

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
November 12, 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 November 12, 2024, Houston County Commission Regular Session and declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Major Linda Payton gave the invocation and Commissioner Curtis Harvey led in the pledge of allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting 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 the National Peanut Festival is over for this year and that they had a record crowd on Saturday as 41,000 people came through the gates. Traffic was a problem, but they have that figured out for the future. Chairman Shoupe also announced that the annual Children's Home Fundraiser "Festival of Trees" will be held this Thursday at 6:00 p.m. and tickets are still available.

AWARDS & PRESENTATIONS

1. Proclamation – "The Salvation Army" – Major Linda Payton, Corps Officer

Chairman Shoupe stepped to the podium and asked Major Payton to join him for the proclamation. Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the proclamation and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Shoupe then read the proclamation in its entirety and presented it to Major Payton. He stated that he had been to the kickoff event the last couple of years but will not be able to attend this year due to being out of town. Chairman Shoupe then invited Major Payton to make any comments.

Major Payton began by saying that she is grateful for this opportunity and that the kickoff event is Thursday at 2:00 p.m. at 1001 S. Bell Street and everyone is welcome. She added that at this time they are just starting off and they have almost 500 children signed up for the Angel Tree

Program. They will also pass out over 600 food boxes at the same time at the distribution center which will be at the Peanut Festival Fairgrounds. Major Payton said that if anyone is interested in helping to adopt a child, there will be Angel Trees all throughout the county or come by the Salvation Army office and look at their Facebook for information. She added that they are always looking for volunteers. Chairman Shoupe asked about the Angel Tree campaign and do they need more people to adopt and she answered that they will be placing their first tree out this weekend and will continue until December 9th. She said the closer they get to the 9th of December, they start analyzing to make sure they have enough for everyone. Major Payton mentioned that this community has helped every time. A round of applause was given by all for Major Payton and all the work she does for this area.

2. Proclamation – “Farm City Week” – Micah Johnson

Chairman Shoupe asked Mr. Johnson to come forward to accept the proclamation for “Farm City Week”. Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the proclamation and Commissioner Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Shoupe then read the proclamation in its entirety and presented it to Mr. Johnson. He added that he knows that farmers are incredibly important, and especially to this community, and county, as farming and agriculture is one of the biggest industries that we have. Chairman Shoupe asked Mr. Johnson for comments and Mr. Johnson began by thanking the commission for recognizing this week as they also recognize the relationship between rural and urban counterparts. Mr. Johnson added that we are fortunate to live in an area where we have opportunities with business and industry in the surrounding areas and at the same time without losing their agriculture identify. He mentioned that some places get so urbanized but here in the Wiregrass people keep both characteristics healthy between rural and urban counterparts. Mr. Johnson stated that our local farmers are good at what they do with peanuts, cotton and corn and that they are appreciative of what they do.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to make appointments to the Houston County Health Care Authority

Chairman Shoupe began by stating that there are two appointments that they need to make today and they are holdovers from the previous expired terms. He continued by saying that the first vacancy they need to fill is created by the expiration of the term of Chester Sowell, District 3 and the Healthcare board has submitted three individuals to include Neil Holloway, Lance Shepard and Chester Sowell, who is the incumbent. Commissioner Herring made a motion to appoint Neil Holloway and Commissioner Ivey seconded. When called for the vote, the motion carried unanimously to appoint Neil Holloway as the District 3 appointee.

Chairman Shoupe continued by stating that the second one they need to fill is a vacancy created by the expiration of the term of Walter Young, District 4. Three names have been submitted to include Chris Suddarth, Donavon Wewers and Walter Young. Commissioner Ivey made a motion that Donavon Wewers be appointed to fill this vacancy for District 4. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Request to approve lease and maintenance agreements for copiers located at Road & Bridge

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the lease and maintenance agreements for copiers located at Road & Bridge. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve the advertising of local legislation authorizing the Sheriff to establish procedures for the use of credit cards and/or debit cards at the Sheriff's Dept – Major Bill Rafferty, Sheriff's Dept.

Commissioner Ivey made a motion to approve the advertising of local legislation as stated above. Commissioner Adams seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve Resolution to Amend Appointment of Solid Waste Officer – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the Resolution to Amend Appointment of Solid Waste Officer and Commissioner Adams seconded. Chairman Shoupe reminded everyone that this was discussed on Thursday and they are changing this from appointing a person by name to appointing by position. When called for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No report.

County Engineer – Closed roads, Springhill, Leo Pynes, Sherman Brunson, Strong

County Attorney – No report

Adjourned