

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION  
August 28, 2023

PRESENT: Chairman Brandon Shoupe, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Tracy Adams, Commissioner Ricky Herring, 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 28, 2023, Houston County Commission Regular Session. He declared a quorum as a majority of the commissioners were in attendance.

ABSENT: Commissioner James Ivey

Pastor Kevin Woodcock, from The Harbor, 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 announcing that the commissioners had a very informative conference last week in Perdido for the ACCA Conference. He added that it is always good to get together with other county commissioners and see what others are doing in local government.

Commissioner Herring stated that he would like to say that the Road and Bridge Department is doing a great job including trimming trees, roads being completed and paved, and many other things. He knows they work hard as he sees them when he is out on the roads and he appreciates all they do.

Chairman Shoupe then called EMA Director Mark Powell to the front for an update on the possible Hurricane status which is making its way to the Florida gulf coast region. Mr. Powell began by reporting that they had just watched a webinar at 8:30 this morning for an update. At this time, it is Tropical Storm Idalia and it currently has 65 mph winds. They project it to be a category 3 when it makes landfall. The landfall should be somewhere near Indian Pass, Florida. Mr. Powell added that the storm is currently located 680 miles south of Tallahassee and they predict the impact will be occurring Tuesday night between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. There is also a small chance that our area could see some tropical force winds along with some rain but

we should not have a big impact. Mr. Powell also noted that at this time they are working on evacuees at the Red Cross Shelters. They are diligently coordinating with the different agencies to get that going and preparing for those coming into our area. Mr. Powell also noted that this is a fast moving storm and it will move through our area quickly but will be a low impact storm for our area.

## AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

### 1. Presentation – Dothan Regional Airport update – Adam Hartzog, Director

Chairman Shoupe introduced Mr. Hartzog and asked him to come forward to the podium for his update about the Dothan Airport. Mr. Hartzog began by thanking the commission for having him today. He stated that one of the reasons he is here today is to continue the strong relationship with the Wiregrass area to include Houston County, even though the airport is located in Dale County, but they are in the city limits of Dothan. They have always worked great with Houston County in the past and they have always been grateful for the opportunity to work with the Road & Bridge Dept. and they want to always be there for them as well. Mr. Hartzog added that in regards to the storm, that the airport works closely with EMA in regards to disaster response and that the airfield will remain open as long as they can get debris off the airfield. During the entire hurricane season, the staff at the airport will be ready and available to help with any needs as they also have law enforcement and a fire department at the airport and they are here for their partners in the Wiregrass.

Mr. Hartzog then reported on the updates at the airport. He said that a few years ago they recognized the need for pilots as there is definitely a shortage, especially in the Wiregrass area. He added that they have two new hanger developments going on which total about 35,000 square feet and will be mainly for corporate activity. In regards to helicopters flying in the airspace, they are working with the local military airfields to create a more efficient use of the air space over Dothan. They hope to have some plans within the next few years to make it more efficient for the Army aviators to train over Dothan. Mr. Hartzog stated that the big news is that Delta Airlines has a new schedule coming in October to include a 6:55 a.m. departure and then a mid afternoon arrival and departure and a 9:00 p.m. arrival coming from the Atlanta airport. They feel this is great news for business customers, military customers and for leisure customers as well. Mr. Hartzog said this makes same day travel economical and easier for people in the area. He also stated that in the next 24 months they have about \$21 million worth of infrastructure that they are investing in and that is along with FAA grants, ALDOT grants and with a \$2.1 million match on the money. With this, they will not have to ask for any help on these projects. He added that they are repaving both of the runways and working on a large drainage project for the entire airfield. They are also replacing LED's. Mr. Hartzog also said that they are reinvesting some of their grant money and some of their own money into

infrastructure. He reported that they provide \$96 million dollars in economic impact in the state of Alabama with a \$20 million payroll in the Wiregrass area. He concluded by stating that they want to continue to be successful and they are looking at a growth strategy over the next five years.

Chairman Shoupe stated that he believes that Mr. Hartzog and his team are doing a great job and they have been aggressive to get the schedule changed to coordinate the additional flight.

#### REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to re-appoint Lori Wilcoxon and Matt Parker to the Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the stated re-appointments to the SEARPD and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to award bid for the purchase of (2) vehicles for the Revenue/Reappraisal Dept. to the lowest bidder meeting specs and approve accompanying budget amendment – Starla Moss, Revenue Commissioner

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to award and the bid and approve the budget amendment and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve budget amendment for Opioid Settlement – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve budget amendment to Juvenile Services due to increase in cost of services provided – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the budget amendment to Juvenile Services. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve contract for the construction of the Homeland Security Warehouse Building to the lowest bidder meeting specs – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the contract for the construction of the Homeland Security Warehouse and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to approve resolution for Storm Water Grant – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the resolution for Storm Water Grant and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Request to sell the following items on GovDeals from the IT Dept.:

- a. IBM 3995 Optical Storage Library
- b. IBM 6500 Printer
- c. Shredder

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the selling of the stated items on GovDeals. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Request to enter into a lease agreement with Crab and Corner, LLC, for property located at 2890 Horace Shepard Dr., in an amount not to exceed \$3,000 per month and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve entering into a lease agreement with Crab and Corner, LLC, for property located at 2890 Horace Shepard Dr., in an amount not to exceed \$3,000 per month and authorize Chairman to negotiate documents. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – Mr. Covert announced that Accounting Department staff member Jennifer Pearson recently passed the required classes offered by the ACCA for her certification in Accounting Administration. He congratulated Jennifer and a round of applause was given by all in attendance.

County Engineer – No report

County Attorney – No report

Adjourn