

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2018
9:30 A.M. E.S.T

An Adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order by Chair Peggy Martin.

The invocation was given by Chair Martin.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Screws.

The Mayor of Hurtsboro - Vivian Covington invited all the Commissioners to attend the Hurtsboro Mayor Scholarship Ball that will benefit the students of Russell County. The event will be held at the Russell County High School on Saturday, April 14, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.

Citizen – Charles Hollowell who resides in District 5. Expressed his concern about the recent inaction and vote on the sewer system in Fort Mitchell, AL. I want to be as positive as I can because I do believe after having met all the Commissioners you have the interest of this community at heart. I feel there is a sense of tribalism that is interfering with appropriate decisions. The Fort Mitchell sewer line is a doable project. I want to ask you all to work hard at it to get things done for this community.

Chair Martin welcomed elected officials, department heads media and guests. She also thanked Cable T.V. of East Alabama and The Citizen News for their coverage of the Commission Meeting.

Administrator Horne called the Commission roll. Members present were Chair Peggy Martin, Vice Chair Carl Currington, Gentry Lee, Ronnie Reed, Cattie Epps, Chance Corbett and Larry Screws. Also present was the County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk and County Administrator Horne who kept the minutes.

A quorum was established.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the January 24th, 2018, meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Mrs. Epps made an amendment to the January 24, 2018, minutes noting two changes she had called in the day before. The minutes were approved unanimously with the two changes.

Commissioner Lee requested when they get a set of minutes that has been corrected, please put the correction in red so they can see them right off.

Proclamation and Resolutions:

Chair Martin and Commissioner Screws presented the Proclamation for the Crowell Family Reunion. Commissioner Screws stated the Proclamation is to Raymond Crowell who is a member of Mt. Hebron Church in Seale. Mr. Crowell was a photographer in the County that has taken many pictures over the years. He retired from being a photographer. Commissioner Screws made a motion that the Proclamation be accepted. Commissioner Epps seconded it. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Business Items:

Commissioner Corbett reported that he applied for a grant for the Crawford Park Phase 2 Walking Trail project. The Wiregrass RC&D grant application paper work said they were accepting up to \$2,000.00 grant applications. I applied for the \$2,000.00 grant, so when it was awarded, to our surprise, it was awarded for more which was \$3,533.00. Shawn, our County Engineer, has got an initial estimate from a contractor. It will not take the engineering department away from their duties. The contractor will go out and create the actual foot print of the walking trail and back fill it with dirt or base material. That quote was \$4,000.00 which was a little shy. The rest of the funds will come from the rent that is generated by that building. What I need to do now is get the money where we can spend it. My motion is to appropriate \$3,533.00 and place that in the Parks and Recreation Budget, line item 530. County Administrator LeAnn Horne stated the grant line will increase (GF) revenue line 44741. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett stated that one of our local businesses Pine Hollow donated bricks for the Crawford Park Phase 2 Walking Tail project. There is going to be a community meeting March 15th, 2018.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne, presented the Ad Valorem Tax Resolution which Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott requests approval each year. It is approved every year in accordance to Section Title 40-7-42 the Code of Alabama 1975. This allows the Revenue Commissioner to collect the property taxes (Ad Valorem) for Russell County. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett, County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Bob Franklin, EMA Director, stated he applied for five storm shelter grants for the County. We received all of them. We finally received a grant for the Crawford area storm shelter. It is a total of \$66,668.00 of that \$50,001.00 is the Federal share and County share is \$16,000.00. We can do in-kind work. This is a budgeted item and at this time I would request that we approve and accept this grant.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Economic and Tourism Director, Mr. Victor Cross, gave the Commission a copy of the Tourism Expense Policy which was reviewed Monday at the work session. To answer Commissioner Screws question concerning gratuity, Victor Cross responded you can do up to 15% is my understanding. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin announced that Mr. Mark Clark on the E-911 Board Appointment sent me a letter of resignation. Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Bill Friend to serve as a board member for Mr. Mark Clark's term.

County Engineer, Shawn Blakeney, stated it is time to renew the Federal Lease at Briar Creek Park that we maintain. We need the permission from the Commission to renew the lease at Briar Creek Park. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer, Shawn Blakeney, stated they rejected the concrete bid several weeks ago. I am now wanting to get approval to solicit bids for our concrete pipe. I would like to open the bids Tuesday, March 13th, in the Commission Chambers at 2:30 P.M. I will be back at the next Commission meeting to award them. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer, Shawn Blakeney, stated they are about to complete Lamb Road and the next one on the list is Pitts Road. We are having some right-of-way issues obtaining that road. As it is now, the first two residents have declined to give the right of way. In that area we will not be able to get the 18 ft. required pavement with 2 ft. shoulder. We need direction from the Commission on which way to go.

Commissioner Corbett made a motion to approve paving as the road is. We have done this in the past. Seconded by Commissioner Currington.

Commissioner Lee asked the attorney. Will this be considered nonstandard and should we approve it? I know the Commission will be liable. Will individual Commissioners be liable for it? County Attorney, Mr. Funderburk, stated it is essentially a question for the insurance company and it is the question of marking the road correctly indicating the construction. I am sure Shawn would do that. If it's going to be a one-lane roadway, you need to make it known through signage. If it is going to be a narrow two-lane road, mark it properly and visibly. The liability for that reason would probably not be against the Commissioners.

County Engineer, Shawn Blakeney, stated that if you sign it properly and lower the speed limit through that section, we will be covered in my opinion. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer, Shawn Blakeney, stated the Annual Resurfacing Bid is a public works bid. We have to advertise for three consecutive weeks because it is over \$50,000. We need an approval today to solicit the bids. We will also open them on March 13th, in the Commission Chambers at 2:30 P.M EDT. I will award them at the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws stated that he would like to receive a monthly financial report each month. County Attorney, Mr. Funderburk, stated that you do not need to vote on this request. It is a right currently to have access to the records of the office with proper notice.

Commissioner Lee stated that these records are open to the public. There is a cost for reimbursement for the cost of duplicating and the time involved in duplication of documents.

Commissioner Epps stated that Mr. Alexander is here for the Alexander-Abercrombie Cemetery. County Attorney, Mr. Funderburk stated that all he needed was a correct name of the LLC from Mr. Alexander. The Commission can go ahead and vote on it. Mr. Alexander stated he would provide it at a later date and will bring it to the County Attorney's office.

Commissioner Corbett stated that on Monday night they had an individual come to the Commission wanting to give the County a piece of property on the corner of Abercrombie and Brickyard. We accepted that piece of property. The reason he was giving us the property was he bought it in a tax sale and he couldn't sell it. He did not want to pay the property taxes on it. We had the opportunity to go out and see the location. The property borders a cemetery. It is completely useless for the County to ever have any use for it. I support it. I think it is the right thing to do give it to the people who own the cemetery.

Commissioner Epps made a motion to approve by the recommendation of the County Attorney, Mr. Funderburk. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. County Administrator LeAnn Horne polled the Commissioners. The vote was unanimous.

Announcements:

- The Fort Mitchell Playground grand opening is Saturday February 17th from 11:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.
- Valentine's Day Dance at the Seale Courthouse is Saturday February 17th from 7:30 P.M.-12:00 A.M.
- President's Day is Monday February 19th. The Courthouse will be closed.

- Commissioner Epps would like to thank everyone who participated in the Fort Mitchell Playground Construction

Chair motioned to adjourn. Adjournment approved.