

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2017
9:30 A.M. EST

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order, by Chair Peggy Martin.

The invocation was given by Rev. Steve Reneau, Pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Martin.

Chair Martin thanked the Cable T.V. of East Alabama and the Citizen of East Alabama for their coverage of the Commission meeting. She also welcomed elected officials, department heads, media and guests.

The Commission roll was called. Members present were: Gentry Lee, Carl Currington, Peggy Martin, Ronnie Reed, Cattie Epps, Chance Corbett and Larry Screws. Also present was the County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk and County Administrator LeAnn Horne, who kept the minutes.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the December 28th, 2016 meeting minutes. Commissioner Currington motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

Extension Office Director Jennifer Davidson presented a video about 4-H camp.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney discussed the closure of Firetower Road to Through Truck traffic. The closure will affect Old Seale Hwy to Oswichee Road, to Howard Road to Firetower Road to 165. Truck Traffic will be moved to County Road 4. The reason for closure is because the road is narrow and curvy for trucks that speed down this road. Message boards have been placed, but permanent signs will be placed by Friday January 13th and closed. The road will be monitored by the Sheriff's Department for the next few weeks and only warnings will be given during that time.

Shawn Blakeney stated the ACCA wanted to introduce the ATRIP Bond, which is a legislative bill that the ACCA will propose at the 2017 Legislative Session. This is a 15 year bond that the counties are doing to raise money for the highway departments for roads and bridges. This must follow the Senate Bill 180 passed in the 2016 Legislative Session that this money is designated for roads and bridges only. The bond proposal will be a \$.03 increase on gasoline tax for the next 15 years. After 15 years the tax will be reduced to the current gasoline tax amount. The tax is just to pay back the bond. If the legislation is approved, Russell County would receive approximately 16.1 million dollars. 20% of that would have to go to municipalities in Russell County and will be based on population size. That would be about 13 million dollars which would be approximately 100 to 150 miles of road that could be resurfaced over the next 35 years. All projects would be bid at county level and drawn at county level. Therefore, projects would not have to go through ALDOT and the funds received would not have to be used for only Federal Aid routes. It could be used for any paved road inside the county. A draft resolution for support of this bill was distributed at Monday night's work session. A community meeting should be scheduled to explain the purpose of this legislation and to keep the citizens updated.

Commissioner Corbett requested Mr. Blakeney to set the community meeting Thursday, February 23rd at 6:30 P.M. at the Old Seale Courthouse. Mr. Blakeney agreed to set the meeting as requested.

The Commission discussed approving the support resolution today rather than wait for another meeting. Attorney Funderburk reviewed the draft resolution and declared it was valid for Commission approval. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the resolution seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

Chief Alexander from the Sheriff's Department requested approval to let bids for the Jail's Annual Food Bid. He would like it to be held January 30, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

Chief Alexander presented a 160 - Special Retail - More Than 30 Days Alcohol License Application for Dogwood Farms LLC located at 48 McGee Road, Seale, Alabama is owned by Vladislav Vladimir Saveljevs, Anatasia Dominique Saveljevs, who reside at 52 McGee Road, Seale, Alabama and Marilyn Sue Pelfrey, who resides at 1505 Co. Road 72 Hanceville, Alabama. This is an event venue rented for weddings, anniversary parties, etc. Chief Alexander stated he did not find a reason not to approve an alcohol license for Dogwood Farms. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve the license and was seconded by Commissioner Currington. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws motioned to have the County Attorney to write a letter to the Sewer Authority requesting the following information:

- Where do the sewer lines begin and end, street and how long is the line?
- How many customers are on the line?
- Date customers were connected to the sewer line.
- Name of customers along with the batch number.
- How much are the tap fees?
- Who collects the tap fees?
- Who is responsible for setting the taps?
- Are there customer records and who maintains those?
- Who is responsible for maintaining the system?

- Does the system have equipment and what type?

Commissioner Screws also requested that since he has used layman's terms to allow the County Attorney to change or add to the questions outlined today so they will be legal and without problems as it is submitted to the Sewer Authority. He also requested that the questions brought back to the Commission by February 6th.

Attorney Funderburk asked Commissioner Screws to clarify if he wanted the letter be brought back to the Commission before he send it to the Sewer Authority.

Commissioner Screws responded that the answers be returned to the Commission by February 6th.

Commissioner Reed seconded Commissioner Screw's motion.

Commissioner Lee stated he did not have a problem with this information, but this is information that could have easily been obtained by going to the Sewer Authority and asking for it, he hoped. He did not see anything wrong with the report being given to the Commission. A report probably should be given annually to the Commission.

Commissioner Corbett agreed an annual report would be good.

Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Sanitation Director Wanda Hardie discussed request for a rate increase during April 2015 for \$2.50. Only \$1.50 of that amount was approved. Due to Mr. Currington's leave of absence the additional \$1.00 was not addressed during 2016-2017 Budget Sessions. This increase will help the overall operation of sanitation system. Before the 2015 rate increase there had not been an increase in sanitation fees for 8 years. To remain current or level with cost of conducting business, the department is requesting the additional \$1.00 to the monthly sanitation fee. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

Commissioner Corbett stated he was not opposed to the additional \$1.00 but was opposed to the timing of the request. The County is half way through the fiscal budget. We approved the budget based on the \$1.50 and although Mr. Currington was on leave, the Commission should have seen something saying that money was needed. There are several increases about to happen including taxes and the monthly water fees. Commissioner Corbett wanted to see this office live within its means until the end of the Fiscal year.

More discussion took place.

Administrator Horne asked if approved today when Mrs. Hardie would want the fee to begin? Mrs. Hardie said she would be willing to wait until April, 2017.

Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1(Lee) voted, no; District 2 (Currington) voted, yes; District 3 (Martin) voted, yes; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6 (Corbett) voted, no; District 7(Screws) voted, yes. 5 yes votes and 2 no votes, the motioned passed.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk recommended The Commission move into executive session to discuss a matter dealing with real-estate and an emergency matter that is covered under the rules of executive session. He said that the Commission may need to vote on the matter.

Commissioner Screws motioned to move into executive session. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Six (6) Commissioners returned from the executive session. Commissioner Corbett was absent. Commissioner Screws motioned to reconvene and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

The meeting was adjourned.