

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2013
9:30 A.M. EDT.

Public Comment: Recreational Director Mike Parker stated The Russell County Sports Complex was allowed to apply for the Baseball Tomorrow Grant and we were notified March 12th that Russell County has been selected as one of the finalists for the grant. The grant will pay for lighting at the complex. Also the Complex has been leased for a tournament this weekend 6 to 12 teams from Georgia and Alabama will be competing.

Chair Martin also announced Assistance Engineer Brandon Bundy will be leaving Russell County and returning to his mid-west home. She thanked him for his service to our Engineering Department and wished him well in the future.

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

A quorum was established.

Chair Martin requested an approval of the meeting agenda. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

The invocation was given by Judd Stinson, Pastor of Summerville United Methodist Church.

Commissioner Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterward, she welcomed elected officials, department heads, media and visitors.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the February 27th, 2013 meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Pugh addressed the issue of a county-wide sales tax that is collected but not shared. County tax is only collected in the unincorporated areas of the county. After looking at several solutions, the least restrictive or damaging to either the city or county would be to look at creating a resolution that will provide shared tax on all future annexation, based on the current police jurisdiction. Legislative Services has asked for the County Commission to create, approve and send the resolution. The Legislative Service will do research to create a bill and advertise. Commissioner Pugh motioned to create the resolution and send it to Leslie Vance at the Legislative Delegation, requesting that any future annexation by the City, that the sales tax be shared at the

percentage that the county is currently receiving at the police jurisdiction. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Administrator Horne polled the Commission; the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett stated he talked to City Council Member Chris Blackshear who said he did not have a problem with sharing tax of annexed properties and also mentioned that Council Members are willing to sit down in the future with the Commission to discuss other issues. The Mayor and himself will be gathering information and contacting the Commission for a meeting.

Commissioner Screws asked if there could be a meeting between the County and City and would it be feasible before we approve the resolution?

Commissioner Pugh reminded that there has been a meeting and the Commission already knows their answer would be as far as income for the County.

More discussion took place concerning forming a committee to meet with the city. Chair Martin stated she would like to be part of the committee along with Commissioner Corbett and the County Administrator.

Commissioner Lee motioned to appoint a committee of less than four (4) Commissioners to meet with the City, representatives of their choice. That way they could meet without giving notice or be open to the public. If the committees come to any agreements it would be brought before the Commission for review. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. Administrator Horne polled the Commission: District 1 (Lee) voted, yes; District 2 (Pugh) abstained; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, no; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Corbett) voted, yes; District 7 (Screws) voted, yes. 5 yes votes, 1 abstention and 1 no vote; the motion carried.

Russell County Water Authority Manager Mark Clark presented a sewer project which will be located down State Hwy 165 to County Road 18. The project cost is approximately \$ 2.89 million with an interest rate of 2.4% through SRF ADEM over a period of 20 years. Presently no customers have applied for service and there is potential for commercial growth, but no guarantees. The application deadline is May 1st, 2013. After much discussion no official action was taken. Mr. Clark was given the charge of researching and bringing back to the Commission information for gap coverage recommendations that would make sure the County would qualify for ADEM or any other agency that would provide coverage. Also Mr. Clark is to supply a cost estimate for the engineering plans.

The County Engineer Larry Kite requested approval for 2 resolutions that are revising 4 previously approved resolutions for ATRIP projects. ALDOT has requested to combine and streamline this process to make projects more efficient. The first project RCP 57-038-12 combines resurfacing and traffic striping from Greenburt Road (CR-39) from Prudence Road to Oswichee Road (6.68 miles). The second resolution RCP57-039-12 combines resurfacing and traffic striping of Bradley Road and Tarver Road (CR 24) from Lato Road to Alabama Highway 165 (5.1 mile). Commissioner Screws motioned to

approve the revised resolutions. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Kite also made a request for purchase of a used 2004 Ford F- 650 from the ALDOT surplus in the amount of \$20,000. A flatbed truck was budgeted for purchase this year, but this truck will be in place of that item and is for the same budgeted amount. He also requested to have the Administrator sign the invoice for the truck purchase. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the purchase and was seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

Sheriff Heath Taylor presented a list of surplus vehicles. Six of the vehicles he recommended auctioning at Govdeals.com and the other 3 vehicles sold for scrap. He also asked for the proceeds to be earmarked for the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Pugh motioned to approve his request and was seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws gave a brief history on the Annual Easter Egg Hunt in the Twin Gates Community. In the past other properties in the Town of Hurtsboro have been used for this event, but this year the community has requested to use County property in the Hurtsboro for the hunt. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve their request and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator Horne stated she received requests to schedule a meeting with the Reapportionment Office in Montgomery to review the redistricting maps that were recently drafted. Dates available for a meeting are March 21st, April 4th and April 18th. She asked the Commission to select a date that would be convenient. She also wanted to let the public know that the Commission would be returning to look at the redistricting maps.

Commissioner Pugh discussed a recent letter and news article concerning the purchase price of the 7th Avenue building that the city bought from the county. He also requested Administrator Horne to research the articles and give corrected answers concerning the purchase price of the building, annexation and police services to be included in today's meeting minutes.

Administrator Horne read portions of the article from WTVM: "Phenix City Finance Director Stephen Smith also added the city recently agreed to give the county more than \$1.5 million for the purchase of a property, the red brick building located behind the BB&T bank on Broad Street. The facility will be used to house the city's engineering department and for road improvements in the county".

Administrator Horne's response was: the agreement between Russell County Commission and the City is the City Council approved the purchase of the annex building formerly known as the old tag office / appraisal office from the County Commission totaling \$700,000. The remaining agreement between the City officials and the County Commission was a request of the City Council for the County Commission to

approve road projects under one state proposal rather than another. The two state programs offered to the County Commission are ATRIP and RAMP. The City of Phenix City requested that the County Commission approve the ATRIP State Agreement which required larger match funding amounts from the county than for the RAMP proposal. It was agreed that the County Commission during the meeting wanted to assist and work with the City. However, the County did not have the total match funding required to approve road projects under the ATRIP proposal. The City agreed only if the county approved ATRIP to help by offsetting the county's expense of funding road projects under the ATRIP plan rather than the RAMP. The City's plan was to refund up to \$75,000 per year for ten years of the 10% gas tax that the county provides to the city on an annual basis. The average amount distributed to the city annually is \$200,000. Total investment for both the property purchase and the funding of ATRIP road projects is \$1,450,000 over a ten year period.

Administrator Horne continued to read the WTVM article: "they needed police services; they are not interested in building a store in the unincorporated area of Russell County, Smith responded".

Administrator's response: The Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services county-wide to both residents and business owners. Also the Sheriff's Department is responsible for dispatching all fire and rescue in the jurisdiction. Volunteer Fire Departments have the responsibility to provide all fire and rescue services in the police jurisdiction to both residents and businesses. This is not an incentive for annexation to the city because services are already provided by the county in my opinion.

Chair Martin made announcements:

Community of Heroes will be hosting a hospitality suite with the Ft Benning Wounded Warrior Association for the soldiers, families and cadre of the WTB at the Thunder in The Valley Air Show, March 16 & 17.

Russell County Homeland Security/EMA will host "Be Ready Day" on March 30th from 9a.m.to 2p.m. at the Pavilion located on the 280 By-pass.

Chair Martin adjourned the meeting.