

The Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
September 26th, 2018  
9:30 A.M. E.S.T

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

The Lord's Prayer was recited by the Commissioners and Audience.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag was led by Commissioner Screws.

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.

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

A quorum was established.

Chair Martin asked for a motion to approve the September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Currington motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1(Lee) voted yes, District 2 (Currington) voted yes; District 3 (Martin) voted yes; District 4 (Reed) voted yes; District 5 (Epps) voted yes; District 6 (Corbett) voted yes; District 7 (Screws) voted yes; The vote was unanimous, and the motion was approved.

**Business Items:**

Chief Alexander requested the Commission's permission to send out the annual jail food bids and cleaning supplies. The bid should be sent out on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and bids should be in by October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and will be opened at the Courthouse in the Commission Chamber at 3:00 P.M. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Reed.

Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1(Lee) voted yes, District 2 (Currington) voted yes; District 3 (Martin) voted yes; District 4 (Reed) voted yes; District 5 (Epps) voted yes; District 6 (Corbett) voted yes; District 7 (Screws) voted yes; The vote was unanimous, and the motion was approved.

Commissioner Corbett stated on Monday night we discussed County Road 49. Commissioner Corbett stated that the Commission approved at the last meeting for

County Road 49 in Hurtsboro to Rutherford to be closed to trucks other than local traffic. Some citizens and other County Commissioners stated to Commissioner Corbett that they had several contracts already in play and they had already been negotiated. This action that we took is going to adversely effect their business and the contracts they already have. Commissioner Corbett stated that he was also told that WestRock is concerned about it as well but are not necessarily coming to the table to talk about it. Commissioner Corbett and Commissioner Screws agreed the fair thing to do is giving them a little more time. Commissioner Corbett made a motion that the Commission hold off, or stay the decision, to close that road to semi-trucks until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, giving companies enough time to renegotiate contracts. Commissioner Martin seconded the motion. Commissioner Reed stated discussion. Commissioner Reed asked if there will be a public hearing at that time on that road to invite people to the hearing to speak, especially the people who live on that road? Commissioner Reed stated he feels like the Commission should do something if someone is going to close a road and the people who live on County Road 49 should be able to have a hearing. Commissioner Lee stated the Commission is not closing the road, we are just limiting thru semi-trucks. We do that on a lot of roads in the county and we never have a public hearing on just limiting the weight. All the people who live there can still drive their trucks or whatever they want to drive on it. Commissioner Screws stated that after talking to the Engineer if we give them until January that would give them time to repatch some bad holes. What I would request is that we ask the Sheriff's Department to monitor that road very closely to lower the truck speeds down to 45 mph. If they are running 65 mph, it's a safety hazard. If they are hitting the patch as soon as we put it down, it is picking the patch right back up again. We are wasting money. As far as that Commissioner of that district I have no problem closing the road in January. Again, I just ask the Sheriffs Department to monitor the road closely to lower the truck speeds. Administrator Horne polled the Commission. District 1(Lee) voted yes, District 2 (Currington) voted yes; District 3 (Martin) voted yes; District 4 (Reed) voted yes; District 5 (Epps) voted yes; District 6 (Corbett) voted yes; District 7 (Screws) voted yes; The vote was unanimous, and the motion was approved.

Commissioner Corbett asked the County Attorney before the meeting concerning the comments that were made at the last meeting by the Mayor of Hurtsboro. Obviously, I think a lot of the Mayor of Hurtsboro and the article's in the paper as well. The article that was in the paper talking about the County holding Hurtsboro's gas tax money. I think we forgot a very important piece in that discussion and that was left out. Per Commissioner Screws he requested we help pave a road through Hurtsboro's truck route. The road was in terrible condition. The County paid a lot of money on paving repairs than the Town of Hurtsboro did. It was the agreement that if we did the resurfacing they were going to pay us back with their gas tax until it was paid off. Commissioner Corbett stated he was not sure why the Mayor was here at a public forum complaining we are holding their gas tax funds money when that money was supposed to be coming back to the County to pay for that road repair. Commissioner Corbett had some concerns after reading the article in the paper. Commissioner

Corbett stated, I hold the Mayor of Hurtsboro in high standards and I wish she was here today, so we can set the record straight. Although, we do not feel we owe the money because of the law that was set up and our understanding expired. Even if we do owe the money, that money should be coming back to the County for years to come anyway for the road repairs. They would not be getting any money. Commissioner Corbett stated, he was not sure why that happened the way it did. County Attorney Funderburk stated, we handled it where that is not something you want to set out here and argue over. The County does things for Hurtsboro all the time. I have never known of them to complain. The way it was handled was not to have it here in a public quorum and argue about it not knowing the facts. Commissioner Screws stated that if he is not mistaken we did the paving down there based on the \$10 tag fee. It might have been because of that, she might have thought she was still getting the gasoline tax. Commissioner Screws stated he was not speaking for the Mayor he was just saying when the County did the work they gave up their \$10 tag fee. Commissioner Lee and Commissioner Corbett stated we would have to check in the minutes because they were thinking the gas tax. County Attorney Funderburk stated that either way he didn't think either one has been paid back the paving. Commissioner Lee stated he thinks that is the problem. We kept on sending it to them when we shouldn't have.

Announcements were made.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney stated he received an invoice in from the state on a project they have been working on for about two years. The railroad crossing at Bradley Road where the Commission voted on two or three years back to do the work and finally got the agreement with the railroad company and the state DOT all agreed. The project is going to cost \$196,145.68. Our portion is \$19,614.57 which is 10% of the overall project. We have some work to do out there which we will be reimbursed for \$4,000 to \$5,000 worth of work. The state will be reimbursing us before the crossings go in. As soon as we get the check cut and the invoice back to the state they will send out a notice to the railroad company and it is usually 30-60 days that they start the work. This has already been approved and he was just letting the Commission know they are getting a check to the state and hopefully by December we have our crossarms up.

Commissioner Martin would like to announce and congratulate Commissioner Epps for being nominated as a member of the Human Services Education Policy Steering Committee with NACO.

Commissioner Reed motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

