

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
December 12, 2022

PRESENT: Chairman Brandon Shoupe, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Tracy Adams, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner James Ivey, County Engineer Barkley Kirkland, Chief Administrative Officer Peter Covert and County Attorney Pres Register.

Chairman Shoupe called the 10 a.m. meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the December 12, 2022, Houston County Commission Regular Session. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Major Linda Payton, Corps Officer of the Salvation Army, gave the invocation and Commissioner Adams led in the pledge of the allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Harvey and seconded by Commissioner Ivey. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Shoupe began by inviting Major Payton back to the podium for an announcement. Major Payton stated that she had in front of her the totals of the County vs. City annual bell ringing competition and she is happy to announce that the county beat the city by over \$200. She thanked the county for their efforts in helping to raise money for the Salvation Army. Chairman Shoupe thanked Major Payton for being here today and thanked her for all the work she does with the Salvation Army.

Chairman Shoupe then continued by congratulating Henry County on their new Administrative Building, named the Herndon Building, and that it will be dedicated on Friday, December 16th along with an open house. He added that there have been a lot of Christmas Parades and events in the county and city over the weekend and the Town of Taylor will hold their "Santa in the Park" on the 16th and he encouraged everyone to attend.

Chairman Shoupe announced that on Thursday, Mr. Coffee Bean Coffee Truck will be parked outside the administrative building for the employees and anyone else that may be interested. He stated that hopefully this can be a regular event with the different food trucks from around the Wiregrass Area parking in the parking lot. Chairman Shoupe then reminded everyone about 'Garden's a Glow' at the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens and stated that this is a fun and popular family event.

Chairman Shoupe reported that he spoke to the Sheriff at a parade over the weekend and they talked about the crack down on gun violence and he wanted to say that on behalf of the Commission they are in support of this and he thanked the Sheriff and his department for what they do.

Commissioner Ivey announced that Pilgrim Home Baptist Church is doing their drive through nativity scene this weekend and stated that this is a great event. He added that the band at Wicksburg High School had twelve members selected to be in the 20/20 Southeastern United States Honor Band at Troy University and he applauds them for their efforts and achievements.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to present the 2021-2022 departmental over/under spending summary report – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Adams seconded. At this time, Peter Covert began by stating that this has been an unexpected year with all the price increases and the situations that all have faced and he applauds the department heads in the county for being such good stewards of the citizen's funds. He said that everyone will see in the presentation that overall the county came in under budget. Mr. Covert announce that before he starts he has a confession to make and that is this has been a somewhat of a frantic year and it has been challenging. He added that Major Raferty, with the Sheriff's Dept., is very concerned about his budget, as he is very mindful of his budget and he is very cautious of his budget. Mr. Covert stated that when he first put this report together, it shows that the Sheriff's Dept. budget is over and that is not correct. He added that after he put this presentation together that he did not put in the salary increases that went into effect in the budget presentation and he apologized for that.

When the presentation was brought up on the screen Mr. Covert pointed out that the department heads were very cautious with their funds and Road and Bridge was able to perform a lot more work with their Rebuild Alabama projects. He said that overall the county expended four million dollars less than what was budgeted. He asked if there were any questions and there being none the commission called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to publish the Houston County year-end financial report to include county, fiduciary and other special trust funds – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to publish the year-end financial report and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to adopt resolution in support of local legislation for compensation increase for election officials and approve cost of advertising – Patrick Davenport, Judge of Probate

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to adopt a resolution in support of local legislation for compensation increase for election officials and approve cost of advertising. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to adopt resolution in support of local legislation for appointment of temporary probate judges – Patrick Davenport, Judge of Probate

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to adopt resolution in support of local legislation for appointment of temporary probate judges and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve budget amendment due to price increase for the purchase of (2) vehicles – Reappraisal Dept.

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the budget amendment due to price increase for the purchase of (2) vehicles. Commissioner Ivey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6. Request to approve budget amendment in the amount of \$15,000 for funds received from Farley Nuclear for Ashford Volunteer Fire Dept. – Chris Judah, EMA Director

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the budget amendment in the amount of \$15,000 for funds received from Farley Nuclear for Ashford Volunteer Fire Dept. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

7. Request to award bid to Ingenuity for website contract and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bid to Ingenuity for website contract and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Request to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Houston County Volunteer Fire Departments and Houston County Volunteer Fire Association

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Herring seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Request to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Houston County Rescue Squads and Emergency Management Services Association

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Ivey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Request to award bid for Night Vision Binoculars – Sheriff’s Dept.

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the request to award the bid for Night Vision Binoculars. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Request to adopt resolution to authorize allocation of ARPA Funds for eligible water infrastructure project for the Town of Rehobeth – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made the motion to approve the request to adopt resolution and Commissioner Ivey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

12. Request to adopt resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with Forever Wild Land Trust and approve accompanying Memorandum of Understanding

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to adopt resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with Forever Wild Land Trust and approve accompanying Memorandum of Understanding and Commissioner Adams seconded. Chairman Shoupe then asked CAO Peter Covert if a budget amendment was needed for this item and he responded yes. At this time Commissioner Herring made a motion to amend the motion to state “Request to adopt resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with Forever Wild Land Trust, approve accompanying Memorandum of Understanding, and accompanying budget amendment.” Commissioner Ivey seconded to amend the motion and it carried unanimously. At this time, Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the motion as amended and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

13. Request to approve addendum to the agreement for the sale and purchase of the Houston County Farm Center and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the addendum to the agreement for the sale and purchase of the Houston County Farm Center and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

14. Request to enter into a construction agreement with ALDOT for Project Palm, an Industrial Access Project – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to enter into a construction agreement with ALDOT for Project Palm, an Industrial Access Project. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Request to approve declaration of no bids received for Bid No. CC-0841 and request to negotiate through the receipt of informal bids for the Fiber Loop Network Project

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Herring seconded. Chairman Shoupe reported that this was talked about in the administration meeting and James Brannon is present if anyone has any questions. Mr. Brannon commented that this is the first time in 40+ years that there was not a bid and that this is very unusual. He reported that there were three interested bidders and for some reason two of them dropped out and the third one could not make it on time for the bid opening and now he believes that this is an opportunity for the county to negotiate with a contractor that they enjoy working with and like their quality of work they do, to per cue a bid. With their being no other questions or comments, the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – 2 closed roads; Campbellton and Bowen. They plan on having everything open before Christmas.

County Attorney – No report

Adjourn