

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 12th, 2017
9:30 A.M. EST

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order, by Chair Martin.

The invocation was given by James J. Eberhardt, Pastor of Good Shepherd Transitional Home.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Currington.

Carla Thomas and Tina Riley gave a status report concerning the consolidation of the county rental properties. They distributed brochures showcasing the Senior Center, the Old Seale Courthouse and the Masonic Lodge. Information and rental of all three properties are now handled by Mrs. Thomas and Ms. Riley. The consolidation allows offering the other venues if the date and facility the renter requests had been booked. This has increased rentals at all properties.

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

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

A quorum was established.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the March 22nd, 2017 meeting minutes. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. Commissioner Currington abstained from the vote due to his absence at that meeting. The other six Commissioners voted yes. The minutes were approved.

The Department of Commerce Work Force Development Division Representative, Brenda Tuck presented the Work Force Development Agreement. After realigning the State's resources is looking at what could be done with Federal resources. Currently there are three Boards Work Force Investments Opportunity Acts. Currently Jefferson County, Mobile County and the other 65 counties constitute what is considered a local board. They are looking at reconfiguring so there will be 7 Boards, which would truly be a more local Board. There will be 13 counties and you will have representation on that Board who will report back to you and let you know where the Federal funds are going.

Ms. Tuck requests support in the restructuring the Boards. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the redrawing of Districts. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett presented the Power of Purple Proclamation for recognizing the month of May for Cancer Awareness. The Relay for Life will be held May 5th at 7:00 P.M. till Midnight. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve the proclamation. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

A Proclamation for County Day of Recognition for National Service was given to volunteers of the National Organization Senior Corps. There are 2 programs in Lee and Russell County “the Foster Grandparents Program and Retired Senior Volunteer Program”. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve the proclamation. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Currington discussed problems within his district that lie within the police jurisdiction. There are junk cars, uninhabitable houses, etc. lining Hwy 80 and other areas of the police jurisdiction. Special Enforcement Officer Bill Friend has submitted a report to the City concerning the areas, but the City has yet to take action. He would like for the Commission to address this issue with the City. If the City doesn't correct such problems the County needs to take over before the county looks like a dump. Citizens in these areas pay taxes to the City, but the City will not give the services that those who live in the City receive.

Commissioner Lee stated that he did not think this is part of the City's responsibility even though it is in police jurisdiction.

Commissioner Corbett suggested requesting Administrator Horne to contact the City Manager and find out where the issue is if there is one.

Commissioner Lee stated that Attorney Funderburk could look up to see if there is a law that states what responsibilities are for a municipality within the police jurisdiction.

Attorney Funderburk informed the Commission the City has control of building permits, laws that govern what a nuisance is in that jurisdiction.

Commissioner Corbett gave a status report on the Cookie Crawl held at the Masonic Lodge April 2nd. This was a fund raising event for the Child Advocacy Center. \$950 was raised for the organization. Commissioner Corbett thanked all the volunteers and people who baked cookies for the event.

Commissioner Currington discussed the recent RFP for Economic Development. There was only one application submitted, which was from Bill Weeks.

Mr. Weeks presented his ideas and what he felt he could do for the county. He also discussed his qualifications and background.

Commissioner Lee asked Mr. Weeks if the Commission should decide to hire him, how long before he thought the County would see results, and a year from now if the Commission did not see results would he admit that maybe the County is not doing the right thing and may not need his services.

Mr. Weeks stated that it would take about 18 months to see results.

Commissioner Lee said then in 2 years?

Mr. Weeks agreed he would not have a problem with that.

Commissioner Lee asked Administrator Horne if this was in the budget.

Administrator Horne stated it was not included in this year's budget.

Commissioner Corbett asked if we already have a contract and set a salary.

Commissioner Reed motioned to hire Mr. Weeks and set a salary at the next meeting.

Commissioner Epps stated that since at Monday night's work session we did not question Mr. Weeks she proposed to table this item until the next meeting so the Commission would be able to decide if this is a good idea and can the County afford to place Mr. Weeks under contract. Seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Commissioner Screws requested to add to the motion for the Administrator Horne meet with Mr. Weeks to discuss a salary, so that information could be included at the next meeting.

Commissioner Epps stated that his request is added to her motion. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

Deputy Coroner Dennis Vaughn presented a court ordered cremation for Frank Carpenter. Payment should go to Colonial Funeral Home and not to exceed \$400. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the cremation and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Parks and Recreation Director Bill Taylor requested to approve he Russell County Baseball League with a change in the first paragraph to change the lease from 6 months to 12 months. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Currington. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Taylor presented the results for the Parks and Recreation fence bid held on March 30. Affordable Fencing Solutions was the only bid submitted. Mr. Taylor requested to accept their bid for \$25,800. The bid will cover 2 fields at the Ladonia Complex for fields 1 and 2. Commissioner Screws motioned to accept the bid. Seconded by

Commissioners Epps and Currington. Commissioner Currington suggested Mr. Taylor make sure that the fence company use schedule 40 as stated in the bid specs. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Taylor also requested a budget transfer as follows:

General Fund 001

Park & Rec 57200

Decrease 001 57200 214	Minor Equipment	\$5,000.00
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Decrease 001 57200 541	Equipment& Furniture	\$6,887.00
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Increase 001 57200 524	Additions & Renovations	
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Total	\$11,887.00
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Commissioner Screws motioned to approve the transfer. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Mrs. Dee Braun is retiring from the Department of Human Resources Board whose term will not be up until Oct. 15, 2021. Someone will need to be appointed to complete the term. Information was submitted from several citizens that wished to be on the Board.

Commissioner Reed nominated Barbara Jones.

Commissioner Corbett nominated Marcia V. Johnson.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to closed the nominations. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

The vote began in reverse order: Marcia Johnson
4 Commissioners voted for Mrs. Johnson; therefore, she became the Commission appointment for the Department of Human Resource.

The Russell County Water and Sewer Board appointment, David Smith, has come to term. Several people interested in serving on the Board submitted information.

Commissioner Lee nominated David Smith to continue to serve on the Water and Sewer Board.

Commissioner Screws nominated Mark Godwin.

Commissioner Reed motioned to close the nomination and was seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

The vote was in reverse order: Mark Godwin
There were 5 votes for Mr. Godwin; therefore, he is the new Commission appointment for the Russell County Water and Sewer Board.

Commissioner Corbett discussed Phase II of Crawford Park and presented a proposed lease for parcels of land. Attorney Funderburk has contacted the property owners. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve the 25 year lease. Seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Commissioner Screws asked if Commissioner Corbett planned to use county forces to develop this property.

Commissioner Corbett announced that the plan is to use volunteers. Any request money for will come back to the table.

Commissioner Screws stated what he meant by county forces are Engineering or Parks and Recreation and if you are using them, then you are using public money.

Commissioner Corbett agreed just like Commission did when we paved the \$100,000 project in Hurtsboro in Commissioner Screws' District. The Commission is using public money.

Commissioner Screws stated that then the county is developing private property in a sense.

Commissioner Corbett replied no the Commission would be developing leased county property.

Commissioner Lee informed that developing leased property which is allowable.

More discussion took place. Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1(Lee) voted, yes; District 2 (Currington) voted, yes; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, no; District 5 (Epps) voted, no; District 6(Corbett) voted, yes; District 7(Screws) voted, no. 4 yes votes and 3 no votes; the motion passed.

Commissioner Lee discussed Troy University's presentation of their plans for the Coulter Building if the Commission approves donation of the building to them. Commissioner Lee made a motion to allow the County Attorney to draft a deed donating the Coulter to Troy University. Seconded by Commissioner Screws.

Attorney Funderburk stated that he will draft a deed to be reviewed by the Commission. There will be a reversion clause placed in the deed if they decide not to use it for the public.

Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Administrator Horne presented the annual renewal of ABC Levies for 2017 Sec. 28-3-4 Code of Alabama which allows the State of Alabama to collect the Alcoholic Beverage license fee for Russell County. There are no changes in the levies and the County is

taking the maximum amount allowed. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous

Administrator Horne informed the public that April 24th the work session falls on a holiday therefore there will not be a work session and the Commission will go straight into their meeting on Wednesday, April 26th.

Administrator Horne presented a contract to provide deputy services for the Town of Hurtsboro. The contract has been updated to reflect the current deputy's salary and dates have been changed to reflect a two year contract versus a year because we are midway through our fiscal year. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve the contract. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

Attorney Funderburk recommended going into an executive session. Commissioner Screws motioned to move into executive session. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Announcements were made before moving into executive session.

Commissioner Corbett discussed at the Monday night work session that they were working on paving the Old Seale Courthouse parking lot in Seale. This will make an easier access for people who are in wheelchairs or those who have small children in strollers to enter the Old Courthouse. They are looking at the Probate Judge helping fund the \$6,200 project.

Probate Judge Alford Harden Jr. announced that under the Help American Voter Act, each county is awarded money based on their population. This gives him his office over \$6,000 to use from the Secretary of State Office to help with matters like this. He will have to submit the proposal to the Secretary of State, with information about how much the building is used. He requested that all Commissioners look at their districts to see if they could use some of this money, which has to be used at a voting center.

Commissioner Lee motioned to reconvene the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Screws.

Commissioner Lee motioned to approve for the County Commission and the County Attorney to enjoin the Russell County Sewer Authority in a letter to the City of Phenix City for legal clarification of utility jurisdictions located the police jurisdiction. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee motioned to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

