

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
May 28, 2024

PRESENT: Chairman Brandon Shoupe, Commissioner Tracy Adams, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner James Ivey, Asst. County Engineer Tyler Reeder, 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 May 28, 2024, Houston County Commission Regular Session and declared a quorum as a majority were in attendance.

ABSENT: Commissioner Curtis Harvey

Commissioner Ricky Herring gave the invocation and Commissioner Tracy Adams led in the pledge of allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved on a motion by Commissioner Herring and seconded by Commissioner Adams. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Shoupe began by stating that he saw a lot of pictures on social media of everyone enjoying the Memorial Day holiday weekend. He also enjoyed seeing pictures that were shared of their family and friends and honoring them for paying the ultimate price for our freedoms. Chairman Shoupe added that he was saddened to hear of the passing of Mr. Tom Shirley, who was the founder of Home Oil Company. He was a very important person to Houston County and to the City of Ashford. Commissioner Adams commented that he had known Mr. Tom for 35 years. He said that he was a very generous person with his time and with his money for the greater good of Ashford and Houston County and he will certainly be missed.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Recognition – Houston County Queens

At this time, Chairman Shoupe stepped down to the podium and asked the Queens to join him.

He began by introducing the Queens and started with Future Little Miss Houston County, Allie Raye Gidley. Ms. Gidley said that she attends Ridgecrest Baptist Church School and she enjoys playing tag with her mom. Chairman Shoupe asked Ms. Gidley what was her favorite food that her mom cooked for her, and she answered “soup” and not any particular soup, just soup and

she was looking forward to not having to get up to go to school during the summer. Applause was given by all.

Next, Chairman Shoupe introduced Little Miss Houston County, Emerson Claire Stinson. Emerson and she is in the first grade at Rehobeth Primary School. Ms. Stinson said she is excited to be in Ms. Peanut this year with her sister queens and she looks forward to spending time with her sister queens as they are very sweet. She said she is excited for this summer as she is going to Panama City and to some festivals and also the peanut pageant. Chairman Shoupe reminded her that normally Little Miss Houston County girls do a great job at the peanut pageant. A round of applause was given by all. Chairman Shoupe continued by introducing Young Jr. Miss Houston County Lucy Akos and she is in third grade at Wicksburg Elementary School. She began by stating that she loves playing with her dog Sugar and playing with her mom. A round of applause was given by all.

Chairman Shoupe continued by introducing Junior Miss Houston County Anna Beth Bratcher who is a seventh grader at Houston Academy. She enjoys being a Houston County queen as she gets to meet so many people and make new friends. During the summer she plans on spending time with her friends and family and not having to go to school. She ended by thanking the commission for having her here today. A round of applause was given by all. Next, Chairman Shoupe introduced Sabella Nicole Wise who is a ninth grader at Dale County High School. Ms. Wise began by stating that she was 15 years old and will be 16 soon and just got her car. She thanked the commission for having her today and she was excited to come today.

Last, by certainly not least, Chairman Shoupe introduced Ms. Houston County, Emerson Nell Trotter. He commented that he understands, from Emerson's mom, that she is quite busy as she has started a non-profit organization. Ms. Trotter began by introducing herself and she said she loves spending time with her friends and family. She added that she is an upcoming junior at Rehobeth High School and she is excited to see what God has in store for her junior year. Ms. Trotter stated that last year she wanted to start a non-profit because she knew it would be a great way to get people involved and included. She said the name of the non-profit is "Healing Hearts Ministry". She continued by stating that "Healing Hearts Ministry" has a double meaning as she wants to make Jesus known while thanking healthcare workers and first responders for all they do. Her goal is to go to different schools and have students make fun and uplifting cards to be given to health care workers and first responders and to possibly share a bible study with the workers. She is hopeful that people will see the light that God brings into our world and just how amazing he is because without him we would not even be here. Ms. Trotter added that she is striving to make an impact in the community while sharing the love of Jesus in hopes of someone following him and creating a relationship with him. She looks forward in visiting doctors' offices and surgery center and is hopeful for the support of local churches and youth groups. A round of applause was given by all.

Little Miss Houston County, Emerson Claire Stinson, stepped back to the podium and she announced that she is doing a community service project for local foster girls to “Rock the Pink Carpet” and she is excited for them to come as she wants to meet a lot of them. She said they will have a story and Ms. Emerson (Ms. Houston County) is helping her with the project.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request from the Houston County Personnel Board to approve Juneteenth as a county holiday, in conjunction with the State Holiday Schedule – Sheri Garner, Personnel Director

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the request for the Juneteenth holiday, in conjunction with the State Holiday Schedule and Commissioner Adams seconded. Chairman Shoupe stated that it is customary that the county follow all the state holidays and he expects this to be a permanent holiday in the very near future. When called for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Request to approve the 2023 insolvents, errors and taxes in litigation, and uncollected insolvents and litigations for previous years, for final settlement with the State of Alabama – Starla Moss, Revenue Commissioner

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Ivey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Request to award bid for jail lock project to lowest bidder meeting specs for \$1,216,545.00 – Tommy Dixon, Maintenance Manager

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the awarding of the bid for the jail lock project to lowest bidder meeting specs in the amount of \$1,216,545.00. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion. Chairman Shoupe stated that there would be some discussion on this item as there has been some communication from one of the bidders and he called on County Attorney Pres Register for comments. Chairman Shoupe added that there had been some discussion to possibly table this item until the next meeting. Mr. Register approached the podium and stated that it is his understanding that there has been a public records request made on behalf of one of the bidders. He said that there is no requirement, under the bid law, to wait to award the contract and there is also no requirement to award it right now either. Mr. Register added that it is up to the discrimination of the commission that they award it to the most responsible as well as the most responsive bidder. He also said that “lowest” is not always the only requirement and “cheapest” is not the only standard as it is the qualities and things that the commission think is the best use of the county money. He added that this is an item that falls under the public works law as the county obviously owns and maintains the jail and these are items considered for this bid and who the county would like to award this bid to. Chairman Shoupe thanked Mr. Register for the clarification and said the jail is a big concern of the commissions, especially the locks, because as of right now they have a situation where the inmates are able to get out of their cells much easier than they would like for them to. At this time, Chairman Shoupe called Captain Davis Asbill and Mr. Tommy Dixon, County

Buildings Manager, to come forward to answer questions. Chairman Shoupe confirmed with Mr. Dixon and he and Mr. Asbill wrote the specs for this bid, and they have reviewed them. He asked Mr. Dixon that, to the best of his knowledge, Montgomery Technology Systems is the lowest bidder that meets the specs. Mr. Dixon responded that was correct and that the only question that is raised is that there are some clarification issues. He added that Montgomery Technology is the responsible bidder that meets the specs. Mr. Dixon also commented that he and Captain Asbill and Major Rafferty have all looked over this bid before they submitted it for the agenda last week and he feels good about the selection. Captain Asbill said that he is 100% sure that this bid is the best bid. Chairman Shoupe stated that the bidder that was technically the lowest left out a couple of items that were requested in the bid. Mr. Dixon said that was correct as they had requested a five-year warranty and this particular bidder only included labor and did not include parts in the warranty. Mr. Dixon mentioned that this bidder that is questioning the bid said they would sell the county the parts at 10% below their cost. He added that they are not looking for a discount on parts, but they would want things fixed if they had any problems. Chairman Shoupe asked if the other bidders, specifically Montgomery Technology, were not charging for parts and the bid was all inclusive in the warranty and Mr. Dixon responded yes. Chairman Shoupe stated that what they know is that there is a situation at the jail that needs to be resolved sooner than later. Chairman Shoupe asked CAO Peter Covert if he had any input and Mr. Covert said that he was still looking over the documents as he was out last week, but he does not see anything that encounters what Captain Asbill or Mr. Dixon have suggested.

Chairman Shoupe asked for comments from the commission and Commissioner Ivey asked if they went with the lowest bidder would there be unforeseen amount of money that could come forward due to the way they have written their quote. Mr. Dixon responded that they left out a couple of things that are going to be an additional cost and one is the warranty as they are pretty sure there will be something in five years, they will have to purchase parts and they do not know what that cost would be. In addition, he said they did not give any type of allowance for frame or hinge work that is going to be involved when the locks are put in place. Mr. Dixon said that if the doors are not square the hinges are not working correctly and then the locking mechanism is not going to work correctly. Mr. Dixon added that they requested that they put in allowance in the bid because it would be hard to find each hinge that would have to be replaced and they (bidder) did not so there will be the extra costs and he cannot put a price tag on those items. Chairman Shoupe responded that they can put a price tag with Montgomery Technology Systems because it is in the bid, and they know what they are getting, and they know what they are paying. He added that he does not see why they cannot go ahead and award the bid as they have a situation in the jail that they need to get working on. Commissioner Herring stated that he is ready to move forward. Chairman Shoupe then called for the vote and the motion to award the bid to Montgomery Technology Systems passed unanimously.

4. Request to approve purchase for replacement of a service gate for the Houston County Jail using emergency funds in the amount of \$16,500 – Tommy Dixon, Maintenance Manager

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the purchase and Commissioner Ivey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve resolution for the conveyance of real property to American Legion Post 12, subject to reversionary interest.

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the resolution and Commissioner Adams seconded. Chairman Shoupe noted that there were several members in attendance today from Post 12 and they will have a photo opportunity after the meeting. Chairman Shoupe also said that he was in hopes that Representative Paul Lee would be in attendance as he was very instrumental in getting this “over the goal line” as they have been trying to get this done for several years and it just needed a few signatures from some key people in Montgomery as that was the last step and Representative Lee got that done. He thanked Representative Lee for his actions in this matter. When called for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to approve resolution for the approval of a quitclaim deed to Dothan-Houston County Intellectual Disabilities Board, Inc., to remove prior restrictions on real property.

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the resolution for the approval of a quitclaim deed and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Request to approve budget amendment for a hydraulic water pump in the amount of \$52,895.35 – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the budget amendment for a hydraulic water pump in the amount of \$52,895.35. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve construction agreements for emergency repair with the State of Alabama for Broad Street and tornado cleanup – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the agreements and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Request to sell the following items on GovDeals:

- 1) 2015 Ford Escape (Revenue Dept.)
- 2) Canine Carrier (Sheriff’s Dept.)
- 3) 25 Empty Chemical Tanks (Road & Bridge)

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve selling the above items on GovDeals. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – 5 closed roads: Hicks Rd., Prevatt, Jack Bruner, Ebenezer, Pansey.

County Attorney – No report

Adjourned