

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
January 8, 2024

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 January 8, 2024, Houston County Commission Regular Session. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Pastor Chuck Locke, from Ridgecrest Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Commissioner Harvey 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 announced that Commissioner Adams would be serving as a Pall Bearer this morning at Former Circuit Clerk Judy Byrd's funeral. Ms. Byrd served from December 1993 until January 2007. She was a long-time public servant and prayers are with the family at this time.

PRESENTATION

1. FY 2023 Houston County Rebuild Alabama Annual Report – Road & Bridge

County Engineer Barkley Kirkland began by stating that this report has to be given, by law, to show where the money was spent. He continued by stating that they completed (4) projects in the last fiscal year for a total of \$2,183,537.00 and their other projects that were in the plan that were completed after September, and that included West Cook, Enterprise Church Road, Enon and Lynn Jarvis. These roads will roll into the next fiscal year totals. Chairman Shoupe added that this is not everything that was done, just what was completed with the "Rebuild Alabama" funds, which is gas tax money.

At this time Chairman Shoupe stated that because Commissioner Adams needs to leave as soon as possible for the funeral, he would like to request, if there is no objection, that agenda item #3 be moved to item #1. The commissioners had no objections and therefore agenda item #3 was moved to item #1.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to appropriate 10% of SSUT to Houston County School System and authorize Chairman to negotiate and sign a Memorandum of Understanding

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Adams seconded. Chairman Shoupe then asked for discussion and/or questions. Commissioner Ivey asked that this item be tabled until after next month's meeting so they can see where they stand financially and also to see what percentage would be beneficial to the Board of Education. Chairman Shoupe stated that there is a motion to table this item. Commissioner Harvey asked for a better understanding of what Commissioner Ivey is asking. Commissioner Ivey stated that last Thursday Commissioner Harvey made a comment that a better alternative would be a ½ cent sales tax. He also understands that there is a meeting next month with legislation in regard to that. Once those meetings have happened, and also our strategic planning at the end of February, they would better know where the county stands financially. Commissioner Ivey also stated that they would help in knowing how to proceed further. Chairman Shoupe stated that they do have a meeting, but it is not about a specific tax or solution, but there is a meeting scheduled for later this week. Chairman Shoupe stated again that there is a motion to table from Commissioner Ivey and they need a second. Commissioner Herring seconded. When called for the vote, the motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Adams voting NAY.

At this time, Commissioner Adams left the meeting.

2. Request to adopt Resolution Allocating American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Replacement Funds for the Construction of a Communications Fiber Loop Project – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to award bid for 2023 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 to lowest bidder meeting specs – Major Bill Rafferty, Sheriff's Dept.

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

4. Request to sell the following items on GovDeals:
 - a. 2014 International Knuckle Boom (Sanitation)
 - b. 5 Gradall Buckets (R & B)
 - c. Tire Changer (R & B)

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to sell the above items on GovDeals. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – Two closed roads; Moffet Rd bridge repair and County Rd. 75 replacing cross drains.

County Attorney – No report

At this time Chairman Shoupe asked the EMA Director, Mark Powell, to give an update on the weather situation. Mr. Powell reported that the current webinar they just finished showed that the outlook will not get any better and it will get worse than they initially thought. They moved the risk to 3 out of 5. The weather channel is taking this storm very serious, and we should as well. He added that the storm should arrive around midnight to 2 a.m., but there will be sustained winds of 30 – 35 mph prior to that time. Wind gusts could be 60-75 mph, and this is actually before the storm arrives. There will also be hail and severe thunderstorms during that time. Mr. Powell stated that there are two rounds to this, and the next round will be around 5 a.m. to 6 a.m., which could have possible 80 mph wind gusts. This will also include strong tornadoes and hail. This storm is not a maybe as it will happen, and it will be very serious weather. He also reported that they are looking at opening their emergency operation center with a limited staff beginning at midnight and a full staff beginning at 4 a.m. and until the storms settle. He urges everyone to take this seriously and prepare now by getting supplies and downloading the EMA app for notifications. Chairman Shoupe asked when the squall lines will be coming through the area as they need to make a decision concerning the county personnel as well. Mr. Powell said it will be in the 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. range. They will have another update at 1:30 this afternoon.

Request to convene into executive session.

At this time Chairman Shoupe entertained a request to convene into executive session to discuss the purchase and/or sale of real property. He added that he does not anticipate any other items to be discussed so they will reconvene to adjourn. At this time Commissioner Herring made a motion to convene into executive session and Commissioner Ivey seconded. The motion carried unanimously, and they convened at 10:14 a.m. and they plan to reconvene around 10:25 a.m.

At 10:34 a.m., Commissioner Harvey made a motion to reconvene the regular session. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Motion to adjourn the regular session was made by Commissioner Harvey and Commissioner Herring seconded. Motion carried unanimously and meeting was adjourned.