

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2010
9:30 A.M. EST

Public comments were made by:

Judge Bellamy addressed the Commission with his views of the temporary offices he will relocate to during the Judicial Building renovations.

Chancy Loftin asked for the status of the Lonesome Pine Road Project.

Fletcher Tolbert, Pastor Freddie Evans, Arthur Bickerstaff, Kim Davis, Owen Ditchfield and Attorney Robert Gilpin stressed their concerns on the proposed C&D landfill in South Phenix City and asked the Commission to support today's Landfill Resolution and all legislation restricting landfill developments on and along the Chattahoochee River and the South Phenix City Area.

Hugh Sorrow and Attorney Tom Dubray gave reasons not to support a Landfill Resolution or possible legislation preventing a C&D Landfill in South Phenix City.

Dr. Loudon Alexander asked the Commission to expedite actions on personnel matters.

Pastor Johnnie Robinson gave an update on The City of Phenix City Project that was approved for funding, the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing project which begins January 4, 2010. This program will help those who are late paying rent and utilities, have eviction notices, or have recently become homeless.

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order. Members present were Chair Peggy Martin, Vice-chair Gentry Lee, Tillman Pugh, Ronnie Reed, Cattie Epps, Mervin Dudley and Larry Screws. Also present were County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk and County Administrator LeAnn Horne, who kept the minutes.

A quorum was established.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the meeting agenda. The County Administrator stated: Since Monday night's work session business item, warrants for failure to purchase business license had been resolved and removal from the agenda was requested. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the agenda with the amendment. Seconded by Commissioners Dudley and Reed. The vote was unanimous.

The invocation was given by Jim Meadows, Pastor of First United Methodist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Martin.

Chair Martin welcomed elected officials, department heads, media and visitors.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the December 23, 2009 meeting minutes. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the meeting minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk stated: Presently, Russell County does not have a State Rabies Officer, that position is now vacant. Whoever is appointed must work with the joint County and the City Shelter and should be a local residence of the county instead of bringing someone from out-of-town to issue citations and collect money.

Chief Smith addressed the Commission explaining the City's position. We would like for the citations to be paid locally; whoever the State appoints as the Rabies Control Officer. The citation will help offset the cost of the shelter and enforcement. This will be an opportunity for the County and City to use their enforcement officers to go out to enforce these rabies citations and have the citations generate revenue to go back to the shelter to continue programs that the shelter has implemented.

Mr. Funderburk recommended adopting the Resolution, even though the vacancy is there, the Resolution will serve the purpose to finally bring this program back locally as much as we can.

Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the State Rabies Officer Joint Resolution as stated with the portion pertaining to replacing the current Russell County Rabies Officer to be stricken. Seconded By Commissioner Reed.

Commissioner Pugh asked if he heard correctly, the money would go to the operation of the pound. Was an amount included as to the fine? Will that just be left blank?

Commissioner Lee said: I believe it is set by State Statute.

Mr. Funderburk stated: The County doesn't have a function as to setting the amount of the rabies fine. The most we can do is to try to keep the program to where it comes locally. There is no more that we can do other than what this Resolution states. All we can do is state our opinion that whoever the Rabies Officer is, for the State to appoint a local person, rather than contracting outside of Russell County. This is merely a suggestion; we can not make them do it. All this resolution does is to put on record the City and County's request to the State Health Board who makes the Rabies Officer appointment.

Chair Martin requested the Administrator to poll the Commission.

District 1 (Lee) voted, yes; District 2 (Pugh) yes; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Dudley) voted, no; District 7 (Screws) voted, yes. The motion passed with (6) yes (1) No.

Commissioner Epps discussed reasons for approving a resolution prohibiting the development of landfills, outside the corporate limits of any municipality wholly or partially located within Russell County within one mile of the Chattahoochee River.

Assistant County Engineer Shawn Blakeney gave a status report on road projects currently in progress.

- Lonesome Pine Road Project: The Engineer Department is currently gathering required right-of-ways.
- Farm Road Project: Gathering of required right-of-ways is in progress.
- Bethel Road: All required right-of-ways, except 2 parcels have been acquired. The road design is in progress and work is expected to begin in the spring of 2010.
- Harris Road: Paving is in progress now, but has been delayed due to weather conditions. This project is 30 to 40% finished with completion expected in spring 2010.
- Owens Road and Hwy 165: Improvements have been completed, with striping to begin soon and as the weather permits, the final grading and grassing will be completed.
- County-Wide Resurfacing and Striping Project: Work on these roads will begin soon after the Commission's approval of asphalt and striping bids. Surface treatments of roads require temperatures of 65 degrees or higher and will have to wait accordingly.
- County Road 4 Relocation and Bridge at Pittsview: This project is 25% finished for both grading and bridge working. This project should be complete in the fall 2010.

- HRRR Stripping Project: Bayview Drive, Greenburt Road and Oswichee Road are being schedule soon.
- The Opelika Road Resurfacing: 0.9 miles from Cut Rate Road to Stafford Road is scheduled to be let March 26, 2010.
- Fire Tower Road Resurfacing: Preliminary engineering is now in progress with hopes of having it let this summer.
- Pitts Road Bridge: Also is in the preliminary engineering stage, with the pursuit of a Federal Grant funding.

Special Enforcement Officer Bill Friend requested the citation fee for Russell County Business License to be raised from the current \$1.50 to \$75.00 to cover the cost of collection. He also request for this to be effective October 1, 2010. Commissioner Dudley motioned to accept the recommendation of Mr. Friend. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne, presented a court ordered cremation for Timothy Boone not to exceed the amount of \$400.00 to be paid to Colonial Funeral Home. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the payment of the cremation. Seconded by Reed. The vote was unanimous for approval.

Homeland Security/EMA Director William Alexander stated, at a previous meeting the Commission approved the purchase of two (2) Hazardous Materials Detectors with funds from a Homeland Security Award which had been budgeted for. On research for their purchase it was discovered these items would cost over \$15,000; therefore, a bid process will be required. Mr. Alexander requested approval to send out for bids and to schedule the bid opening for February 5, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. EST in the Commission Chambers. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the recommendation and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Assistant County Engineer Shawn Blakeney made a request to purchase a GPS Receiver, a surveying instrument, for the amount of \$13,090. This is a budgeted item. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the purchase. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Blakeney presented the annual materials bid awards. Tabulations were presented to the Commission with recommendations to accept all, except the bid for concrete pipe, which he advised for re-bid. His requested the re-bid to be held February 16, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. EST. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve his recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne stated, the Financial State Audit Report had been published; there was a formatting error by The East Alabama Citizen, which was corrected at no charge to the County. A meeting with the 2008/2009 Commission and the State Examiners to discuss audit findings; Russell County is solid with no findings and received an A+ rating.

Chair Martin announced, due to a State Holiday, January 18, 2010, all Government Offices will be closed.

Commissioner Reed presented to each of the Commission Staff, Certificates of Special Governmental Recognition for all their hard work in achieving the A+ report given by the State Auditors.

Commissioner Lee motioned to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.