

The Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
February 26, 2020  
9:30 A.M. EST

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order by Chair Lee.

The invocation was given by Reverend Brady Baird, Seale United Methodist Church.

Commissioner Larry Screws led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Lee called Ms. Martha Alfred Islam to speak.

Ms. Martha Alfred Islam stated: I am here to talk about 10 Spartan Road in Pittsview.

Chair Lee called Michael Cannon to speak.

Mr. Michael Cannon stated: I am here to talk about my mobile homes.

Chair Lee stated: We do not make decisions during this part of our meeting.

Chair Lee called Mr. Leroy Davis to speak.

Mr. Leroy Davis with the Wiregrass RC&D stated: I want to invite all the Commissioners to a luncheon on April 8, 2020 at 11:30 at T-Bones Restaurant which the Wiregrass will hold their first meeting in Russell County.

Chair Lee welcomed elected officials, department heads, media and guests. He also thanked Cable T.V. of East Alabama and The Citizen News for their coverage of the Commission Meeting.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne called roll. Members present were Chair Gentry Lee, Commissioner Carl Currington, Commissioner Peggy Martin, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Cattie Epps, Commissioner Chance Corbett and Commissioner Larry Screws. Also, present was the County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk. A quorum was established.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chair Lee requested approval of the February 12, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Martin motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Currington.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous to approve the February 26, 2020 minutes.

**PROCLAMATIONS & RESOLUTIONS:**

Commissioner Corbett stated: As I spoke about this Monday night at the Work Session it has come to my attention several months ago, we had a local legislation that was passed in 2008. It was attempted in 2007, but it was vetoed by the Governor. It changed the way we do business in the County upon a vacancy of a County Commission seat. I am not forecasting any vacancies on this Commission seat. Across the State of Alabama, it is the common State law the vacancy is filled by the Governor. For some reason the Commission that was sitting at the time, the Legislative Delegation passed a local law and the request of an individual to change that law and change it to the first three years of the term, anything outside of less than a year out of the term would call for the Probate Judge to call for a special election. Your talking \$10,000 possibly in doing special elections that would not be reimbursed by the State. Your

talking about a special election that would not have a very good turnout. This is something that should not be put in place.

Commissioner Corbett made a motion to approve the resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1, Lee voted yes; District 2, Currington voted yes; District 3, Martin voted yes; District 4 Reed voted no; District 5 Epps voted no; District 6 Corbett voted yes; District 7 Screws voted no.

The motion was approved for the Resolution to Repeal Local Legislation.

Sheriff Heath Taylor stated: We have a bill that is coming up in the Legislature that the Sheriff's Association and the County Commission Association is actively opposing. It is in reference to the pistol permit and the State taking over and removing the Sheriff's around the State from handling the pistol permits. I asked Monday night at the Work Session and provided a sample Resolution in opposition of this. They have asked for each one of our Commission's to each pass a Resolution of House Bill 39 and Senate Bill 47.

Chair Lee stated: The way this is written if approved only the Chair has to sign it.

Commissioner Martin motioned to approve. Seconded by Chair Lee.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous to approve the Resolution to support the Sheriff's Association to oppose House Bill 39 and Senate Bill 47.

County Coroner Sumbry stated: The Coroner's office is asking the vote of approval for the below budget transfer.

Line item transfer of \$2200 from Line item # 250 Communications and \$1500 from line item #265 Registration & Training into line item #234 Motor Vehicle Repairs & Maintenance.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission; The vote was unanimous for the Coroner's Office budget transfer.

Sheriff Heath Taylor stated: We have been asked about a month or so ago about a liquor license for Criolla located 4100 Sandfort Road, Phenix City, AL 36869. At this time after receiving the letter from the church next door, I would recommend to the Commission that we grant a 020-Restraurant Retail Liquor license. The bill is being changed down the road. The letter from the church states they have no opposition to it. I would recommend we go ahead and grant them their license.

Commissioner Lee stated: You heard from the Sheriff. I am going to ask County Attorney Funderburk do you have an opinion on this?

County Attorney Funderburk stated: We are in line with this.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Currington.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous to grant Criolla Restaurant located 4100 Sandfort Road, Phenix City, AL 36869 a 020-Restaurant Retail Liquor License.

Sheriff Heath Taylor stated: We have a deputy that has been called up for Military duty for approximately 13 months. Historically we have asked the Commission when this occurs can we fill his position while he is gone. We won't be paying him he will be on Military leave. When he returns, we just won't hire the next available position. We will

actually be saving a little money during the time he is gone because he is in a position 5 and we will be hiring in a position 1.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous for hiring a deputy to fill a deputy's position that is going on Military leave for approximately 13 months.

Economic & Tourism Director Victor Cross stated: We would like the Commission to approve an abatement for a local manufacturer.

Shaun Culligan Economic Development Manager of the City of Phenix City stated: I placed in front of you a sheet with some slightly detailed information on it. In fact, I have done all that I can to understand how the sales taxing situation works. We did get some clarification from the State Department of Revenue. The City is still the granting authority inside the City but also within the Police Jurisdiction. So that being the case the City does have control over the sales tax portion; however, the City does not have control over the property tax situation. The way I understand it from them, we will be asking the Commission for the property tax abatement. We will approach the City for the sales tax portion of the abatement on March 3. I can't speak for them if they will pass that or not. I can say, historically that has been the case.

Chair Lee stated: That is not necessarily true. I don't think they granted sales tax when Home Depot was built.

Shaun Culligan Economic Development Manager of City of Phenix City stated: The way that it works for property tax is if the County and the City both don't pass the property tax portion then the state will not pass the property tax portion. The Resolution will just be for the property tax for 5 years. What we are discussing today is about the average of a \$7,000 a year commitment for over 5 years.

Chair Lee stated: Let me state what I think you are asking for now. You are asking for an abatement of property tax on the new expansion and renovation for JVL Laboratories. This will be for 5 years at approximately \$7,000 to \$8,000 a year.

Shaun Culligan Economic Development Manager of City of Phenix City stated: I want it to be clear that number will depreciate it may be a little more the first year.

Commissioner Reed stated: Mr. Chairman, how come we have to go 5 years and we can't just go 4 years?

Chair Lee stated: If you make a motion to go 4 years, we will discuss it and vote on it. That is permissible.

Commissioner Reed stated: The reason I say that is because the City is constantly taking all of our revenue and when the time for us comes to give the employees a pay raise sometime this year, the City of Phenix City is going to be able to give their employees a 2% and we might not be able to give our employees a pay raise. I am just looking at the big picture.

Probate Judge Harden stated: In 2 years you are going to get \$6,400 of your \$7,000 back. We are really only talking about 2 years.

Commissioner Corbett stated: I am not typically in favor for giving abatements for renovations and keeping a business more profitable than they are. At some point I think they need to pay back into the Community more. However, I treat this one a little different. They lost the jobs due to the loss of the contract. Now they are making a huge attempt to bring more jobs back into the community.

Commissioner Corbett made a motion to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission: The vote was unanimous to approve the Tax Abatement for JVL Laboratories for a period of 5 years.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: The first thing on the Agenda is to rebid our Bituminous Paving. I want to send out bids today and open bids in the Commission Chamber on April 2 at 2:30 EDT. Once we review the bids, we will bring back to the Commission on April 8 at the Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission: The vote was unanimous to approve the Engineering Department to rebid Bituminous Paving.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: The Freeman Road Resolution is an MPO project 80-20 match with the State federal aid money. It is going from County Road 61 (Freeman Road) from County Road 28 (Sandfort Road) to US Highway 431. This is tentatively scheduled for July of this year. The County portion is budgeted.

Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Commissioner Martin seconded.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission: The vote was unanimous to approve the Freeman Road Resolution.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: The Bradley Road Resolution is just an update Resolution. This Resolution was done about 2 or 3 years ago with a project that initially kicked off. We were waiting for the railroad crossing to get completed. It is completed. This is updating the Resolution. This is going from County Road 24 (Bradley Road) from County Road 39 (Nuckols Road) to AL Highway 165. This has been budgeted.

Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission: The vote was unanimous to approve the Bradley Road Resolution.

Chair Lee stated: We normally donate to the CVCC Foundation Banquet that they have annually. I am asking for a motion to contribute \$500 to the CVCC Foundation Banquet. This is the amount we have done in the past. This will be paid out of the Contingency Fund.

Commissioner Reed motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Currington.

County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1, Lee voted yes; District 2, Currington voted yes; District 3, Martin voted yes; District 4 Reed voted yes; District 5, Epps voted yes; District 6, Corbett abstained due to his receiving an award; District 7, Screws voted yes.

Announcements were made.

County Attorney stated: We have issues which involve the Sanitation Department that clearly comes under the Executive Session law and these being a result of information obtained by the Administrator. I recommend we go into Executive Session.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to recess to Executive Session.

Chair Lee stated: We are in Executive Session.

Commissioner Screws made a motion to reconvene. Seconded by Commissioner Epps.

Commissioner Reed made a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned.

After careful examination and considerations, the Commission authorized the Administrator to pay the following bills from the perspective funds.

### February 2020 Checks

<b>General Fund 001</b>				
18037	02-03-20	Pannier Graphics	41250 018	\$818.00
18038	02-03-20	BBP Reprographics, Inc.	41250 018	\$727.92
18039	02-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	2030	\$432,430.30
18040	02-03-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	See attached	\$23,781.00
18041	02-06-20	Russell County Volunteer Fire Department Association	3040	\$42,850.00
18042	02-10-20	Operation Fund		\$373,717.77
18043	02-10-20	Chris Medley/Modern Images	41250 018	\$1,000.00
18046	02-14-20	Juvenile Service Fund BB&T Bank	3040	\$14,242.44
18047	02-20-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$338,879.10
18048	02-20-20	John A. Ward dba Ward Sculptural Arts	41250 018	\$6,000.00
18049	02-20-20	Charese Danielson	57200 219	\$945.00
18050	02-20-20	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of AL	52100 122	\$1,316.78
18051	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$115,950.68
18052	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$943.43
18053	02-24-20	Victor Cross	41250 018	\$1,133.08
18054	02-24-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	See attached	\$20,809.00
18055	02-25-20	Economic Development Association of AL	41250 018	\$300.00
18056	02-25-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$3,871.30
18057	02-26-20	American Cancer Society	57200 530	\$800.00
<b>Contingent Fund 002</b>				
<b>Ft. Mitchell Senior Center</b>				
1243	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$484.00
1244	02-24-20	Tangela Cox	51100 499	\$25.00
<b>Masonic Lodge Fund 104</b>				
1160	02-03-20	Millicent Belrose	51100 499	\$175.00
1161	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$215.74
1162	02-12-20	Rosemary Manderson	51100 499	\$75.00
1163	02-14-20	Pine Hollow Landfill	51100 499	\$375.00
1164	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$1,055.03
<b>Court Cost Fund 105</b>				
<b>Gasoline Tax 111 Fund</b>				
13685	02-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	2030	\$94,650.58
13686	02-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	53100 122	\$8,005.00
13687	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$20,153.22
13688	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$40.00
13689	02-10-20	PG Bank	3040	\$163,524.34
13690	02-10-20	Local Government Health Insurance Board	53100 122	\$503.00
13691	02-20-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$71,163.97
13692	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$9,538.77
13693	02-24-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	53100 122	\$7,711.00
13694	02-25-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$2,004.94
13695	02-28-20	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of AL	53100 122	\$176.50

13696	02-28-20	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of AL	53100 122	\$32.00
13697	02-28-20	Larry Kite	53100 122	\$1,861.50
		<b>Road &amp; Bridge 112</b>		
1385	02-07-20	Reuben Berdeaux/Renew Home Renovations and Remodeling	51100 304	\$1,855.00
1386	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC		\$605.00
1387	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$9,100.66
1388	02-21-20	Reuben Berdeaux/Renew Home Renovations and Remodeling	51100 304	\$2,150.00
1389	02-25-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$731.01
1390	02-28-20	Stivers Ford Lincoln	51100 550	\$66,512.00
		<b>Capital Imp. Fund 116</b>		
		<b>RRR Gasoline Tax 117</b>		
1207	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$83,941.83
1208	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$90,495.14
1209	02-27-20	RRR Gas Fund PG Bank of PC	3040	\$83,941.83
		<b>Secondary RD Fund 118</b>		
		<b>Reappraisal 120</b>		
2291	02-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	2030	\$25,730.01
2292	02-03-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	51985 122	\$394.00
2293	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$7,113.37
2294	02-10-20	Phenix Girard Bank	3020	\$200.00
2295	02-20-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$21,197.03
2296	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$2,460.85
2297	02-24-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	51985 122	\$394.00
		<b>Juvenile DRUG 195</b>		
1279	02-01-20	Tommy Powell	56900 195	\$895.71
1280	02-12-20	Tommy Powell	56900 195	\$895.71
		<b>Sanitation Fund 511</b>		
1677	02-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	2030	\$68,697.60
1678	02-10-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	21101	\$36,085.08
1679	02-20-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$53,146.57
1680	02-21-20	Postmaster	54100 252	\$2,636.88
1681	02-21-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$45,211.20
1682	02-25-20	Operations Fund PG Bank of PC	3020	\$3,000.00
		<b>Garbage Fund 511</b>		
61130	02-03-20	Monique McNeal	3040	\$20.00
61131	02-03-20	Brett A. Mitchell	3040	\$17.50
61132	02-03-20	Ashley Montes	3040	\$20.00
61133	02-03-20	John J. Screven	3040	\$40.00
61134	02-03-20	Amy R. Mills	3040	\$12.00
61135	02-03-20	Thomas Trent	3040	\$10.00
61136	02-03-20	Albert H. Gross	3040	\$30.00
61137	02-03-20	Lucy Upshaw	3040	\$16.00
61138	02-28-20	Brian Rinciari	3040	\$40.00
61139	02-28-20	Terry Newman	3040	\$10.00
61140	02-28-20	Christopher Russell	3040	\$15.80
61141	02-28-20	Annie Ayers	3040	\$14.00
61142	02-28-20	Chong Hui Smith	3040	\$10.50
61143	02-28-20	Donna-Jane Glazier-Carter	3040	\$14.00
61144	02-28-20	Jeffery Chestang	3040	\$20.00

61145	02-28-20	Bruce W. Gallups	3040	\$26.00
		<b>Garbage Escrow Fund 513</b>		
		<b>Donation Fund 750</b>		
		<b>Law Library 755</b>		
1097	02-03-20	RELX Inc. DBA LEXISNEXIS	51100 410	\$462.00
1098	02-03-20	Malone Office	51100 499	\$104.72
1099	02-03-20	ELG Computer Care	51100 499	\$153.17
1100	02-10-20	ELVES	51100 499	\$1,386.20
1101	02-12-20	AAJA	51100 499	\$200.00
		<b>Worthless Check 761</b>		
525	02-06-20	Worthless Check Unit Office of District Attorney	51260 365 51260 362	\$2,899.00 \$1,561.00
		<b>Revenue Commissioner Manufactured Fund 781</b>		
		<b>Motor Vehicle Special Fund 782</b>		
		<b>Land Redemption Fund 786</b>		
784	02-03-20	Naomi Elliott, Rev. Commissioner	3040	\$43,458.60
785	02-19-20	Naomi Elliott, Rev. Commissioner	3040	\$475.48
786	02-25-20	Naomi Elliott, Rev. Commissioner	3040	\$1,726.93
		<b>Juvenile Service Fund 787</b>		
2284	02-10-20	Administrative Office of Courts	52600 307	\$14,242.44
2285	02-10-20	Office Depot/Office Max	52600 499	\$48.59
2286	02-10-20	Verizon	52600 499	\$131.46
		<b>County Tobacco Fund 797</b>		
518	02-20-20	Russell County Volunteer Fire Department Association	3040	\$22,676.65
519	02-20-20	Project Greene Light	3040	\$596.75
520	02-20-20	Task Force for Senior Citizens	3040	\$596.75
		<b>County Beer Tax 798</b>		

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Administrator Chair