

Russell County Commission  
Russell County Commission Chambers  
Meeting Minutes June 9, 2021  
9:30 A.M. EST

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order by Chairman Corbett.

The invocation was given by Pastor Richie Ashburn from Silver Run Baptist Church.

Commissioner Epps led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Mr. Harry Williams came to speak about the Crawford Community Health Fair. He stated he is a board member of the American Heart Association Greater Columbus Chapter in Columbus, and he is also a founder of AED Advocacy, that stands for Automated External Defibrillators, where they have placed needed units to non-profit agencies. Most recently they have placed them at the Phenix City Shriners Club. He has organized the upcoming Crawford Community Health and Wellness Fair which would be held in Crawford this coming Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. It's been rescheduled a couple of times due to weather and covid. It's a free event and they are expecting a large crowd. Some of the event sponsors are St. Francis Emory Healthcare, Hughston Clinic, IACT Health, Cornerstone Family Chiropractic, and Rivertown Ford. There will be over 40 health and wellness exhibitors attending, and over 40 craft vendors there. Some of the exhibitors attending will be American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Columbus Technical College, Alabama Department of Veterans Lee County, John B. Amos Cancer center, Livesock Community Center, Southeastern Cardiology, and some from East Alabama medical Center and many more. This will be at the Crawford walking park on Highway 80.

Chairman Corbett thanked our partners that are helping get the meeting out to the public, Cable TV of East Alabama BEAM and The Citizen of East Alabama. The meeting was on Facebook Live today, and they are happy to send it out for people to see their business and see how they are doing for the people of Russell County. He welcomed our elected officials, department heads, and guests.

Interim County Administrator Paulette Colbert called roll of the Commission. Member's present were Commissioner Rod Costello, Commissioner Cattie Epps, Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Larry Screws, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Gentry Lee, and Chairman Chance Corbett. Also, present was the Interim County Attorney Hope Hicks and Interim County Administrator Paulette Colbert, who kept minutes.

A quorum was established by Interim County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Corbett presented to approve the May 26, 2021 Commission meeting minutes even though there was not a work session Monday (due to the holiday). Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion to approve the minutes unanimously.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

Chairman Corbett asked to postpone to a future meeting the proclamation for Ms. Dillie Elliot while he is currently working on the information for it so they were not able to get it approved today.

Chairman Corbett presented Ms. Lisa Sandt with the proclamation for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and Ms. Sandt spoke about it. She said that June is World Elder Abuse Prevention month, and the Lee Russell Aging Department is doing a promotion to get the word out about the elder abuse, and the epidemic that our seniors are facing. It's a silent problem that often goes unreported and they are trying to make sure that people are aware. She said

that 1 in 10 Americans experience this, so they want the community to be aware of how to prevent it, recognize it, and report it. She said that on June 15th they will be holding a Take the Elder Abuse Prevention pledge at 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time at the Central Activity Center and she invited everybody to come out to take the pledge to stop elder abuse. She read the following proclamation that outlines what communities can do to help in that effort.



## Proclamation

- WHEREAS: Older adults deserve to be treated with respect and dignity To enable them to serve as leaders, mentors, volunteers and vital participating members of our communities;
- WHEREAS: In 2006, the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action, proclaimed a day to recognize the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue; and
- WHEREAS: 2021 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Its recognition will promote a better understanding that an estimated one in ten adults age 60 or older have experienced abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect; and
- WHEREAS: The Russell County Commission recognizes the importance of taking action to raise awareness, prevent and address elder abuse; and
- WHEREAS: As our population lives longer, we are presented with an opportunity to think about our collective needs and future as a nation; and
- WHEREAS: Ageism and social isolation are major causes of elder abuse in the United States; and
- WHEREAS: Recognizing that it is up to all of us, to ensure that proper social structures exist so people can retain community and societal connections, reducing the likelihood of abuse; and
- WHEREAS: Preventing abuse of older adults through maintaining and improving social supports like senior centers, human services and transportation will allow everyone to continue to live as independently as possible and contribute to the life and vibrancy of our communities; and
- WHEREAS: Where there is justice there can be no abuse; therefore, Russell County Commission urges all people to restore justice by honoring older adults.
- WHEREAS: Join us in our engaging and empowering movement, and putting an end to elder abuse.
- THEREFORE: We, the Russell County Commission, do hereby proclaim June 15, 2021 as

### **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Russell County**

We encourage all of our communities to recognize and celebrate older adults and their ongoing contributions to the success and vitality of our country.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Chairman Corbett presented an update on the Economic Development Advisory Committee. He told the Commissioners that they had their second meeting had good attendance and they discussed projects. The next business item was about the sewer projects and the growth of the Fort Mitchell area, and also the Highway 80 corridor. Also, he stated there were very positive feedbacks from the membership of the committee.

Chairman Corbett presented Commissioner Screws with the update on the COVID-19 Job Plan by Reverend Brandon Thornton. Reverend Thornton, the pastor of St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in Hurtsboro, addressed the Commission the awareness of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which provides 1.9 million of COVID-19 Relief Funding. Mr. Thornton said he was also aware of the 11 million plus which Russell County was granted. He believes this is a once in a lifetime positive flow of capital for our community and for our county. The Presidential Executive Order 13985, the Advancing Racial Equity Support for Underserved Communities through the federal government provides a provision for communities to utilize parts of those funds for building equity in the black and underprivileged community. He said this requires all federal agencies to do the same. Laws and unified black community have come together to request that our county be in the process of strategically planning for the most of those funds in our community. He stated that they are continuously moving and will return with the proposal that will speak to the social economics of our communities. He is asking that the Commission to not rush when appropriating the funding

until there is equal access to the table of planning for the appropriations of the funds. We are intentionally placing in the public records as to make this Commission aware of the provisions and ensure that it is a part of the record. Reverend Thornton thanked them for the opportunity to help establish a better community for all and assure that there is transparency and equitable distribution of the funds. Commissioner Screws stated he is sure that there will be a meeting to come up with a plan of how they would like to give him some of the money. Chairman Corbett stated that he had a long conversation with the attorney yesterday about this subject on the Recovery Act. He stated that the amount that Russell County will receive is \$11,258,245, and they will need to do a lot of planning and preparations as they approach it because this is just not free money to do as you will. This is money that has a lot of strict guidelines, and he has put it later in the Commissioner's Discussion about trying to have some planning workshops and Commissioners on addressing these issues, maybe as early as they can, as early as the next work session. Chairman Corbett thanked Reverend Thornton for being here today.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Chairman Corbett presented Commissioner Epps with the Defense Community Infrastructure Program Grant. Commissioner Epps presented our Economic Development Advisor Victor Cross to comment and address it and he has his leases for backup. Mr. Victor Cross stated that back at a previous meeting when they were first made aware of this particular grant by the Lee Russell County of Governments, the Commission voted in favor of moving ahead and applying for the grant. He has Lisa Sandt, Director of the Lee Russell Council of Governments, and Ben McGraw. Mr. Cross said that we are at the stage where we need to select the engineer for that project. Ms. Cross said he sent out RFQ's and had two responses and they are here today. One is Barrett & Simpson by Tim Simpson and GMC Goodwyn Mills Cawood by Wheeler Crook. Mr. Cross stated that this is a Defense Community Infrastructure Program Grant and each firm submitted interest in the grant and have agreed to work with Lee Russell Council of Governments to complete the application in time to meet the July 12th 2021 deadline. He said the application itself has to be in by 5 pm Pacific Time and that DCIP Grant is designed to address deficiencies in the community infrastructure supported of a military installation in order to enhance military value. Installation, resilience, and family quality of life is the bottom line. We are the only reason we are able to apply for this particular grant is because of the proximity of Fort Mitchell to Fort Benning, so we are very thankful for Fort Benning. Mr. Cross said the Commission has received information on the RFQ's that the firms submitted, and you have received scoring information to guide you through the process and we are at the point where we select an engineer who will work closely with the Lee Russell Council of Governments will move ahead and apply for the grant. Mr. Cross clarified that when you apply for a grant, does not mean that you get that grant so we are in stage 1 applying for the grant. He knows there are a lot of questions and ideas, but the decision needed today is which firm. All the rest of it will play out according to the application itself. He asked if anyone would like to make a recommendation, or would they like them to make the recommendation? Chairman Corbett stated that he himself is not very comfortable making a recommendation for an engineer, since he does not do that for a living and not an expert in this field, and they've had no time to interview these two firms. He doesn't know how they could make a recommendation but entertains an open floor for any recommendations from Mr. Cross. Commissioner Lee stated he is familiar with both of these firms, and they are both very reputable but if Lee Russell and Victor Cross has a recommendation, he would like to hear it. He also knows one company is local, a Russell County company, and the other is not but he thinks we have used both companies before in different projects, so he is not leaning one way or another. Commissioner Epps stated that since none of them on the Commission is an expert in this field, and since we have an Economic Developer Advisor working with the Lee Russell Council of Government, who she's sure does it every day or at least once a month, her recommendation would let them come together and make that recommendation because she thinks it would have to be on point. She said them working together and having information already, then they can do it much better than we can sitting here discussing what we can do. Commissioner Epps recommendation would ask Mr. Victor Cross and Lisa with her committee and her employees make that recommendation for the county. She also stated that she works very close with one of these firms, and she is familiar with them, and she knows something about one of the firms, but she is not an expert and it's not her field. She thinks everybody should start working within their field and then they probably can get something done. Commissioner Costello stated that with a recommendation from either of us, the Commission or Russell Lee Government, what would be the upfront cost by just naming one of these two

firms and is there any cost to the county? Ms. Lisa Sandt stated that right now the proposal was submitted and then the next step would be rating the RFQ based on the requirements, then selecting the firm, and then you negotiate the cost of the engineering study. Ms. Sandt said that's basically what the RFQ was entailing was having an engineering report that shows what are the options for the sewer in Fort Mitchell, and what's the cost for the Commission and so once a recommendation is made then you negotiate the cost of the proposal. Commissioner Lee asked if the cost was negotiated and can't be agreed to, can we stop the process agreed to? Ms. Sandt agreed. She said that the committee or Commission would recommend the engineer, then a negotiation would happen, and if the Commission did not agree with that cost, then you can either go back and renegotiate or you can stop the process all together. She said that basically the selection is one thing, but you have to have a contract that the Commission would approve for anything to go forward and so there are multiple steps that have to happen even before that firm is formally hired. It would need to come back to the Commission to review the contract for approval of the contract, as well as the engineer. Chairman Corbett thanked her for the clarification. He feels a little concerned (not wanting to throw Sheppard Dearing under the bus), because our water authority also being our sewer authority and they want him to take from the word he received from him as a neutral stance on any recommendations, and he appreciates it, however, Sheppard Dearing is an engineer which it makes it very hard for him to say that he accepts it because he's rather hear what their recommendation is. Chairman Corbett said they have had long, lengthy conversations this week and he's also lost sleep over this. He said as a commissioner in this county, not as a Chair, he wants to do the best thing for this county but what worries him is doing too much too quick and not having a way to pay for it, not having a way to keep it up or maintain it long term, replace it as we need to replace it down the road. He knows the RFQ went out for a twelve-month period and now we are trying to award it on a three-week period. He asked Ms. Sandt if that was correct? Ms. Sandt stated that there is a grant there and there are other grants, but her personal opinion is that you have to put those grants aside and you need to focus on the RFQ and getting an engineering report because without that report, no grant can be applied for, and it would be great if you could meet the July 12<sup>th</sup>. If you can't, there is always next year or there are other grants you can look for and apply for but she thinks what is missing is what you are saying, what are options? What are the costs? What is the responsibility of the Commission and does the Commission feel like they can move forward with it? Ms. Sandt says that without the report, no grant can happen and that we cannot really apply for anything because we can't answer the questions from a grant writing standpoint of, what is the cost? What is going to hook up? So, it can't be a fast process. It has to be a quality process so that you are happy with the results of the engineering report. Chairman Corbett asked if she feels that we will have enough based on a three-week study by an engineer to apply for this grant in July, based on her professional opinion? Ms. Sandt stated that she thinks it will be tough, she will be honest and not sugarcoat it, she thinks that it would be tough, but she doesn't know if she can say "yes" or "no" with having or pointing a firm negotiation and getting the Commission a contract to approve and then starting to meet with them. She stated that Ben can talk a little more about the grant because he is the one who's been working on it. She said it's a preapplication and then you get invited for a full application. So, depending on what that preapplication requires, it may be possible but she's not going to say 100% that it is. She said they really need to sit down with the engineers, see where they are at and then determine, can we meet that preapplication process and do we have the information. She said that if we don't have the information, the worst thing you can do is submit a preapplication and then come back in the application and say that we have to change our scope. Chairman Corbett stated that whatever they do from this point on as a Commission, he wants to do it the sense that even if this application process fails and we are not able to do it or we are able to do it from a year from now, that we still utilize what we have moving forward and it's not a waste of money or time. He said no matter what we do, we have money coming down as we mentioned in the American Recovery Act that actually can be used for this as well. Whatever we do, we need to plan for the future. Ben McGraw spoke and said that he has been working in contact with the Department of Defense trying to gather information for this grant so that the deadline and the July 12<sup>th</sup> deadline is the deadline for the preproposals. In that deadline, he said we need to present a project that can be ready to turn dirt or is ready to turn dirt after a year of the application. He said the application deadline for this is between September 16<sup>th</sup> and September 23<sup>rd</sup>, and that is after the proposal is rated by the committee at the Department of Defense and we are approved and invited to apply, then that year timeline starts. He said we are looking at having to turn dirt by September 2022. Commissioner Lee asked that this preapplication has to be done now, which is the main thing in selecting the firm? Mr. McGraw

agreed. Chairman Corbett asked the Commissioners to entertain an idea for him, since they have both companies here, he asked before we get a recommendation, he asked both companies if they would like to still be recommended or considered for this job, even with the RFQ stating it is a 12-month process. Tim Simpson with Barrett & Simpson said this grant is one he is very interested in it and it's a very substantial grant for Russell County. Mr. Simpson said when the RFQ came out, they put it in mind from an engineering perspective, that yes, they could make it. They have come up with two or three ideas of how they can best provide the sewer for the Fort Mitchell area. He thinks he can do it and can meet the application timeline of July 12<sup>th</sup> with a detailed, quick plan to show them to sign off on. He said he needs to get the information with the dollar amount and the schedule to the Lee Russell Council Government so they can meet their application deadline of the 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Simpson feels very confident they can do it and he understands that there is nothing that can be done past that point until September, when they are awarded the application grant. If the preapplication is approved from July 12<sup>th</sup> to September are waiting until that approval is approved to move forward with any kind of design, any future study or anything like that. Wheeler Crook with GMC Goodwyn Mills spoke next. Mr. Crook said that they have been looking at the qualifications proposals and they've built constructed sewer systems from scratch around the state, and they have a lot of experience in that arena. He said a concern he has is that they can meet deadlines, get costs estimates together, develop a plan but his concern is the long-term viability of the sewer system in Russell County and recognizing that they have to have ordinances in place, rates in place, and have operation maintenance cost that is covered at a real budget so that we know what it's doing to take to finance the sewer system. He said that they recognize that these funds are very important and it's something that we can meet a deadline. He said they can certainly work with Lee Russell and with Mr. Cross to get some cost assessments together and develop a true plan, but we also have to recognize that the grant's probably not going to cover everything. He says to look at the bigger picture in the long-term viability of sewer there, how do you change the ordinances to make sure people can connect, and how many customers you have so you can set your rates. He says being wise about the process is something that needs to be at the forefront. Chairman Corbett thanked both of them for their comments and these are some of the issues that he too has been dealing with the last week or two, and he knows the other Commissioners have as well. Question is, if somebody doesn't pay their bill, how do we go after that? That's the question he cannot get answered. Like what the rates would be, or where it's even going. There are so many questions, and he doesn't know how, if they select the firm today, how are we supposed to send them into action without telling them where we want to end the lines at. Are we going into one spot? Are we going into neighborhoods? Are we going down roads? There are so many questions that this Commission has to answer ahead of charging the engineering firm for doing the work. He thinks we will have to follow it up because he does not know exactly how we are going to it. Whether we are going to do that as soon as we approve an engineer firm today or if we are going to have a called meeting to talk about it because he doesn't have a clear picture of it yet. Ms. Sandt stated that she thinks the engineering report is going to help that process. She said not everything will be answered but at least where the line can go, what type of system, is it going to be a hybrid or traditional? That's what the engineer can help guide the Commission because there are a lot of questions. She said sewer has been talked about a long time and hopefully that's what's going to happen, and this is the first step. Looking at that grant, the defense grant, or other grants you have to have that report first to start it and to start the conversation and to see what the Commission wants to see for the future of Fort Mitchell. She thinks without the engineer report, nothing else can happen beyond that. She says until an engineer comes in and provide this guidance to the Commission of what they want to see with the sewer. Commissioner Lee stated that they have seen several, several proposals over the last 20 years and we should still have records of all of it, since they belong to us. He said they've talked about it for 22 years and nothing has been done. Commissioner Lee's question was, if they decide to go with it and they are awarded the grant, put in all the infrastructure, and then we decide we may want to privatize it or give it to someone else to manage or do something else, is that allowable? He said we've had proposals where Columbus /Fort Benning would process our sewage and proposals from Phenix City. He was just wondering if we could just turn it over to them. Chairman Corbett asked to hold that question for a second to allow Sheppard Deering to talk. Sheppard Deering, General Manager of the Russell County Sewer Authority and has been GM for about 3 years then before that for roughly 5 years was an engineering consultant to the Sewer and Water Authorities. Mr. Deering stated that he is very familiar with the past studies, and the study back from 2002 was actually before the BRAC realignment really took hold, so that study has some value. He said he thinks the

customer base for the Fort Mitchell Water Authority is probably doubled or tripled since that time, so the scope of that study does not really translate very well to today. He said it was picked up a couple of times and then put down with no action, maybe a simple grant map or an updated cost estimate, but nothing really detailed. Nothing like what they put together with Lisa and her staff with RFQ. The RFQ was published and sent out really took a detailed approach towards how we identify what is economically viable and have numerous options for the Commission to vote on, then once that vote took place, the process of going after the grant. That's where it really starts. Since that time there's been an understandable reason to push forward with the grant. He thinks the DOV representatives have encouraged it, Lee Russell has encouraged it, and certainly Mr. Cross and his Economic Development Team have encouraged it. Russell County Sewer Authority as GM and as he represents the board, said whatever the Commission tell them to do, they will not get in the way, and they will support it. Mr. Dearing said there are pros and cons. He said you have "proper planning prevents poor performance", then you also have "if you don't try, you will not get it." He said they understand the value of both of those and he says when you look at both of the proposals given by the engineers, you have two very different approaches on how this project would take place and how the study will get completed. He said both of them have submitted excellent proposals and he said the charge to the Commission is to determine what kind of timeline the Commission is trying to work within, and then determine what the best engineer would be for that process. Mr. Dearing said that is his recommendation from the Russell County Sewer Authority to the Commission, and he is there to help in any way. Chairman Corbett asked Lisa Sandt about the legality. Ms. Sandt stated they can look into the legality and look into some of the Commission's questions. She also thinks that, once again, going back to the engineering report, that is going to help with some legalities like what is feasible, what is allowable and if you have those questions about 15 or 20 years down the road, she said she can talk about that. She said, just like Sheppard, Lee Russell will do whatever the Commission tells them to do and gives them their charge, and so they are there to support the Commission, to help, get, and receive the funds in Fort Mitchell. She said that once again, the report is the first step because it will provide current information and facts to help move forward with the process. Chairman Corbett asked if Lisa or Ben have rated the RSQ's? And were the only ones involved or where others involved in that rating system. Ben McGraw stated that for the rating it was himself and Tracie Hadaway, the Planning and Economic Development Director. Chairman Corbett asked if they have shared the information with anybody yet, but he guesses so now. Chairman Corbett asked the Commissioners if they are asking them for a recommendation at this time with what is the plan. Commissioner Lee agreed. Mr. Ben McGraw stated that according to our scoring sheet, Lee Russell Council of Government's recommends Goodwyn Mills and Cawood for the feasibility study for sewer in Fort Mitchell. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the recommendation coming from Lee Russell Council. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. Chairman Corbett commented that they are basing this on a recommendation by our partner agency and contract with Lee Russell Council of Governments and he appreciates the work they have done on it. He stated that this is obviously a tough one for him because he has a lot of questions that he doesn't have answers. Call for vote was done by Interim County Administrator Paulette Colbert: District 3: Costello, yes. District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, no. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, no. Motion was passed 5 to 2.

Commissioner Reed commented that the sewer is really just for business and the county can make money. Once we get sewer into Fort Mitchell, on down the road they are looking at about 25 businesses that will come down there, and if you are not for progress you don't need to be on this Commission. He said that sewer is designed for, just like what he did in Ladonia. Mr. Jack Pezold ran the sewer line and then look at all the businesses that started coming out there. Chairman Corbett said that he doesn't think any of the Commissioners up there are against progress in this county. He appreciated his comments, and he hopes he is right. He doesn't think sewer is about making money, but he hopes he is right, and we get 25 businesses out of this. He really does. Commissioner Epps thanked Lee Russell Council along with Mr. Victor, who have been working on this project for a while. She thanked them for their work and the service they have put into it.

Chairman Corbett presented Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott with the Revenue Commission Final Settlement report. Ms. Elliott stated that each year she gives them an annual report for updates and litigations and each of the Commissioners should have a copy of it in their packets and then she requested that the Chair be allowed to sign the documents that she has to send to the state. Chairman Corbett stated that the Commissioners have the report

in front of them and hear the request by the Revenue Commissioner to allow the Chair to sign the report. Commissioner Epps motioned and seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

NAOMI ELLIOTT  
RUSSELL COUNTY REVENUE COMMISSIONER

2020/2021 TAX YEAR	
CHARGES	\$26,261,756.96
SUPPLEMENT	\$219,857.24
INTEREST	\$28,931.30
ESCAPES	\$3,969.52
<b>TOTAL CHARGES</b>	<b>\$26,514,615.02</b>
ERRORS	\$257,146.73
LITIGATIONS	\$13,246.37
INSOLVENT	\$1,709.96
LANDS SOLD TO STATE	\$2,892.93
REFUNDS	\$3,310.00
REFUNDS (PERSONAL PROPERTY)	
RETURNED CHECKS	
REFUND WRONG PAYMENT	
MILEAGE	
RF APPRAISAL BUDGET	
F PRAISAL BUDGET	\$933,144.62
PRO RATED WITHHOLDINGS	\$1,203,189.62
COMMISSIONS	\$896,949.74
REMITTANCES	\$24,136,169.67
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>\$26,514,615.02</b>
MANUFACTURED HOMES COUNTY GENERAL FUND	\$25,313.00
CO GENERAL FUND 8 MILL AD VALOREM	\$4,074,088.06
COMMISSION TO GEN FUND	\$838,661.08
FEES TO GEN FUND	\$17,585.00
<b>TOTAL TO GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$4,955,637.14</b>
<b>CO ROAD &amp; BRIDGE FUND 4 MILL AD VALOREM</b>	<b>\$1,996,894.74</b>
MANUFACTURED HOMES ACT NO. 2015 VOL. FIRE DEPT	\$56,350.00
AD VALOREM ACT NO. 2015 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT	\$490,200.00
<b>AL ACT NO. 2015 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT</b>	<b>\$546,550.00</b>

**INSOLVENTS, ERRORS AND TAXES IN LITIGATION FOR 2020 AND  
UNCOLLECTED INSOLVENTS AND TAXES IN LITIGATION FOR PREVIOUS YEAR(S)**

THE STATE OF ALABAMA  
Russell County County

BE IT REMEMBERED, That at the meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of said County, held on this 9th day of JUNE, 20 21, Naomi Elliott, Tax Collector of said County, made his report of "Insolvents", "Errors in Assessment" and "Taxes in Litigation" on taxes for the current year 2020, as required by Code of Ala. 1975, Section 40-5-23. And after a careful and rigid examination of said reports by said Board, it was considered and adjudged that said collector be allowed credit on his final settlement with the Comptroller for the following amounts:

Insolvents: State Taxes-- General.....	\$	898.10
-- Soldier.....	\$	830.21
-- School.....	\$	8117.72
Errors in Assessments: State Taxes-- General.....	\$	812,367.90
-- Soldier.....	\$	81,017.18
-- School.....	\$	811,813.18
Taxes in Litigation: State Taxes-- General.....	\$	8329.75
-- Soldier.....	\$	8211.93
-- School.....	\$	8833.50

And said Collector has also made his report for final allowance of the uncollected balances of Insolvent Taxes for the previous year 2019, as required by Code of Ala. 1975, Section 40-5-29; and the Board thereupon made the following allowances to said Collector of such Insolvent Taxes as he may have been unable to collect, as follows:

State Taxes-- General.....	\$	839.65
2019    -- Soldier.....	\$	815.86
-- School.....	\$	817.58

And said Collector is also allowed credit for the following taxes in litigation for the previous year(s) which he has been unable to collect as follows:

	General	Soldier	School
Tax Years 1989-2012	\$ 3,903.50	\$ 1,561.40	\$ 1,681.20
Tax Year 2015	\$ 26.35	\$ 10.62	\$ 31.88
Tax Year 2018	\$ 6.15	\$ 2.46	\$ 7.38
Tax Year 2019	\$ 87.3	\$ 34.92	\$ 191.76

Given under my hand this 9th day of JUNE, 20 21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer

See Code of Ala. 1975 Sections 40-5-23, 40-5-24, and 40-5-25 as to taxes of current year and Sections 40-5-26, 40-5-28 and 40-5-29 as to insolvent taxes and taxes in litigation of previous year(s).

Chairman Corbett presented the update on the Emergency Management Director search process. He stated that they currently have a vacancy in the emergency management program as the director's position. It is important and they did not have a work session to prepare for this meeting today, so he brought it to see the pleasure of the Commission, and he probably should have put it under Discussion instead of Business. He asked if the Commission wants to begin the search now or do they want to bring it back to a work session on June 21<sup>st</sup>? Commissioner Lee stated that they are not in a hurry. Chairman Corbett said that we have Mr. Martin as an interim. Commissioner Lee stated that he would rather have it at a work session so they can talk freely without being proper. Motioned to postpone by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented the ADECA Grant award agreement letter. He said as he shared with them in an email and info is in their packets on the ADECA Grant that we applied for using some COVID-19 CARES Act money. It requires a signature by the Chair accepting the grant. He said some of the positive things that have come out of it will be the ability to set up clinics in our community at a moment's notice, whether it is in Phenix City or as far out as Hurtsboro and other areas. He said that we did not really have the capability in the past, but it also comes with some relief for our citizens where they will be able to apply through a nonprofit for utility and rental assistance, as well. He thinks it was a very good application and it also includes things like the generator at the Health Department and the freezer, so he thinks it was a very good plan. He stated all of the Commissioners they are very familiar with it because it was brought to them when we applied for it and we just need to follow this up and sign it. Commissioner Costello motioned to allow the Chair to sign the grant for the board. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. Commissioner Screws asked what the cost was? Chairman Corbett



said it is \$500,000. Clarification, it did not cost us anything, but the award is \$500,000 and was a zero-match grant, as well. Ben (McGraw) has the documents, and it is waiting the Chairman's signature. Commissioner Screws verified that there is no match. It was agreed that there is no match. Chairman Corbett agreed that this is good money that we can use the right way for the county. Commissioner Corbett said that they spoke about the generator and stuff like that with the money, so were those projects earmarked out of this money? Chairman Corbett believed that they were with the final project. Chairman Corbett agreed that they were unable to store and meet the storing the Pfizer vaccine and other vaccines, and for future pandemics that we may have in this county. Commissioner Screws asked for the freezer and stuff? Chairman Corbett agreed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

#### **COUNTY ENGINEER:**

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated he had nothing to present. Chairman Corbett stated that he appreciates all of the work he's doing and that we've had a lot of rain lately, and he himself has been on the phone with a lot of projects so he appreciates all they have done.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR:**

Interim County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the 2021 Annual Football Guide Magazine advertisement request. Ms. Colbert stated that last year the County Commission purchased a full page inside advertisement in The Citizen of East Alabama Football Magazine and a copy of the ad is in their packets. She asked if they would like to renew it, she is asking their pleasure. Commissioner Lee moved to do it but he said we might want to change the ad some since it's pretty generic. Commissioner Lee stated he dealt with this last year and it was an election year and was asked to not put Commissioner's names in there because it could be considered a political ad, so they just stayed away from it. Chairman Corbett said she called him yesterday about this and asked if she can be contacted back when they are done. Seconded the motion by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

#### **COUNTY ATTORNEY:**

County Attorney Hope Hicks stated that she does not have an Executive Session request anymore and it can be taken off of the agenda. Ms. Hicks added that she gave them all a copy of the Executive Summary of the American Recovery Act so that they could look at it and maybe we could go ahead and start having some conversations in a work session about what they can legally use the 11.2 million dollars on. She appreciates that there will be citizen groups and she's gotten calls from other people saying they would like all 11 million dollars, but she thinks we need to spend some time talking about legally what they can and cannot do. Commissioner Lee asked if she would be prepared in 2 weeks to go over all of that with the Commission? Ms. Hicks said that she is prepared today. Commissioner Lee suggested to do it in their next work session, and we start it at 4 o'clock instead of 5 o'clock and to have an extra hour. Ms. Hicks said it was an excellent idea and she could absolutely talk with them and answer any questions even before then. Commissioner Lee said that they'd need to get an overview before they could ask questions because it looks like a lot of legal reading stuff to him. Ms. Hicks said it's super exciting and it'll keep you up at night, she promises. Chairman Corbett said that the Vice-Chair has been reading his notes up here while he's talking because they got here early, at 4:00 pm. Ms. Hicks reaffirmed that she could meet at the work session and talk about it. Chairman Corbett said that Commissioner Lee stated, and we need to make notice because this will be a public meeting. They will begin the work session at 4:00 pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> in the Commission Chambers and it is open to the public. Chairman Corbett thanked Ms. Hicks for all of her help.

#### **COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Corbett presented Max Herring receiving his certificate last week (for Local Government Professional Management Certificate Program through the ACCMA), because Max has done a lot of work on this, and he is very proud of him.

Chairman Corbett mentioned that yesterday was a holiday and he wanted to thank Ms. Colbert and Mr. Watson for the work they did. A Holiday Closure sign was placed when you came into the parking lot telling people (of the closure) so people were not getting out of their vehicles and coming to the door on such an odd holiday, and to get upset to realize the courthouse was closed. They probably were still upset when they saw the sign, but at least did not have to come all the way to the door and see a little sign on the door. He stated that hopefully this is something we can continue to do in the future.

Chairman Corbett stated that he mentioned a little earlier that he had a note about the American Recovery Act. He mentioned the amount and wanted to make sure we get it in the minutes as well.

Chairman Corbett also mention that Bill Friend stated his last day in the county will be September 3<sup>rd</sup> . He said that Bill has done a great job for this county with our licenses and nuisance complaints, and that we really appreciate what he is doing.

Chairman Corbett spoke about the microphones, and that he asked Ms. Colbert (they filled out a request) to put five microphones on the front row for the department heads that speak the most in our meetings. Then his proposal was to put 2 microphones on both sides of the room, on the steps, so if you have an item to speak to that you can just get up and come to one side of the room and speak to the microphone. That is what he will go with unless he gets some feedback otherwise.

Announcements were made.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Lee. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Administrator

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair