

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2019
9:30 A.M. EST

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

Reverend Mark Waldrop with Epworth United Methodist Church gave the invocation.

Commissioner Currington led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott stated: As a member of the Russell County Historical Commission I just want to thank all of you for your support for the Historical Commission and especially at Ft. Mitchell. We would not be able to do some of the things we are doing if it were not for your support there. I want to introduce you to Dell McLendon, the Director of Operations at the Ft. Mitchell Historic Site.

Dell McLendon Director of Operations at the Ft. Mitchell Historic Site stated: I want to tell everyone I am excited about this position and working with Ft. Mitchell and helping continue it to grow. We want to thank everyone in the Commission for your support.

Citizens Darrell Grissom and his mother Mary Grissom who live on 14 Grissom Lane asked the Commission to help with maintenance of a road that Darrell Grissom cut in on Mary Grissom's land. Commissioner Epps stated: Grissom Road is a private road Commissioner Corbett explained it is against the law for the County Engineering Department to maintain a private road.

Chair Martin thanked Cable T.V. of East Alabama and the Citizen of East Alabama for their coverage of the Commission Meetings. She also welcomed Elected Officials, Department Heads, Media and Guests.

Assistant County Administrator Vicky Perry established a quorum. Members present were; Chair Peggy Martin, Vice Chair Cattie Epps, Gentry Lee, Carl Currington, Ronnie Reed, Chance Corbett and Larry Screws. Also, present was the County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk. County Administrator Horne was at a business conference.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Martin requested approval of the April 10, 2019 Minutes. Commissioner Currington motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Martin. The vote was approved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Commissioner Corbett stated: I just want to give an update to the Commission and the public as well, we are moving along very fast with the Old Russell County Courthouse in Seale. For the last three to four weeks the restroom area has been blocked off because we are renovating the restrooms. If you have been there before the men and women's restrooms are being turned into the men's and the next room over will be the women's restroom. We are also putting in a bride's room because a lot of events held down there are weddings. That has been one complaint we have received concerning the Old Seale Courthouse is there isn't a room for the bride to get dressed in. The Committee is very excited about what it is going to look like. It is going to be first class and something the County can be proud of.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chair Martin introduced Emily Senn & Eli Gonzalez who are representing the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

Preston Pritchett stated: I have two students with me from South Girard Junior High School and our Future Business Leaders of American program. Recently in April our Future Business Leaders of America Program from South Girard Junior High School attended State FBLA Conference in Birmingham, AL. At this conference students were able to attend different sessions with guest speakers leading on business and industry. As well, both students competed in various competitive events. Both students worked so hard and practiced so hard they were able to receive first place in the competitive events. That gave them an invitation to attending The National Leadership Conference this summer in San Antonio, Texas. I would like for each student to explain to you just what their competition area was about and how that would impact their future careers.

Eli Gonzalez stated: For me my competition area was Business and Financial Literacy. At some point in my life I would like to be a future Engineer.

Emily Senn stated: My test covered areas for personal security, online privacy rights and responsibilities, ethics digital footprint, internet searches, copy rights and cyber bullying.

Preston Pritchett stated: We are vigorously fundraising and pulling all our efforts together of reaching about our goal of \$6700 which will cover the cost for our students and chaperons to attend the Conference. We are here today to ask the Commission to accept our invitation for a fundraiser opportunity as well as anyone that may be listening and watching. We are open to any opportunities for fundraising. Our students have put together a shirt that would be worn by students, business logos could be included on the back of our shirts.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Thanks for reaching out to us and bringing to light your accomplishments. After the discussion at Monday night's Work Session we were looking to see if we could help you with your fundraising. We do have an account and Assistant County Administrator Vicky Perry has checked. Russell County Commission can give \$500 to help you with your project. Commissioner Reed brought it up at the Work Session and I think everyone is on board with it I believe. Commissioner Corbett made a motion that Russell County Commission appropriate \$500 for this project trip and it will be coming out of the Contingency Fund. Commissioner Lee seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Coroner Sumbry presented court ordered cremations for Kenneth Comins & Jerry W. Colley. Commissioner Corbett made a motion to accept both cremations based on the Order from the court. Payment should go to Colonial Funeral Home and not to exceed \$400 per cremation. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Emergency Management Director Bob Franklin stated: As we talked about Monday night in the Work Session, we are requesting that the Commission approve the overtime policy. What this will do is give us ability to pay when we go under a State of Emergency Declaration. We do a lot of overtime that this policy wouldn't come into effect, but when usually it is a State of Emergency it turns into a really extended time and we put in a ton of hours and this policy would then take place. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Emergency Management Director Bob Franklin is requesting a budget transfer. He stated: Normally we don't budget a lot of money in vehicle repairs and maintenance but this year we had a transmission go out in one of our older vehicles and then recently just had an air conditioner failure. I would like to move \$2000 from line 214 for minor equipment and repairs to line 234 for motor vehicle repairs and maintenance. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Chair Martin seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Emergency Management Director Bob Franklin stated: The last request is a Mutual Aid Agreement with Fort Benning. It is not just Russell County. It is Lee County, Russell County, Stewart County and Muscogee County. It is this whole area. This is mainly an update to one that was done a few years ago. It is regional. It lists some of the assets that they have that we can have to as well as gives them access to any needs they have that we may be able to help them with. There will be an official Signing Ceremony. They have invited everybody on May 14 that is going to sign and have lunch. We will have one signed copy right away. At this time, I would like to ask permission that we sign the agreement with Fort Benning. Commissioner Corbett made a motion to allow the Chair to sign the Mutual Aid Agreement. Commissioner Currington seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Enforcement Officer Bill Friend requested abatement of property on Davis Circle. Mr. Friend stated: I come before you this morning because we have two properties that are public nuisances. The first one is at 49 Davis Circle. This house was burnt on April of 2016. We have made several attempts and exhausted them to find out who owned this property so we could get them to do the clean up on it. It is a pretty big house and we have received several complaints from the neighbors in the last 18 months. At this time, I am requesting that the Commission by Resolution declare this property as a public nuisance.

Commissioner Corbett asked the County Attorney Mr. Funderburk are we in our rights to do this?

County Attorney Funderburk stated: Yes.

Commissioner Corbett made a motion the Commission declare 49 Davis Circle a public nuisance and proceed with the abatement process. Seconded by Commissioner Currington. The vote was unanimous.

Enforcement Officer Bill Friend requested that a public hearing will be set for the 22nd of May which is the next Commission date. Post that property ten days prior. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

Enforcement Officer Bill Friend stated: The second property is at 10 Alexander Loop at a house that burned April 2018. The local church and some of the people around this house paid for a dumpster to sit out there for an extended time. They tried to help them clean the property up. The whereabouts of the person who owns the property is unknow. We have made several attempts to contact different places with no luck. When the wind blows the debris is blowing into the neighbor's yards. The properties around it are really kept up so it is really an eye sore.

Commissioner Lee asked did they need a public hearing on this property on the same day.

Enforcement Officer Bill Friend stated: Yes sir, I do. May 22nd.

Commissioner Corbett asked County Attorney Funderburk is the Commission in their legal rights?

County Attorney Fund Funderburk stated: Yes, the public needs to know we have done everything we can to locate the owner.

Commissioner Corbett made a motion to declare this property a public nuisance and begin the abatement process and set up the public hearing process for May 22, 2019 at 9:30 A.M. Chair Martin seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Corbett stated: As I stated on Monday night at the Work Session, I put on the agenda Nomenclature (Interim) Adjustment/Salary Human Resource Manager, for numerous reasons, but most of my questions were answered after I read the minutes. I have been told by the Administrator when she was in discussion with Ms.

Cade about taking this position and trying to get it into the situation it needed to be in that they had both agreed that her increase at doing so would be \$500 more than what we approved. This would obviously be for about six-months while she is in her probationary period. If the job is great and she wants to do the job and she applies for it then at that time I would like to consider moving it back up to what's more in line with the previous Manager was making. At this time, I would like to make a motion that we increase her salary by \$500.

Chair Martin stated: It would be \$40,500.

Commissioner Corbett stated: That is correct.

Commissioner Reed seconded.

Commissioner Epps stated: Question, before you go. As I was reading the minutes was the error of the salary not made from the office. Could this have been corrected without going through the Commission? I just want to make sure.

Commissioner Corbett stated: I asked the Administrator the details on it. Since we voted on it and set it. I think we need to vote and correct it. That's my opinion.

Commissioner Epps stated: My next question, just question. When we talk about interim, that word, if someone comes in and her time is up, will you hire someone because it means they are filling in until you get someone? Is this what we are doing? She is filling in until we get someone or are we offering her the job and giving her the opportunity.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Based on the minutes that we approved we gave her the job, we set her salary and we said after six-months we were going to evaluate it to see if it's going in the right direction.

Commissioner Epps stated: I just want to make sure that when she does the job and she is doing the job we don't go back and hire someone over her because she is interim. I am just trying to get things cleared up so this young lady will have a job.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Mrs. Epps, that was my question but when I read the minutes it cleared it up for me.

Commissioner Reed stated: Madam Chair when you make an error in the minutes you have to bring it before the Commission because if you try to change the minutes it is a felony.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Madam Chair, there was not an error in the minutes.

Commissioner Lee stated: The minutes were correct.

Commissioner Epps stated: The minutes were correct.

Commissioner Corbett stated: The error was the amount that was stated and approved. That will be corrected.

The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin asked if there were in Commissioner Comments? Commissioner Corbett stated: I have been notified by National Association of Counties (NACO) that the Russell County Commission has received a National Achievement Award for the Crawford Walking Trail. I am very proud of that and I am very proud of our Committee, our citizens and our Commission supporting the project. This is something that is Nation Wide. There were a lot of submissions from what I understand. This is the third National Award we have received from NACO since 2014 for projects.

Announcements were made.

Chair Martin adjourned the meeting.

Attest: _____ Signed: _____
County Administrator Chair