

The Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
July 14, 2010  
9:30 A.M. EST.

Public Comments were made by:

Citizen Farrar discussed the Ft Benning Land Expansion and the lack of information concerning this issue.

Chauncey Lofton asked for an update Lonesome Pine Road and dangerous areas on the road.

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order. Members present were: Chair 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. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote to approve was unanimous.

The invocation was given by Dwayne Dean, Pastor of Cedar Hill Baptist 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 June 23, 2010 meeting minutes. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. 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.

Deputy Garrison Commander George Steuber discussed the Ft. Benning Land Expansion Study. The study concerns the possible acquisition of up to 82,800 acres. The Ft. Benning Study is looking at certain types of land needed for advanced military training and property owners with large tracts of land willing to sell. Their intent is not to acquire land from unwilling land holders. Large tracts of land and low population density will minimize purchase transactions. Maps supplied today are generalized to show the areas Ft. Benning is studying. The maps are little defined now, but will become detailed as the study progresses.

The estimated time of completion for the land study is 14 months with a time-line as follows:

- June 2010- Notice of Intent & Public and Scoping Meetings
- February 2011- Draft Environmental Impact Statement out for Public Comment
- Summer 2011- Final Environmental Impact Statement Published
- September 2011- Record of Decision Signed
- December 2011- Land Purchases Begin
- September 2016- Training to begin on New Land

Hecht Burdeshaw Architect, Scott Holmes presented the Judicial Bid and Project Final Approval. A rendering of the project with a report of the new 15,500 square foot addition and renovations to the existing 36,000 square foot building was presented. If the project is approved at this meeting it will be scheduled for bid, August 9, 2010. A preconstruction meeting will be held on site for all contractors interested in placing a bid. It will be mandatory for the interested contractors to attend the preconstruction meeting or they will not be allowed to place a bid. There will also be prequalification for a bonding limit set over the job capacity to insure the contractor is able to handle the job and will be required to bond to make sure the job will be completed. Construction should be completed by October 2011. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the final plans for the Judicial Center and bid. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk added his recommendation to approve the Provisional Lease Agreement PBA, Judicial Building and Annex, which will allow the project to go forward. He also reported on the Court's approval of the Validation Petition which defines and approves the source of funds.

Commissioner Lee amended his motion to include the Provisional Lease Agreement PBA as well as the final plans for the Judicial Project. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Epps stated her agenda item needs more research, therefore would like to table her request for a historic grant application approval for the Macedonia School.

James McGill, from the Chamber of Commerce stated: A Community Block Grant is available for various community projects. Mr. McGill requested approval to submit a grant application for construction of a new ball field at the Russell County Sports Complex. The Russell County Board of Education decided not to participate with the County for a joint field. There are only 31 days to prepare and apply for the grant. Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the grant application. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Barbara Scott from Lee / Russell Council of Governments stated there is a new requirement of Federal grant applications. Now a public hearing is required, therefore the public hearing date will be placed in the local newspaper tomorrow at the cost of \$714.00. Approval is also needed to move forward with this new requirement. At the next Commission

meeting Mr. McGill and Mrs. Scott will bring Engineering plans and cost for the new field. At that time the actual grant application can be considered for approval. Commissioner Dudley amended his motion to include these costs for the application. Commissioner Reed seconded the amendment. The vote was unanimous.

Barbara Scott also announced ADECA has sent notification that the Emergency Shelter Grant that had been applied for earlier in the year has been awarded to Russell County in the amount of \$148,000.

Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott requested a salary schedule change in the Appraisal Department for two appraisers that have had to take on additional duties and responsibilities. She states: I would like for the change to take place this pay period. One appraiser should be moved from a grade 10 step 8 to a Grade 11 step 8; this will be an increase of \$4,163.34. She requested: Next appraiser to be moved from a grade 9 step 8 to a grade 10 step 9, this will be an increase of \$5,033.83. The second appraiser has received his State Appraisal Certification. Balance for the year will be approximately \$24,000; the funds for the salary change are in the budget. Commissioner Reed motioned to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Epps motioned to have a letter or resolution sent to the State of Alabama requesting to have a traffic light installed at the U.S. Hwy 431 and Hwy 165 intersection. She also requested to contact the city for support of the traffic light by sending a letter or resolution to the State as well. Commissioner Pugh discussed the necessity of placing a light at this intersection even if there is no city support and if there isn't city support the county needs to find funding for installation of this light. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Extension Office Director Ted Gilbert stated funds for his department are almost depleted and requests additional appropriations for his department in the amount of \$16,000 for this year. This will allow his department to stay within their budget; otherwise a valued position would have to be eliminated and devastate his department.

Commissioner Lee asked: Mr. Gilbert have you submitted a request for additional funding from the City of Phenix City.

Mr. Gilbert stated: A formal request was submitted, but the request was for the next fiscal year and would not help for the balance of this fiscal year. As of this date, the City has not responded.

Commissioner Dudley asked for Mr. Gilbert to bring to the next meeting a breakdown of city and county residents who use the Extension Office's services and to now make a guess at the percentage of city dwellers that the Extension Office actually service.

Mr. Gilbert estimated that 75 percent of their services used were for city residents.

Commissioner Dudley asked how much revenue has been received from the city. Mr. Gilbert stated, up to this date, he stated none had been received.

After more discussion of the County Budget and obligations to other agencies receiving county appropriations and who are also requesting extra funding for this year. Commissioner Reed motioned to table the additional appropriations request at this time. Seconded by Commissioner Pugh. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne presented a request for the Building Inspector Department for a departmental budget transfer to carry his department through the remainder of this fiscal year the as follows:

GENERAL FUND 001			
BLDG INSPECOTR-52710			
DECREASE	001 52710 239	OTHER REPAIRS/MAINT	\$1,250.00
INCREASE	001 52710 211	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$1,250.00
		TOTAL	\$1,250.00

Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the transfer and was seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote for approval was unanimous.

County Engineer Larry Kite requested a budget transfer to cover overages in employee testing as follows:

GASOLINE FUND 111			
ENGINEERING-53100			
DECREASE	111 53100 211	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$500.00
INCREASE	111 53100 156	MEDICAL/DENTAL	\$500.00
		TOTAL	\$500.00

Also due to an increase in supplies for additional drainage projects funds Mr. Kite requested another transfer as follows:

DECREASE	111 53100 530	IMP OTHER THAN BLDG	\$40,000.00
INCREASE	111 53100 213	MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	\$40,000.00
		TOTAL	\$40,000.00

Commissioner Dudley motioned to approve the budget transfers. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator, LeAnn Horne stated, earlier Commission Pugh referred to the Energy Grant and I too am very disappointed at this time that I'm having to bring this before you. We had worked very hard on the grant application, Barbara Scott, Richard Sellers and I, countless hours. We were one of four counties in the State of Alabama that received stimulus funds in the amount of \$250,000. Those funds were to go toward the mechanical purchases of the new chiller and boiler system for the retrofit of the former Courthouse and new Annex. The scope of project has changed. Discussions with the Department of Labor as well as the Alabama Department of Economic Affairs, conflict as to their opinions on how to administer the grant and requirements that they have set for it. That is in addition to the county's issues of the construction time-lines that Mr. Holmes brought to your attention today. We had worked diligently with the Department of Labor and spoke with ADECA to get their opinions to be on the same page if possible so we could move forward and use the \$250,000 grant; because, I certainly did not want to make a recommendation of returning that money to the State. To no avail Mrs. Goggin did report there is not a concurrence with the Department of Labor so that we may use the grant to benefit the county and make the maximum use of the \$250,000 without costing or inflating the bids of the entire renovation project estimated now at 7.3 million. So at this time, it is my recommendation based on all the facts and information that we have from the Department of Labor, The Alabama Economic Office and Lee / Russell Council of Governments plus the architect, that we surrender the \$250,000 back to the State, because it does not fit with the project scope at this time. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the County Administrator's recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. The vote was unanimous.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk recommended moving into an executive session to discuss an issue in the Ladonia area. Commissioner Lee motioned to convene into executive session and was seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin announced the Civilian Military Council to be held July 16, 2010, Russell County is to host the luncheon this month.

Chair Martin also announced a book signing will be held at the Russell County Library on July 21, 2010. The author is John Lyles who has written a new book about Phenix City.

Commissioner Dudley motioned to reconvene from the executive session. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

The County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk clarified what had been approved earlier in the Ladonia Area, if the road was built to straighten up the intersection, landowners would have to enter into an agreement that the city would have to pay the county for improvements, if they were annexed into the city. He recommended extending the contract to clarify if only one of the property owners is involved and is necessary to condemn a portion of someone's land, and road

improvements are made. The one property owner that this is done for will be responsible for the total cost including any condemnation of property cost, should that property owner annex into the city. There may be two property owners involved, but if the work is being done for one, that owner is responsible for the total condemnation cost. Commissioner Pugh motioned to approve the County Attorney's recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Dudley. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Dudley motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Pugh. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned.