

The Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2019
9:30 A.M. EST

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

Reverend Keith Badowski with Epworth United Methodist Church gave the invocation.

Commissioner Corbett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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.

County Administrator LeAnn Horne 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. A quorum was established.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Martin requested approval of the June 26, 2019 Minutes. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Chair Martin. The vote was approved.

PROCLAMATION:

Commissioner Epps presented a proclamation to Rena Miles.

Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts stated: We have a discrepancy between two people. One is a Manufacturer and Contractor; the other is a Building Inspector. They have a lot of great ideas. The product has been tested by UL. It has been tested in the field. It is a real good product. However; I feel, in a rural jurisdiction, you need pull copper wire. They will tell you this conductor will run cooler than copper. It will. The draw-back to it to me, is the bending of the conductor itself as well as the size of the hole. I have talked to them in codes. I am willing to give a little if they will give. I would like to postpone the vote until the next meeting and let me redraft the resolution. They can come up and address the change. If there is further debate that will be welcome as well. In the Resolution in Section I, where it states, "all branch circuit conductors rated 40 amp and below be American Wire Gage Copper". I suggest taking that out. The next sentence where it states, "Be it further resolved that no branch circuit shall have a conductor smaller than #10 AWG Copper and branch circuit rate 20 amperes have no more than 10 outlets". The concession is the type of material we will allow 15-amp circuit in bedrooms. What I have asked for is the 15-amp branch circuit which will allow this product to be used and which will be a #12 conductor, but normally, if it is copper it would be a #14 conductor with no more than 8 outlets per circuit. Bear in mind with these circuits and the numbers; there is a way to figure a certain size per house. You go by square foot. The number of outlets we are looking at now will still give the fire departments a safe working range and safe response time.

Commissioner Lee stated: You said #10 copper in a 20-amp circuit.

Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts stated: #10.

Commissioner Screws asked are you going to rewrite this?

Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts stated: Yes, I will rewrite if you so desire if you and the Contractor's like the change. If not, we will leave as it is presented.

Joshua with Abel Electrical Incorporated stated: We work in Russell, Lee, Muscogee, Harris Counties, including Auburn, Opelika and Montgomery office in Lee County. We

do half commercial and half residential. I do about 400 houses a year. For the last year we have been using this product copper clad aluminum. To answer your question to run a 20-amp circuit we have to upsize the wire from one size from 12 gauge to 10 gauge. We have also had to increase some of our boxes. We are completely code compliant according to NFPA and NEC. It is completely code compliant; it is in NEC; it is in the National Electrical Code. Mr. Robert's is from the day when everything was copper. He is from the days back in the 60's, 70's and 80's when they started using aluminum for branch circuiting and things started burning down. I understand what is in his mind. This is rated as a copper connection. As far as HVAC use, it can be used on copper devices. This is UL rated for a copper connection. It is not made with the same copper as regular copper. It is actually a pure copper. It is 27 percent aluminum and expands and contracts as would copper. You're not having the load problem and the loosening as you would with aluminum as where the fear comes into play. I hear where Mr. Robert's is coming from. If he will allow the product, I agree with him as only having 8 circuits on a 15-amp breaker and only having 10 circuits on a 20-amp breaker. I think that is a great idea, I think that is safe.

Commissioner Lee stated: This conductor you are talking about, does it have a copper coating on the outside? What happens if you're cleaning the wire or scraping the wire and you scrape that off?

Joshua stated: It doesn't really scrape off you have to cut it; or nick it; or bend it and break it. It doesn't really install much differently than the regular end cable pure copper. We have had to jump some hurdles with size. We can't put as many in one hole, but we are not drilling 1- or 2-inch hole in the top plates. We have a 1-inch hole in a 3 ½ inch stud. We are in complete code compliance. I would like to say; I would never install a product that I wasn't 100 percent sure of.

Commissioner Corbett stated: I assume this is cheaper than straight copper which is the big motivating factor for your company. You're saying safety is not being compromised. Are there any jurisdiction within 50 miles within Russell County that are not allowing this to be installed?

Joshua stated: Not that I know of. I work in about 10 governing bodies. I have had no problem with the product.

Commissioner Corbett stated: I obviously am not the expert in this. That is why we have Mr. Robert's here to be our expert on this. If he is fine with it then I will support that. If he is not fine with it, I will have to go with him. That is why we have an expert.

Joshua stated: I also wanted to point out there is a National Fire Protection Agency which governs the National Electrical Code. They spend millions of dollars in testing and has several Engineers with Doctorate degrees in Engineering that have tested and proved it was safe. If it wasn't safe, they would have never put it in the Code Book.

Commissioner Lee stated: I am from the age when all the aluminum wire was approved, and all the aluminum wire passed every one of these same tests. It was recommended by everybody then 15 years later it is pulled off the market. You make more money using this wire if you charge the same amount. I personally would rather you charge more because everybody else is going to have to charge more too and use pure copper.

Commissioner Epps stated: Is this an upgrade to copper? You are saying this is better?

Joshua stated: Yes ma'am.

Commissioner Screws stated: If you are wiring a house that has copper all the way through it and you begin to pull this wire, it will tie into it.

Joshua stated: Absolutely. Just to be aware the service wire to every house is aluminum conductors. The 400 amp or 200-amp main service feeder that feeds into

your house is aluminum and is industry standard. No one is arguing that say we should put in copper conductors.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Madam Chair, I don't think we have to take action since Mr. Robert's said he was already going to bring it back.

Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts stated: I don't care about building codes or NEC. That is a minimum standard. You can go beyond that at anytime you want to. The authority of the NEC is to look 90-4 NEC is the local authority in the jurisdiction to look at that code we want to. If we want our citizens to have a better product and if we think it is then I think that is okay for us. I would also like to point out if a developer is coming to town the first place; he is going to start with the Economic Developer. Then, his design engineer is going to get in. The designer is going to find out what the codes are. What version of the codes they are working on? You are talking about Phenix City and Russell County; they are on two totally different code versions right now. Totally different year's/versions. So, the contractor would find this out first. Please keep that in mind.

Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts stated: I am asking from the Commission to take \$6,000 out of salaries line item 113 and increase line items 214 & 219.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS
July 10, 2019
FY 2018/2019 BUDGET

GENERAL FUND 001
BLDG INSPECTION 52710

DECREASE	001 52710 113	SALARIES	\$6,000.00
INCREASE	001 52710 214	MINOR EQUIP	\$3,000.00
INCREASE	001 52710 219	OTHER MISC SUPP	\$3,000.00
TOTAL			\$6,000.00

Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. The vote was unanimous.

Maintenance Director Leon Watson stated: We are requesting to take bids for the replacement HVAC on the 2nd floor in the Courthouse 50-ton systems, the Commission Chamber and the Atrium. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Currington.

County Administrator stated: The bids will be due and open August 6 at 3:30 p.m.

The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: We just wrapped up McElvey Road paving it and are now moving onto Screws Road starting next week. The existing right-of-way out there is anywhere between 22 to 30 feet. We have a dirt road paving policy where a thru road like that would need to be 18 ft wide or 2 ft shoulders.

Commissioners Screws motioned to approve to pave as is. Seconded by Commissioner Epps.

Commissioner Corbett stated: My only question is, are you going to do signage and to make it safe?

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: We will put narrow road signage and probably lower the speed limit. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws stated: Madam Chair, I motion we give the Engineer permission to place signs where he feels necessary to decrease or increase traffic.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Madam Chair, don't we need to actually state the speed as a Commission? We need to state the speed in your motion.

Commissioner Screws motioned to change the speed limit from 45 to 25 MPH. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated: We have been contacted by a landowner out there about piling the debris when we are doing the clearing. Just to let you know we will be working on some private property. We will burn all debris and plant grass.

County Administrator Horne stated: Madam Chair, I would like to request the Commission's consideration and approval to schedule the public budget departmental review following the Commission Meeting on the 24th of July. If we do not complete the budget review and don't move for approval come back the next day to finish up the review and consideration for approval which will be July 25th.

Commissioner Corbett stated: Just to clear your recommendation, immediately or shortly after the Commission Meeting adjourns on the 24th.

County Administrator Horne stated: Yes.

Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve. Chair Martin seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Currington stated: I am going to run for a second term for District 2.

Announcements were made.

Commissioner Lee motioned to adjourn.

Attest: _____ Signed: _____
County Administrator Chair