

The Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
9:30 A.M. EDT

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

The invocation was given by Dr. Robert Dickerson, Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Pugh.

A public comment was made by Hurtsboro Mayor Vivian Covington, who thanked the Commission for their support of the County Road 49 project. She also announced that the Tuskegee Federal Credit Union will open at the old Auburn Bank location.

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

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

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Larry Kite submitted an updated Official Russell County Highway Map. Based on some discrepancies there will be additional research concerning changes to the map which will be brought back to the Commission for review and possibly approved. 1996 was the last official map. This map will be available only for the Commission to review until a revised map is approved.

Larry Kite gave an update on the ATRIP projects. He also announced a website called [drivealabama.org](http://drivealabama.org) which was created to bring awareness of infrastructure needs of roads and bridges in the state.

Building Inspector Greg Smith discussed a problem with the Ambulance Building Project, which does not have enough water resource to supply the required fire sprinkler system. A solution or this issue is to install a 900 gallon holding tank with a booster pump which will provide required 30 minute water supply of 1,260 gallons of water. The total cost of the change order is \$7,139 and will include installation, purchase of equipment. Mr. Lancour, Hosey –Lancour Construction, LLC and Mr. Judah of Pro-Teck Sprinkler System are both waiving their 15% overhead to off-set the unforeseen

expense. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Larry Kite presented a funding agreement for the ATRIP project of resurfacing Auburn Road in Phenix City. Portions of Auburn Road lie within the City's jurisdiction. Mr. Kite requested approval of the agreement and the Chair and County Administrator authorized to sign documents. The total project cost is \$467,640. ATRIP funding is \$374,112, the county's funding portion \$70,146 with the City's contribution being \$23,382. The county's funding portion falls under the estimated cost and was included in the 2015-2016 budget. Commissioner Pugh motioned to have the Chair sign the agreement. Seconded by Commissioner Epps.

Commissioner Lee asked why there is a difference in the County and City's portion of the funding. Mr. Kite said that represents the prorated portion of Auburn Road that is within the County's maintenance jurisdiction. Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Sheriff Taylor presented the Starz Bar and Lounge application for 010-Lounge Retail Liquor – Class 1 License. The business is located in the Old Hawaiian Tiki Bar and Lounge, at 1095 Hwy 165A, Fort Mitchell and is owned by Andre Sabrice Johnson of the ASJ Group LLC. The study for application is complete and Sheriff Taylor finds no reason not to approve application for the License. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve the application and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett discussed the Crawford Park/Historic Tuckabatchee Lodge project which is nearing completion. Grants applications have been submitted to help fund the project. The Wire Grass RC&D has awarded the project \$4,000 as well as a matching grant from a playground company, J.A. Dawson, for the amount of \$16,953.08. Funding for the project is also coming from funding events at Crawford Park. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve the purchase for the playground equipment from J.A. Dawson. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. Administrator Horne noted that J.A. Dawson is approved by examiners thru a purchasing cooperative, U.S. Communities and J.A. Dawson is located in the State of Alabama with current business and required licenses. Administrator Horne polled the Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett also discussed procedures for selections of demolition contracts for nuisance/land abatements. He received an inquiry from a demolition vendor about how those contracts are awarded. This vendor stated that his company is never contracted to provide services for land abatements and suggested the procedure for awarding those contracts change. Commissioner Corbett stated that he has no doubt about the employees in the Special Enforcement Department are trustworthy and are doing their jobs correctly. Work contracted for land abatements never exceeds bid requirements, which is anything over \$15,000. The average the County pays for demolition service is \$2,500 to \$3,000. However, since a vendor is questioning the

procedure Commissioner Corbett motioned that future bids be brought in, sealed and turned in by a certain time as stated on the bid. Seconded by Commissioner Lee, but requested to amend this motion to include accepts sealed bids for 1 year to see if this would cause any problems.

Discussion took place. It was stated that the estimates taken are open public records and any vendor who questions whether or not he had the lowest estimate could go to the Special Enforcement Office to review those records. Commissioner Epps motioned to table sealed bids. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. District 1(Lee) voted, no; District 2 (Pugh) voted, yes; District 3 (Martin) voted, no; District 4 (Reed) voted, yes; District 5 (Epps) voted, yes; District 6(Corbett) voted, no; District 7(Screws) voted, yes. 4 yes votes and 3 no votes; the motion to table passed. Commissioner Screws requested that the Administrator get with the Department Head to clear up any discrepancies and report back to the Commission.

Recreation Director Bill Taylor requested a salary schedule change. Previously, he requested and was approved to combine 2 seasonal positions into 1 full time position with benefits, that position being a Parks and Recreation Tech 2. He asked for a salary range to change for a Grade 7 step 1 for \$12.97 to Grade 7, Step 5 for \$14.60 an hour. This will not require additional money in the budget but transfer money into benefits as follows:

Decrease	Line 113	Salaries	\$6,175.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,175.00</b>
Increase	Line 121	Retirement	\$2,318.00
Increase	Line 122	Health	\$3,843.00
Increase	Line 123	Life	\$14.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,175.00</b>

Commissioner Screws motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Epps.

Commissioner Lee acknowledged voting for the new position, but disagree with bringing a new employee at a Grade 7 Step 5 which is almost the same salary as employees who have been working in the Parks and Recreation Department for years.

Commissioner Corbett discussed his question about this salary change when Mr. Taylor first brought it up. Commissioner Corbett asked if this position would be making more than the other employees who had already been in the department and was assured the new employee wouldn't be, but it would be close. After much thought, Commissioner Corbett did not it was appropriate at this time to adjust the salary before there was even a candidate to hire. The county could possibly hire someone with no experience and give them the same salary as current employees. If Mr. Taylor hires someone with experience and request added funding based on experience or additional education, then Commissioner Corbett stated he would entertain the idea. At this time he stated that it should start at the beginning and if there is a reason to move the salary up then move it up.

Commissioner Reed disagreed with Commissioner Corbett and stated that we don't do that to other department heads.

Commissioner Lee reminded Commissioner Reed that when a new position is created regardless of which department it is, that is not elected; it does come before the Commission and is discussed. If an existing vacant position and the department head was just filling a slot, it would not be brought to the Commission for review or approval. This is a new position and a new salary and actually since we are advertising for this salary, it should be a salary range, not a salary. The Commission should be approving a range from a step 1 to step 5. Then when someone is hired for the position, depending on their experience, decide where within that range they will go.

Commissioner Pugh stated that if he understood the motion correctly, I cannot support putting in a certain salary. I can support the range and letting everybody qualify and let it go through the process with our HR person, Ms. Robinson and then recommendations come back after all application requirements are satisfied. As far as setting a slot now I'm not comfortable with, but a range I'm ok with and would support a motion on that.

More discussion took place. Commissioner Corbett cleared up that Mr. Taylor had not chosen anyone yet for the position or was trying to set a salary for someone. He was only trying to set a salary for whoever fills the position. A salary range should be set instead of a salary. Mr. Taylor came back and offered the recommendation of the salary range Grade 7 step 1 through Grade 7 step 5. The motion was amended by Commissioner Screws to approve the recommended salary range from Grade 7 Step 1, which carries a \$12.97 through Grade 7 Step 5, which carries \$14.60. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous. Administrator Horne also noted this will be adjusted on the job announcement as well as inserting the word "inmates" for the supervision requirement.

Administrator Horne announced Veteran's Day will fall on an official County Commission meeting will the Commission please state their pleasure, whether to reschedule the meeting that falls on the Veteran's day holiday or cancel the meeting and only have one meeting in November which is the day before Thanksgiving, November 25<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Pugh motioned to cancel the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Screws. The vote was unanimous.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk recommended moving into an executive session to discuss two matters: economic development and an audit problem. Neither may require action.

Commissioner Lee asked if a personnel matter could be taken up during the session and be legal?

Attorney Funderburk said that it could be covered.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to go into executive session. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin made announcements before convening into the executive session.

Commissioner Pugh motioned to reconvene the meeting and seconded. The vote to continue the meeting was unanimous.

Attorney Funderburk recommended to write a letter to ask for an extension for Cole Phillip's Trailer Park located at 966 Hwy 165. On the behalf of the County request the Health Department to grant a compliance of approximately 12 months to the County to do proper studies regarding the installation of a sewer package system. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Epps. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Pugh motioned to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.