

The Russell County Commission
 Russell County Commission Chambers
 Meeting Minutes August 26, 2020
 9:30 A.M. EDT

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

Chairman Lee welcomed everyone for their attendance.

The invocation was given by Commissioner Martin.

Commissioner Peggy Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Lee requested approval of the August 12, 2020 Commission Minutes. Commissioner Martin motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Sheriff Heath Taylor stated: We have a liquor license that has been applied for. It is a new license for Sam's Package Store, 802 Hwy 165 South, Fort Mitchell. We have done our survey and we do not have any issues with the Commission issuing them a permit.

Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Sheriff Heath Taylor stated: The Jail food bid is coming up. I request County Administrator Horne to send out the food bid around the 28th of August and open the bids in the Commission Chamber at 3:00 p.m. on the 17th of September.

Commissioner Martin motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Economic Development & Tourism Director Victor Cross stated: Shaun Culligan has some information he would like to present to the Commission, and I would like to go on record that I am supporting this effort.

Shaun Culligan stated: I am here today on behalf of a new manufacturer in Russell County to request a tax abatement. I put together a package of project details and I will go through it. The name of the company is Arbor Vita8, LLC. They are an Alabama licensed hemp processor and licensed hemp grower. They have purchased a 75,000 square foot building adjacent to JVL Laboratories on Opelika Road. They will be upgrading and installing over 2.3 million of new equipment for the drying, processing, and extraction of hemp. The company's total investment is \$3,471,500. The total employment for the first shift will be 14 employees.

Four of those employees will be Business Officers or Upper Management. Their salaries are quite substantial. They are \$150,000-\$200,000. They are also having 2 engineers and 8 hourly employees. They are committing to an entry wage of \$15 to \$20 an hour, with average wage of \$50,000 to \$70,000 a year. Commissioner Reed stated: How many employees are there? Shaun stated: 14 total employees the first year. Part of the conversation on Monday at the Work Session was concerning that they are purchasing an existing building and because of that there has been some existing property tax paid on that building over some years. We discussed the possibility of their continuing to pay the property tax they have been paying over the years, abating the increase after the improvements and the completion of the building.

Our conversation with the Alabama Department of Revenue based on their assessment of it and the state statute we are not allowed just to abate the increase. What I did is I put down what their

taxes were in 2020 to give the Commission an idea of what we would be talking about if the Commission decides to consent to this. To be honest, the tax numbers were a lot better than I expected. In 2020, based on the GIS, they paid \$4,194 in property tax in 2020. Approximately, the County's portion of that is about \$845 a year.

If the Commission decides to move forward with the continuing of the property taxes, it is a five-year abatement. The County investment will essentially be \$4,225 over a five-year period. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Chairman Lee. Commissioner Corbett stated: That is not a lot of money. We are gaining several jobs and with management making over \$150,000 a year, this is huge for our area. I am not big on wanting to do a lot of abatements, and I feel like the ones that we need to do are to create jobs. This is not a business that is competing with any other business that does this type of service. I don't want to abate one that could potentially put another one out of business. These would be new jobs in the area, and I think that is a very small investment on the County's side.

Chairman Lee stated: This could be a potential benefit not only for this Company but for local farmers. This is a new product CBD oil, and this company will take in the raw product, extract, and produce this oil. Commissioner Martin stated: Basically, I want to know what the County will receive from this. Shaun stated: Is there a con to this such as pros and cons? In my honest opinion there is no con, it is brand new jobs. Shaun stated: What the County will receive in (5) years will not be receiving anything. After the five-year period, when the abatement comes off, the County will be receiving 100% of the property tax on the building and any improvements to the building. Commissioner Epps asked: Will this company bring in their own employees, or are they going to hire employees locally? Shawn answered I would imagine some of the Officers that are with the company will be joining this local business; that is my assessment. Administrator Horne polled the Commission: District 1 Lee, yes; District 3 Martin, yes; District 4 Reed, no; District 5 Epps, yes; District 6 Corbett, yes; District 7 Screws; yes. Motion carried.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: I would like the Commissioners to approve the 2020-2021 Transportation Plan of the new gas tax we have. There is a copy in your packets; a copy of the plan and a map that we have to get approved so we can forward to ACCA. ACCA will post on their website. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: I am requesting budget transfers.

Reduce Line Item No. 212 Fuel & Lubricant \$26,200.00
 Increase Line Item No. 123 Life Insurance \$3,100.00
 Increase Line Item No. 228 Uniform Rental \$1,000.00
 Increase Line Item No. 251 Telephone \$100.00
 Increase Line Item No. 550 Motor Vehicles \$22,000.00

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: We opened bids in the Commission Chamber on August 19 for our Federal Aide Exchange fund money that we received this year. I would like for the Commission to approve the award and have the Commission Chairman to sign the contract. This fund money is for Fort Davis and Tuskegee Highways. East Alabama was the only bidder. Their bid was \$299,967.07. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: We opened bids for the CRAF Project also on August 19th in the Commission Chamber. East Alabama was the only bidder. I would like to get it awarded to East Alabama by the County Commission. It is for Lasso Loop in the Ladonia area for \$79,332.40. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Martin. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: I would like to request for the Commission to give me permission to approve surplus equipment so we can sell at the JMWood Auction on September 22nd-25th. It will be a 2008 Doosan excavator, 2008 Cat motor grader and a 2005 Komatsu excavator. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: I am asking approval from the Commission to purchase a 2020 Volvo EC220E excavator. This excavator is off our ACCA county joint bid for \$165,756.04. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: I also would like to request to purchase off the ALDOT Equipment Bureau from their surplus items. It is a 2015 Chevrolet Silverado, 4X4. It has 64,241 miles on it. The price is \$20,305.00. Commissioner Screws motioned for this purchase. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Epps stated: I make a motion to get a Facebook page for Russell County and find someone to operate it. Commissioner Martin seconded. Commissioner Corbett stated: What you are asking is we use the Facebook live. I think it is a good idea. We have a great partner in CTV Beam. They televise our meetings but the people who are farther out they cannot receive their service. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne stated: I would like to schedule the county budget review meeting following the Commission meeting on September 9th. Generally, we take a brief recess and come back to our public budget agenda and continue the next day, September 10th, or whatever date works with everyone's calendars. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne stated: The next item Employee Service Resolution I request to take up in Executive Session. I have conferred with the County Attorney and he indicated to me it meets the criteria.

Chairman Lee stated: County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk presented a letter to request an Executive Session. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Announcements were made.

Commissioner Lee recessed the Commission to go into Executive Session.

Upon return to the Commission Chambers, Chair Lee stated: Is there a motion to reconvene? Motion made by Commissioner Screws. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The Commission was back in session.

County Attorney Funderburk stated: I would recommend the County to adopt the Resolution to provide county employees the Tier 1 benefits to Tier 2 plan members. Chairman Lee stated: This will give all Tier 2 members the same benefits as Tier 1 employees. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. County Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

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

**August
2020 Checks**

General Fund 001				
18134	08-04-20	Go Georgia Arts	41250 018	\$500.00
18135	08-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$415,974.27
18136	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$167,412.57
18137	08-10-20	David M. Boozer, Jr.	52100 122	\$211.00
18138	08-12-20	Intersecure Tech	41250 018	\$947.00
18139	08-13-20	Jody Sellers	51910 322	\$6,000.00
18140	08-13-20	Russell County Circuit Clerk	51910 219	\$88.10

18141	08-14-20	Road and Bridge Fund	51910 322	\$6,000.00
18143	08-21-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$333,813.45
18144	08-21-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$179,592.77
18145	08-21-20	Russell County Volunteer Fire Department Association	3040	\$400.00
18146	08-21-20	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama	52100 122	\$1,316.78
18147	08-21-20	Gasoline Tax Fund	62126 299	\$50,000.00
18148	08-28-20	Sheriff of Russell County	52200 499	\$34,616.00
18149	08-28-20	Capital Improvement Fund	47000 000	\$88,429.46
		Contingent Fund 002		
		Ft. Mitchell Senior Center 103		
		Masonic Lodge Fund 104		
1188	08-10-20	Pine Hollow	51100 499	\$320.00
1189	08-12-20	Baby Boy Tree Service	51100 239	\$150.00
1190	08-12-20	Michelle Folds	51100 239	\$200.00
1191	08-21-20	Joel Jones	51100 239	\$250.00
		Court Cost Fund 105		
		Gasoline Tax 111 Fund		
13751	08-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$92,881.51
13752	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$33,089.57
13753	08-14-20	Rebuild Alabama PGB	3040	\$56,552.53
13754	08-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$75,214.55
13755	08-21-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$24,486.40
		Road & Bridge 112		
1425	08-05-20	Richard E. Thomas	51100 304	\$525.00
1426	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$24,620.32
1427	08-13-20	Alabama Department of Revenue	51100 550	\$72.75
1428	08-21-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$1,795.00
1429	08-21-20	Gasoline Tax Fund	62109 299	\$200,000.00
1430	08-21-20	Gasoline Tax Fund	62108 299	\$160,000.00
1432	08-28-20	Warrant Interest Payment	62125 299	\$784.83
1433	08-28-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$2,110.26
1434	08-31-20	Alabama Department of Revenue	51100 550	\$24.25

		Capital Imp. Fund 116		
319	08-21-18	Gasoline Tax Fund	62110 299	\$162,000.00
		RRR Gasoline Tax 117		
1216	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$139,344.41
		Mineral Fund 119		
1019	08-21-20	Gasoline Tax Fund	62107 299	\$25,000.00
		Reappraisal 120		
2332	08-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$25,730.02
2333	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$411.96
2334	08-19-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$21,197.00
2335	08-21-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$4,402.29
		Juvenile DRUG 195		
1291	08-01-20	Tommy Powell	56900 199	\$895.71
1292	08-16-20	Tommy Powell	56900 199	\$895.71
		REBUILD ALABAMA FUND 220		
		Sanitation Fund 511		
1718	08-05-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$70,613.32
1719	08-07-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$13,880.67
1720	08-19-20	Payroll Fund PG Bank	3030	\$53,293.41
1721	08-21-20	Operations Fund, P.G. Bank of P.C.	3020	\$53,113.77
1722	08-25-20	Postmaster	54100 252	\$2,703.50
61211	08-25-20	Mattie Mae Jones	45411 740	\$51.50
61212	08-25-20	Anthony Thomas Bell	45411 740	\$37.50
61213	08-25-20	Georgia Sanks-Hinton	45411 740	\$21.70
61214	08-25-20	Samantha Seymour	45411 740	\$20.00
61215	08-25-20	Clifford C. Elliott, Jr.	45411 740	\$17.50
61216	08-25-20	Ashley Kittrell	45411 740	\$40.00
61217	08-25-20	Phillip McDonald	45411 740	\$20.00
61218	08-25-20	Frankie Mae Benton	45411 740	\$35.00
61219	08-25-20	Elliot Whitehead	45411 740	\$20.00
61220	08-25-20	Randall Kisner	45411 740	\$80.00
61221	08-25-20	Kimberly Ward	45411 740	\$17.50
61222	08-25-20	Tim Bowden	45411 740	\$10.00
61223	08-25-20	Wendcentral Corp-Wendy's	45411 740	\$35.00

		Garbage Escrow Fund 513		
0037	08-05-25	Garbage Fund PG Bank	3040	\$226.38
		Donation Fund 750		
492	08-21-20	Gasoline Tax Fund	62106 299	\$15,000.00
		Law Library 755		
1116	08-05-20	RELX, Inc. dba LexisNexis	51100 499	\$462.00
1117	08-10-20	Malone's Office	51100 233	\$129.98
1118	08-21-20	Linda Wilson	51100 499	\$270.00
1119	08-21-20	Catherine Lipscomb	51100 499	\$270.00
		Worthless Check 761		
531	08-10-20	Worthless Check Unit Office of District Attorney	51260 362 51260 365	\$2,437.08 \$1,312.26
		MV TECHNOLOGY		
091	07-22-20	S&W Minicomputers, Inc.	51600 499	\$5,700.00
		Revenue Commissioner Manufactured Fund 781		
		Motor Vehicle Special Fund 782		
		Land Redemption Fund 786		
797	08-12-20	Naomi Elliott, Revenue Comm.	3040	\$1,825.61
798	08-28-20	Naomi Elliott, Revenue Comm.	3040	\$11,622.05
799	08-28-20	Naomi Elliott, Revenue Comm.	3040	\$199.52
		Juvenile Service Fund 787		
2294	08-05-20	Wal-mart	52600 499	\$13.99
2295	08-17-20	Hotel Indigo	52600 499	\$565.00
2296	08-17-20	Verizon	52600 499	\$133.18
		County Tobacco Fund 797		
536	08-14-20	Russell County Volunteer Fire Department Association	3040	\$48,004.32
537	08-14-20	Project Greene Light	3040	\$1,263.27
538	08-14-20	Task Force for Senior Citizens	3040	\$1,263.27

		County Beer Tax 798		
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Attest: _____

County Administrator

Signed: _____

Chair