

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION  
January 22, 2024

PRESENT: Chairman Brandon Shoupe, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, 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 22, 2024, Houston County Commission Regular Session. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Pastor Clay Greathouse, from Memphis Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Commissioner Herring 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 Houston County Pageants will be held this Saturday at 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. with the Little Miss being held at 2:00 p.m. and Miss will be held at 6:00 p.m. The other age categories will be held at 10:00 a.m. Eggs and Issues then thanked the local legislative delegation for their participation in the Eggs and Issues, held this morning by the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. He added that it is always informative, and it is a great way to get a preview of what is on the legislator's minds and what issues they see coming forth for the legislative session. The session will begin on February 5<sup>th</sup> and there are some big issues they will be tackling this year and prayers will be with them during that time. Chairman Shoupe also announced that the "State of the City and County" will be held tomorrow morning at 7:30 and he will be giving the state of Houston County, and the Mayor of Dothan will be giving the state of the City of Dothan. This will be held at the Chamber of Commerce.

Chairman Shoupe stated that, with regards to the Town of Cottonwood, a Press Release will be released today. The idea was from Commissioner Herring, and this will give an update on the county side. He added that in the wake of the tornado, the Road & Bridge began cleanup efforts last week. This will last about 10-12 weeks and will come at a cost of about \$110,000 per week. Also, there will not be any federal or state reimbursement for those funds even though the beginning thoughts are that it would have been declared a federal disaster area, but it is more complicated. Unfortunately, because the entire state of Alabama did not reach the

\$9 million dollar damage threshold, Houston County will not qualify for any disaster assistance. Ironically, if we were a county in the state of Florida we would qualify as they meet the \$9 million dollar. Chairman Shoupe reported that the burden will be on the taxpayers of Houston County. The affected areas are the focus at this time and because of this there will be delays on other items in the Road & Bridge Department.

Chairman Shoupe thanked the citizens of Houston County, especially the citizens of Cottonwood, as they all came together during this time. It was very encouraging to see the community spirit.

## PRESENTATION

### 1. LEAD Wiregrass – Doug Sinquefield, Wiregrass Resource Conservation & Development Council

At this time, Chairman Shoupe called upon former colleague, former County Commissioner Doug Sinquefield to come forward. He said that Mr. Sinquefield is with the Wiregrass Resource Conservation and Development and will be talking about LEAD Wiregrass today.

Mr. Sinquefield began by thanking the Commission for allowing him to come today and speak on behalf of the WRC&D. He began by saying that LEAD Director, Nicki Hamm, could not be with him today due. He stated that the LEAD Program is going into their third session as a Leadership Program, and they usually have 30 – 40 participants in a ten-county region. Mr. Sinquefield added that currently there are 12 participants signed up from Houston County. He also mentioned that state funding is made possible by local legislation for various WRC&D programs to aid law enforcement, first responders, towns & communities and especially the schools with various agriculture programs to include FFA and 4-H Programs. Mr. Sinquefield continued by reporting that they are excited to announce that this year their LEAD Program, which helps to develop strong leaders in the local communities. Anyone can apply on the WRC & D website and encourages everyone to participate in this program.

## REGULAR AGENDA

### 1. Request to approve budget amendment for temporary labor funding in the Personnel Dept. – Sheri Garner, Personnel Director

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

2. Request to adopt Resolution for the Brownfield Tax Abatement Project for Eredita Enterprises, LLC – Matt Parker, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to adopt the resolution for the Brownfield Tax Abatement Project for Eredita Enterprises, LLC. Commissioner Herring seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to adopt Resolution to Authorize the Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act Funds for Eligible Water Infrastructure Project for the Town of Webb – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request to adopt the resolution to Authorize the Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act Funds for Eligible Water Infrastructure Project for the Town of Webb. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

4. Request to adopt Resolution to Request Alabama Attorney General Opinion for determining service areas for fire protection and ambulance response – Pres Register, County Attorney

Commissioner Herring made the motion to approve the request to adopt resolution to Request Alabama Attorney General Opinion for determining service areas for fire protection and ambulance response and Commissioner Harvey seconded. Mr. Harvey asked for a little explanation of this item. Chairman Shoupe asked County Attorney Pres Register to approach the podium for comments on this item. Mr. Register stated that this general opinion request is to clarify and to have in writing where the rolls fit in the responding to and designing the map for the county, for fire protection and ambulance services. If the county is responsible, then what parts are the county responsible for and what needs to be done if there are other parties involved. When called for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

#### STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – Three closed roads; Moffet, Woodham & Broad

County Attorney – No report

Adjourned