that support. He stated he would be keeping the commission informed of the happenings at the Library, and that he looked forward to working with them. He thanked the commission for allowing him to come and introduce himself.

#### Awards and Presentations

1. Recognition – Alabama Retailer of the Year – Mr. Steve Maddox, President and CEO, Wireless Advantage – Mrs. Melea McKean, Director of Communications, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

Chairman Culver reported it is always good to recognize someone in our community who excels. At that time, he asked Mrs. Melea McKean, Communications Director, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, to come forward. Mrs. McKean reported Mr. Steve Maddox, President and CEO, of Wireless Advantage, had been selected as the winner of the Alabama Retailer of the Year Award for 2015. She stated this is a very prestigious award that recognizes outstanding retailers who have demonstrated sound business practices in their communities and have shown a commitment to their customers and employees. Mrs. McKean reported this is an awesome award and they are thrilled that a company in Dothan achieved this goal. She then introduced Mr. Steve Maddox. Mr. Maddox reported he has been in business in Dothan since 2001, and his company has continued to grow and be successful. He stated he was honored to win this award, and he thanked his family, his employees and the community. Mr. Maddox then recognized his guests as follows: Candice Maddox, Justin Tiner, Courtney Redahan, and Jennifer Kelley. He thanked the chairman and commission for the recognition. Chairman Culver thanked him for coming and congratulated him on behalf of the commission.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve 2015/16 Budget.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the 2015/16 Budget. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called on Bill Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer, who gave a presentation on the budget. Mr. Dempsey covered the highlights which include:

1. A 3% step increase for both classified and unclassified employees.
2. 7.8% increase in health insurance premiums.
3. Two Lieutenant promotions in the Sheriff's Office.
4. One Clerk promotion in the Jail.
5. Addition of one full time Clerical position in Community Corrections.
6. Road and Bridge added one Laborer position and reclassified the Equipment Operator I, II, and III positions.
7. Eliminated an open clerical position at the Jail.
8. Elimination of the Coordinator position at Madrid Sr. Center.
9. Eliminated one clerical position in the Sanitation Fee Collection Department.

The commission funding for capital and major spending includes various building infrastructure improvements including Courthouse precise caulking/cleaning and numerous HVAC units. Fee for video conferencing in Probate. Purchase a new AS400 computer system for IT, replace upper roof on Sheriff's office, and various computer hardware and software, purchase Verizon phone support, camera upgrades in the Sheriff's office, as well as financing of new computer software and hardware (911 and City of Dothan partnership). Financing of 15 new vehicles (to be reimbursed by Sheriff over a 3 year period), and one sniper rifle. Recoat Drivit, and add a door, tables, chairs, and workstation in the

Learning Center in the Personnel Department. Funding for the Jail will include control boards and counter tops, Tasers, Taser cartridges, Taser warranty, Taser holsters, Taser cameras, medical vital sign monitor, commercial steamer and a copy machine. A new RV vehicle and repairs to the Cabana will be funded for the Chattahoochee Park . Pumps will be replaced for Industrial Park Waste. A vehicle will be purchased for the Farm Center along with painting, sound equipment, mower decks, tables, an air compressor and the replacement of flooring in the office. In the Sanitation Department, an additional garbage truck will be purchased (lease), Schafer software service contract, and additional property insurance for garbage trucks. Three air handling units will be replaced in Community Corrections as well as replacing domestic water pumps, vinyl flame retardant mattresses, and four new vehicles (from the State Surplus lot). In Reappraisal, Business Personal Property Audit, temporary employee (contract services), replace three computers and one monitor. Replace floor covering and Drivit building exterior in Pardons and Parole. In the Road and Bridge Department, miscellaneous construction equipment, patch truck, four tractors, one rubber tire roller, wheel excavator loader and update fuel software.

Mr. Dempsey reported the beginning Fund Balance as of October 1, 2014, was \$9,676,586, and the projected ending Fund Balance as of September 30, 2015 would be \$8,735,161. He reported the projected ending Fund Balance for 2016 would be \$5,260,823. He pointed out a major concern is Revenues being less than Expenses with FY 2014/2015 (\$941,425) and 2015/2016 (\$3,474,338).

Presentations were made on Total Revenue, and Revenue in the following Departments: Revenue Commission, Probate, Sales Tax, Gas Tax, Sanitation Collections, Interest Income, Community Corrections, and Extraordinary Revenue.

Presentations were also made on expenses with a focus on Labor and Benefits, Departmental Operations, Lease Spending, Capital Spending, Agency Donations, Long Term Debt, Bond and Lease Payments, Medical and Dental Expense.

Other topics discussed were the number of employees and safety accomplishments.

Mr. Dempsey reported the total revenues for 2015/2016 would be \$36,547,998, and total expenses for 2015/2016 would be \$40,022,036.

Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey for his report. He asked for any comments.

Chairman Culver reported even though the county has cut 10 percent of the workforce over the last 10 years, the payroll keeps climbing due to things out of their control such as health insurance and the 3 percent step increase, and he stated the commission could not continue that. He stated as he eluded in Thursday's meeting, in order to pass the budget many things had to be cut out. The chairman reported essential services will suffer if some solution isn't found. Chairman Culver stated the commission has to either figure out how to fund the services that the county needs to provide or some significant changes would have to be made in those services that the citizens expect. The chairman reported the county is in sound financial shape, but they have to come up with solutions to these problems.

Commissioner Battles stated as the chairman pointed out, there were things in the budget that were not included due to the money not being there. He stated when an HVAC goes out, it has to be fixed. The commissioner reported technology is changing on a daily basis and the county has to be able to keep up. Commissioner Battles pointed out there is a lot in this budget being spent on upgrading the county's technology.

Commissioner Shoupe reported he felt the commission was looking at three choices: Draconian cuts in personnel, revenue enhancement, or some combination of the two. He stated he did not feel there was a fourth choice.

Commissioner Siquefield stated the commission has reached the point where he would like to have input from the citizens. He reported many of the county's off system roads are in critical shape. The commissioner stated he would like for the public to consider where the county is going in 2016/2017.

Commissioner Harvey reported he was against employees losing their job or hurting any families, but at some point, the county is going to have to look at a one-half to one percent sales tax to increase the revenues.

Chairman Culver reported the state is working on its budget and that will also affect the county.

He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

1. Request from Personnel to approve the 2016 Holiday Schedule.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Holiday Schedule as requested by Personnel. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

2. Request to award the Elevator Preventative Maintenance Bid.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to award the Elevator Preventative Maintenance Bid to Kone, Inc., low bidder meeting specs, in the amount of \$1,010.00 per month. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet)

3. Request to adopt Resolution to reclassify the highway functional classification of Blackmon Road (from Saunders Road to County Road 203) from unclassified to a Rural Minor Collector.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to adopt the Resolution to reclassify the highway functional classification of Blackmon Road (from Saunders Road to County Road 203) from unclassified to a Rural Minor Collector. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland for comments. He stated they were trying to see if the road would be eligible for federal money. (Please see in Resolution Book)

4. Request from Dothan Area Botanical Gardens for one-half load of dirt to fill in around the area that is used to park the people mover.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens for one-half load of dirt to fill in around the area that is used to park the people mover. Commissioner Battles seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer –

Mr. Dempsey reported the county has 50.3 acres available for farming at the Industrial Park and they would be taking bids until November 27<sup>th</sup>. He stated the information is on the website or someone interested could contact him at 334-677-4743.

County Engineer –

Mr. Kirkland reported the paving would be completed this week on County Road 33. He also reported Randall Wade was closed temporarily.

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Battles seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.