

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2010
9:30 A.M. EST

Public comments were made by:

Mrs. Joann Prince commented on the recent Russell County / Phenix City Animal Shelter Amendment.

Reverend Lundon Alexander made statements on the behalf of Hovet Dixon and Jimmie Lee Long.

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 agenda with a request to add the business item "Webb and Eley". Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

The invocation was given by Nathan Sims, Pastor of Holland Creek Baptist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Epps.

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

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the January 27, 2010 meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott requested approval of the 2010 Ad Valorem Tax Resolution. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee discussed importance of the Fort Mitchell restoration project and the need for a permanent source of funding to assure the success of this project. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve a resolution requesting the legislative delegation to add an additional one cent (.01) lodging tax to be used solely for the operation, maintenance and restoration of the Historic Fort Mitchell Project by the Russell County Historic Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. After discussion concerning Historic Commission Members being allowed to vote on this issue, Commissioner Dudley motioned to table the vote for two weeks until an opinion could be obtained. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Reed presented the 2010 Census Partnership Proclamation to Ms. Yolanda Fears and Celida Garcia with the Census Bureau.

Special Enforcement Officer Bill Friend requested to extend the position of Don Hollins, who enforces the business license and nuisance complaints until September 30, 2010. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve Mr. Friend's recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. District 1 (Lee) abstained, District 2 (Pugh) voted, no; District 3 (Martin)voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Dudley) voted, yes; District 7 (Screws) voted, yes. 5 votes yes, 1 vote no and 1 abstention; the motioned passed.

Homeland Security / EMA Director William Alexander received additional funds from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency in the amount of \$6,150.00, which can only be used for the operation or enhancement of our Homeland Security/ EMA office. Mr. Alexander requested for these funds to be accepted and placed in his departmental budget as follows:

GENERAL FUND 001

EMA-52300

INCREASE	001 44741 810	STATE GRANTS	\$6,150.00
INCREASE	001 52300 214	MINOR EQUIPMENT	\$2,500.00
INCREASE	001 52300 215	TIRES & TUBES	\$1,150.00
INCREASE	001 52300 251	TELEPHONE	\$2,500.00
		TOTAL	\$6,150.00

Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the budget amendment. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Alexander also requested approval of the Hazardous Material Detector Bid Results held on February 5, 2010. Of the two bids received, Smith's Detection was the lowest in the amount of \$8,400.00 each; therefore; he recommended accepting their bid. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve Mr. Alexander's recommendation and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin and Commissioner Epps discussed the importance of reviewing department head raises as indicated during the budget planning meetings and at the September Commission budget meeting. It was agreed that the Commission would bring this item back after the first of the year pending revenue availability. Commissioner Epps stated: Because of the state law, elected officials would not be eligible for this salary increase at this time. Elected official's raises must be in the budget at the time it is approved. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve a 3% increase in salary for department heads as presented; this increase is less than \$12,000 a year. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

Mr. J.W. Brannen stated: the 3% salary increase for him was approved by the State in our budget prior to the approval to the County budget. Mr. Brannen stated: There will be no new money needed for my portion of this salary increase in my budget; it is already in my budget.

Commissioner Screws stated: With the deduction of Mr. Brannen's department from what is submitted for the increase that means it would be about \$9,000 total.

District 1 (Lee) voted, no; District 2 (Pugh) voted, no; 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. Four (4) votes yes and three (3) votes, the motion passed. The salary increase is as follows:

APPOINTED DEPARTMENT HEADS SALARY INCREASES:

GENERAL FUND 001

INCREASE	001 43100 710	BUSINESS LICENSE	\$8,968.00
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COMMISSION-51100

INCREASE	001 51100 113	SALARY	\$2,169.00
INCREASE	001 51100 121	RETIREMENT	\$149.00
INCREASE	001 51100 124	FICA	\$166.00

TAG OFFICE-51600

INCREASE	001 51600 113	SALARY	\$2,129.00
INCREASE	001 51600 121	RETIREMENT	\$146.00
INCREASE	001 51600 124	FICA	\$163.00

EMA/HOMELAND DIRECTOR-52300

INCREASE	001 52300 113	SALARY	\$2,067.00
INCREASE	001 52300 121	RETIREMENT	\$141.00
INCREASE	001 52300 124	FICA	\$158.00

BLDG INSPECTOR-52710

INCREASE	001 52710 113	SALARY	\$1,468.00
INCREASE	001 52710 121	RETIREMENT	\$100.00
INCREASE	001 52710 124	FICA	\$112.00

TOTAL \$8,968.00

James McGill, Chamber of Commerce, requested the approval to continue discussions/development of the construction for fields 3 & 4 at the Russell County Sports Complex. The School Board has also requested joint use of these new fields, due to problems with their own fields. School use will take place only during the school year. I would like permission to work with the RCBOE on development and funding these new fields. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the recommendation of Mr. McGill. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Mr. McGill requested he be allowed to send an appropriation's letter to Congressman Mike Rogers for funding of field lighting at the Sports Complex. The cost of lighting these fields is approximately \$400,000. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

Sheriff Boswell gave an update on plans for the Jail addition - security dormitory. Architect Mike Rutland explained the two unit additions which included 110 beds for male inmates and an additional 35 beds for female inmates. This is a minimum security dormitory for 110 inmate facility associated with work release trustees. The cost of this project is \$2,800,067. This will include some kitchen upgrades for the extra 110 inmates and a video visitation concept as well as video arraignment in connection to the court facilities in the county. Also included is approximately \$125,000 in alternates. The project should be ready to advertise in May, with the bid opening in June. The project should be completed in 18 months. Commissioner Reed motioned to go forward with the project. Seconded by Commissioner Lee stated: We are not committing to the project but committing to support the project and authorize the architect to go to the next step which would be drawing up the plans and securing bid. It will then be brought back for review and approval to go forward with construction. The project will be paid out of court cost funds which can only be used for the jail as designated by law. Sheriff Boswell provided the cost of staffing the addition stating to keep in mind the city will be responsible for estimated 20 percent of the operating cost which is \$400,975.38. The vote was unanimous for support of the jail addition next step with the architect Mike Rutland.

County Engineer Larry Kite stated the amount of \$19,495 is budgeted this year for a new 27-foot Trail King Equipment Trailer. He requested approval for the purchase of 2006 Trail King TK40 LP in good condition in the amount of \$14,975. saving \$4,520. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the purchase and was seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws motioned to allow Chair Martin and the County Attorney to schedule a meeting with a representative from Webb & Eley, Attorney at Law, to discuss pending litigation. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Commissioner Lee asked if this would be in executive session and the County Attorney stated this should be in executive session because it is a personnel matter. Attorney Funderburk clarified for the public that, by law, it is not up to the County Commission to hire or fire personnel in the Engineering Department. Those decisions are made by the County Engineer. That law was passed by the Alabama Legislature and is on record. Chair Martin asked the Administrator to poll the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne stated Russell County has been awarded the EECBG from the Alabama Department of Economics and Community Affairs in the amount of \$250,000 to replace the outdated heating and air conditioning system in the Judicial Building. A resolution is needed to allow the Chair to sign all grant agreements, assurances and certification as required by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. Commission Lee motioned to approve the resolution and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous. Chair Martin, Epps and others thanked Ms. Horne for her long hours and hard work on the grant application. Russell County was 1 of 4 in the State to receive energy grant funds. County Administrator thanked Mr. Sellers and the Legislative Delegation for Russell County.

Ms. Horne presented the annual Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Levies Renewal. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the levies. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

The District Attorney has requested to install a security door in their temporary location in the amount of \$1,247. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimously approved.

The Administrator requested to purchase recreation maintenance equipment for use at the Russell County Sports Complex, since the Commission did not renew the landscaping contract for the Complex this budget year. Cost of the equipment is \$14,999, which includes the mower and attachments. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the purchase. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. Commissioner Pugh asked if this equipment could be used by all fields in the county. Chair Martin stated: All 0fields that the County owns. District 1 (Lee) voted, yes; District 2 (Pugh) abstained; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Dudley) voted, yes; District 7 (Screws) voted, yes. 6 votes yes and 1 abstention, the motion passed.

Ms. Horne stated: the new GASB 43 and 45 requirements and accounting standards apply this year and in short, requires the county to set aside a financial amount each year to fund employee and retiree benefits. Lee County used the firm Cavanaugh MacDonald Consulting. I am requesting Commission approval to hire by contract the same firm and for the Chair to sign contract and also authorize payment estimated at \$5,166.25 to be paid from the Public Building Fund. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. District 1 (Lee) voted, no; District 2 (Pugh) abstained; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Dudley) voted, yes; District 7 (Screws) voted, yes. The motion passed.

Commissioner Lee motioned the resolution for the Legislative Delegation for the additional one cent Lodging Tax be removed from the table. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous

Commissioner Lee stated since that was removed from the table, the motion previously made by him and seconded by Commissioner Dudley still stands. The vote was unanimous to approve the Resolution to the Legislative Delegation and to the Phenix City Council to approve an additional 1¢ Lodging Tax. Commissioner Lee requested that the resolution be signed by the Commission and copies be forwarded to Representatives Bandy, Beasley and Vance and to the City for their input.

Chair Martin announced the Courthouse and all offices will be closed Monday February 15, for President's Day.

Commissioner Reed awarded outstanding citizens in our community recognizing Black History Month.

Commissioner Lee motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned.