

The Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
August 25, 2014  
9:30 A.M. EDT.

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

A public comment was made by Children and Family Connections Representatives Dr. Cordelia Moffett and Annie A. Lindsey requested the Commission consider a \$25,000 appropriation to the Children and Family Connection Agency.

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order. Members present were: Chair Peggy Martin, Gentry Lee, Tillman Pugh, Ronnie Reed, Cattie Epps and Larry Screws. Chance Corbett was absence. Also present was the County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk and County Administrator LeAnn Horne, who kept the minutes.

A quorum was established.

The invocation was given by Marvin Minton, Pastor of Crawford Road Baptist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Pugh.

Commissioner Lee motioned to add to the agenda under business, a request to create a proclamation for an employee who will be retiring the end of August. Commissioner Screws also requested the addition of a proclamation for the late Dr. Thomas Shelton. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Martin requested a motion to approve the July 23, 2014 meeting minutes. Commissioner Screws motioned to approve the minutes and were seconded by Commissioner Lee. Five (5) Commissioners voted to approve the minutes. Commissioner Epps abstained due to her absence at that meeting. The July 23 meeting minutes were approved.

Mark Clark received a "Certificate of Recognition" from the Commission in honor of the Russell County Water Authority's award of the Alabama Water and Pollution Association's "Best Operated Plant" and "Best Operated Distribution System" for its population category.

Commissioner Epps gave a resolution of condolence to the family of the late Mrs. Sammie Lee Vann Darty.

Crisis Center Director Gina Bell reported of a new 16 bed facility that will be opening at the end of August 2014. She thanked the Commission for the allocation of the building that the Crisis Center had been using and their support.

Planning Commission Vice Chair David Ellis referenced a letter sent to the Commission regarding sewer options. He requested scheduling a joint meeting of the two Commissions to discuss funding options for sewer projects, on September 8th, 2014 at 4:00 in The Commission Chambers prior to the Commission work session. The Commission agreed to the joint meeting. The meeting will be open to the public.

Commissioner Lee motioned to approve a proclamation honoring Peggy Seymour, who will be retiring from Russell County with 39 years of service August 29<sup>th</sup>. The proclamation will be presented to Mrs. Seymour at the August 27<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws motioned to approve presenting a proclamation to the Shelton family in memory of the late Dr. Thomas Shelton for his faithful volunteer service to his county, community and church. Seconded by Commissioner Reed the vote was unanimous.

Administrator Horne discussed the State Retirement System; through Act #2014-429, has authorized a one-time lump sum payment for retirees. They are requesting that Russell County contribute the amount of \$28,836.00 for those county retirees. Several funding options were reviewed; one option would cost interest to the County. The other option recommended by Administrator Horne is to pay a lump sum payment which some of the funding for this option has been located if it is the Commission's desire. Administrator Horne stated that she did not like to bring something like this prior to the 2014-2015 budget, but the deadline for this action is August 31, 2014. Commissioner Pugh motioned to pay up to the \$28,000. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. Administrator stated that it had been five (5) years since there has been an adjustment for retirees to receive yearly increases. Commissioner Pugh announced that under the law each county retiree would receive up to \$300. The vote was unanimous.

The County Commission established a Safety Committee 3 years ago, which Administrator Horne has been the Safety Coordinator. Since the committee has been established county incidents have been reduced over 39%. Shaun Blakeney has volunteered to be Safety Coordinator for the upcoming year placing Administrator Horne as the Assistant Coordinator. A resolution naming the new Safety Coordinator and the official action is required by the Alabama County of Commissioners Association. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve Shaun Blakeney as Safety Coordinator. Seconded by Commissioner Pugh. The vote was unanimous.

Administrator Horne requested to schedule the Budget Review Meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup> after the regular Commission Meeting at 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. Commissioner Lee motioned to approve the budget meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

County Attorney Kenneth Funderburk stated that Administrator Horne has talked to the State Auditor in regards to the Children & Family Connection and asked her give a

report of their discussions. The State Examiner recommended rescinding the previous action taken by the Commission in regards to paying the IRS directly because that is not allowed. The Commission funds are not allowed to pay those types of debts. The Commission does have the authority to give appropriations to agencies and State Examiners do not typically investigate appropriations. Appropriations given to agencies are to provide services to the community and citizens. The Commission cannot appropriate to the IRS.

Attorney Funderburk states essentially the Commission rescind their prior action and proceed as the Commission would like as long as it is not going to the IRS in payment of a lien. He recommended following the auditor's recommendation. Commissioner Lee motioned to rescind the previous motion. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee motioned to increase the appropriation to the Children and Family Connection by \$25,000. There will not be an appropriation made during the budget session of 2014-2015 year and possibly several years after. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

Commissioner Pugh asked Attorney Funderburk if this is legal.

Attorney Funderburk said the previous resolution that was passed was not. However, it was good that it was presented to the auditors, so they will not come back and second guess this action, which is a grant to the agency and not a direct payment for a tax bill.

Commissioner Pugh asked if it was possible to be charged back to the Commission.

Attorney Funderburk stated it would have been before you rescinded the past action, but as an appropriation it would not.

The Commission was polled. The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Screws motioned to adjourn the meeting

The meeting was adjourned.