

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION  
August 14, 2023

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 10:00 a.m. meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the August 14, 2023, Houston County Commission Regular Session. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Pastor Lyle Peluso from Dothan Vineyard Church gave the invocation and Commissioner Tracy Adams led in the pledge of allegiance.

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

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Shoupe began by stating that he failed to mention at Thursday's meeting that the "Yard Party for Art" was this past weekend, but unfortunately it was cancelled due to the weather. He then recognized some guests in the audience to include representatives from the Town of Rehobeth and from Barry Moore's office, Alex Reynolds. He thanked them for attending.

#### AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation – CASA of the Wiregrass Region – Lorie Killingsworth, Executive Director

Chairman Shoupe asked Ms. Killingsworth to come forward and to give her presentation on CASA. She began by thanking the commission for allowing her to speak today. Ms. Killingsworth stated that she represents the non-profit program called CASA, which stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate. She added that CASA are advocates for a child who is in foster care caused from abuse and neglect. She stated that they are granted this by a judge and if it is granted, they become the eyes and ears for the foster child. Ms. Killingsworth explained that they do not work for DHR as they are independent and work with DHR and with the court system regarding the children. They also have the ability to go wherever the child may be located if they are needed and they stay with the child until their case is over. CASA gives the children something that they may not be getting while they are placed in the system such as

consistency, a shoulder to cry on, a shoulder to vent to, and they get a voice in court. If it was not for CASA, everyone talks around the children, above them and they never talk to them. CASA gives them the opportunity to have a say so in what happens in their life. Ms. Killingsworth also stated that each child has a volunteer that is trained and CASA pays for that training for the volunteer. She added that CASA does receive money from the federal government, and VOCA, to help with this training but there is a gap of what they receive and what it cost to run the entire program. Ms. Killingsworth is in hopes that the commission would be interested in helping CASA and the various programs they have. She reported that the local program has already served 425 children in Houston County since it's' inception.

Commissioner Harvey asked what VOCA stands for and she responded that it stands for "Victims of Crime Act" and it represents funds that are collected from criminal cases where fines have to be paid. A portion of the money goes back to fund programs such as CASA. Commissioner Herring confirmed that what this organization does is help the children and be an advocate for the child in the system if the judge seems that this will help the child.

Chairman Shoupe thanked Ms. Killingsworth and stated that the commission will see what they can do to help this organization.

## 2. Presentation – David Duke, Wiregrass 2-1-1

Chairman Shoupe approached the podium and asked Mr. David Duke to come forward as well. Chairman Shoupe began by saying that this has been a long time coming and he knows that Mr. Duke is excited. He added that it would not be right to let Mr. Duke go (retire) without recognizing him on behalf of the commission and all the citizens of Houston County, which he has served for a long time. Chairman Shoupe then read a proclamation which proclaimed September 1, 2023, as "David Duke Day" to honor him for all he has done from his beginnings with the Alfred Saliba Center to the inception and being Executive Director of Wiregrass 2-1-1. Chairman Shoupe congratulated Mr. Duke on his long successful career and wished him the best of luck and lots of happiness in his retirement. He then asked Mr. Duke for comments.

Mr. Duke began by stating that this means a great deal to him and he said that today is his last official work day and that tomorrow he turns 65 years old. He said that it has been a wonderful journey that began many years ago and early in life he was prepared for this journey. Mr. Duke added that it has been an incredible and rewarding career and Houston County has been a wonderful partner with Wiregrass 2-1-1 from the onset. From "Houston County Gives Day" and working together on so many events in the community, Houston County has played a big part. Mr. Duke said that he has always felt that when people and organizations all come together that they can do so much for the local communities that need it and that is what he enjoyed all of his career in social services. He stated that it is in incredible to watch the citizens of Houston

County come together when they know what the need is and they are always ready to help and he feels that there is nowhere else like Houston County in the entire state of Alabama. Mr. Duke said that it has been an honor and as far as what he is going to do next, he really does not know as he is not making any plans right now and he just wants to retire for the time being. In July, 2008, even though he is single, he feels like he married Wiregrass 2-1-1 when he began with the organization and it has been his life and it has been a wonderful life. Mr. Duke did say that he knows he will be in the community giving back in some way but not sure when. A round of applause and a standing ovation was given by all.

## REGULAR AGENDA

### 1. Reappoint Jennifer Stanley to the Dothan/Houston County Communications Board

Commissioner Herring made a motion to reappoint Jennifer Stanley to the Dothan/Houston County Communications Board. Commissioner Ivey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### 2. Request to approve budget amendment for the Sheriff/Jail Dept. overtime due to the jail kitchen remodel – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to approve a budget amendment for the Sheriff/Jail Dept. overtime due to the jail kitchen remodel. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### 3. Request to approve Resolution to amend Subrecipient Agreement Using American Rescue Plan Act Funds for Water Infrastructure Project and approve accompanying agreement – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the Resolution and the agreement and Commissioner Harvey seconded. Chairman Shoupe stated this was talked about on Thursday and asked for any questions. There being no questions, he called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

### 4. Request approval to sell Chevrolet Silverado Pickup Truck from EMA Dept.

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to sell the Chevrolet Silverado Pickup Truck from the EMA Dept. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### 5. Request to approve Rebuild Alabama FY 2024 County Transportation Plan – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the 2024 Transportation Plan and Commissioner Harvey seconded. Chairman Shoupe then called Asst. County Engineer Tyler Reeder to come forward for the presentation of the plan. Mr. Reeder began by presenting a map showing the county and the areas where the projects will be located and stated that the blue colored roads will be asphalt pavement and the red colored roads will be a leveling and triple surface application. There are a total of 9 roads for this year's plan and it totals 25.372 miles with a total dollar amount of \$3,787,449.97 of paving that is projected. Mr. Reeder stated that the reason the number is so large is because of rollover federal exchange funds, since they were under the bond issue, and this is the first year they are able to implement those funds. He added that this leaves them with \$628,000 to roll over into next year's Rebuild Alabama Plan and they will carry that forward.

Chairman Shoupe asked about the triple surface treatment and that Road and Bridge is doing more of those and it seems to be working out well as far as he can tell. Mr. Reeder said they have not had any complaints and they like the product. He added that it is actually giving them a long lasting surface and it is a little cheaper in cost but they try not to use it on higher traffic volume roads. Chairman Shoupe clarified that this is not all the roads that they hope to resurface next year and Mr. Reeder said that is correct as they have put some additional money in the budget that they are hoping will be approved and that those will not be part of the "Rebuild" plan as it will be additional money funded by the commission. Commissioner Ivey asked what the triple surface treatment consist of and Mr. Reeder answered that it is a gravel layer, small rock layer, and a fine sand layer that covers it and looks like asphalt when completed. Commissioner Adams asked which treatment last the longest and Mr. Reeder said that the triple surface treatment is fairly new but from what they have seen they feel like the triple surface will provide longevity. Mr. Reeder added that most of the county road damage is due to cracking and then water infiltrates into the base and causes failure so if they can prevent the cracking from occurring they expect a longer life span of the road and the liquid AC helps with the cracking. Commissioner Harvey asked what was liquid AC and County Engineer said it is the black liquid that is sprayed from the trucks. Commissioner Herring asked if any roads had been redone with the triple surface treatment and which roads. Mr. Reeder answered that County Road 8, County Road 75 North, Coot Adams, and Hopkins. Mr. Kirkland said that this process has been used for a while around the state but that they had just started using it due to the cost effectiveness. Chairman Shoupe said he has seen these roads and they look great. Commissioner Ivey asked about water shedding on this triple surface treatment and Mr. Reeder said they have not seen any issues with that and it provides acceptable run off of water.

When called for the vote, the motion passed unanimously to approve the 2024 "Rebuild Alabama Plan"

6. Request to enter into a settlement agreement with Triad of Alabama, LLC, d/b/a Flowers Hospital, for tax appeals before the tax tribunal

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to enter into a settlement agreement with Triad of Alabama, LLC, d/b/a Flowers Hospital, for tax appeals before the tax tribunal. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#### STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – 2 closed roads: Pea Market & Faulkner

County Attorney – No report

Adjourn