

Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Meeting Minutes September 8, 2021
9:30 A.M. EST

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

The invocation was given by Reverend Brady Baird from Seale United Methodist Church.

Commissioner Corbett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments were made.

Chairman Corbett thanked Cable TV of East Alabama, The Citizen of East Alabama for covering our meetings and we have Facebook live for people not able to attend. He welcomed our elected officials, department heads, media, and guests.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert called roll of the Commission. Member's present were Commissioner Cattie Epps, Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Larry Screws, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Gentry Lee, Chairman Chance Corbett. Commissioner Rod Costello was absent. Also, present was Interim County Attorney Hope Hicks and County Administrator Paulette Colbert, who kept minutes

A quorum was established by County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

Chairman Corbett stated that there was no work session Monday night, so they setup the agenda today after the roll call and a quorum was established. Motion to approve the agenda was by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Corbett presented to approve the minutes for August 11, 2021. Commissioner Epps motioned to approve minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented to approve the minutes for the Budget Proposal Meeting for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 on August 19, 2021. Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

Chairman Corbett presented a proclamation for September as Attendance Awareness Month presented to Mr. Rick Chancy from the Russell County District Attorney Office and Jacob Johnson with the Russell County School System. Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the proclamation unanimously.

Russell County Commission

PROCLAMATION

September as Attendance Awareness Month in Russell County

WHEREAS, good attendance is even more essential to student achievement and graduation because of the lost opportunities to learning that have occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Helping Families Initiative of the Russell County District Attorney's Office and the Russell County School System are committed to dedicating their resources and attention to reducing chronic absenteeism rates,

WHEREAS, promoting attendance requires noticing - as soon as possible - when students are starting to miss too much school in order to engage students and families, identify and offer needed support and early intervention resources,

WHEREAS, ensuring an equal opportunity to learn requires using data to detect inequitable patterns of absenteeism by school, grade, and student population,

WHEREAS, improving attendance and reducing absenteeism takes schools, families and community partners working together to identify and address factors contributing to students missing school, particularly a lack of digital access, mental and physical health services, access to basic economic supports including food and housing, or in some cases, the absence of engaging curriculum or biased approaches to school discipline,

WHEREAS, partnering with students and families to monitor attendance as well as understand and address barriers to attendance requires building and sustaining caring relationships and regular communications with students and families,

WHEREAS, reducing absenteeism requires taking a public health approach that begins with prevention and early intervention, and adopting trauma-informed approaches rather than responding with punitive actions,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Russell County Commission proclaim our County will stand with the nation in recognizing September as "ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH". We hereby commit to focusing on reducing chronic absenteeism to give all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotionally and socially.

More specifically, we will:

- Raise public awareness and concern about the impact of chronic absence
- Engage broad community engagement in developing meaningful solutions that ensure all children keep learning despite the challenges of Covid-19.

This Proclamation adopted and approved this 8th day of September 2021.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Chairman Corbett presented Commissioner Epps with employee job expectations. She spoke about when hiring new employees, we should take the opportunity to train those employees regardless of their position. Then they can say they gave the employee proper training so they will know their job, when to do it, what to do, and where to do it. She brought it to the Commission for their feedback. Commissioner Lee stated he thought they did this already. Commissioner Epps brought up that the Chair sent out an application that he had received from a person that said they worked for the county, like from October to March, as the assistant administrator but she had never seen the person, so she wondered how they were hired because she didn't know anything about it, and they are responsible for the employees of this county. She stated Chairman Corbett had shared it with them. Chairman Corbett stated that if he receives something that is more to the Commission, he will send it to all of the Commissioners. Commissioner Epps stated that when she received the email, she realized there were things going on that she, as a Commissioner, didn't know about so she thinks it's very important they do training, regardless of the position the person is hired to do. Chairman Corbett agreed and they will make sure the department heads are aware of it.

Chairman Corbett presented the Sanitation Director search progress. He stated he had a couple of people call him and ask when it was going to start and end. The process is already underway and asked County Administrator Paulette Colbert to update them on the dates. Ms. Colbert stated that it has been posted and it is to run through the month of September with the closing date being September 30th and they turn their applications into the Commission Office.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chairman Corbett presented the Social Media Solution to COVID-19 presentation by Ms. Betsy Covington, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley, and Mr. Ben Moser, President and CEO of United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley. Chairman Corbett said the presentation is about a solution to get the word out better and help people understand the importance of being vaccinated, and the importance of getting rid of this pandemic we are under. It will encompass the Chattahoochee Valley, which is the goal because the social media platform we listen to is really cutting edge and it takes it to the next level. Chairman Corbett reminded the Commissioners of the COVID Cares Act money that's being funded going through CDBG and this group would also be helping us with it and getting it out in the rental assistance. Ms. Covington and Mr. Moser presented background information on their fund program and spoke about making grants to organizations that help individuals and families in our communities. They do not make grants to individuals but make weekly grant distributions. They encourage vaccination rates to go up so the virus rates can be low. She spoke about running a campaign with ZOMAD in partnership with the Columbus Consolidated Government in Columbus and Muscogee County, and hopefully with Russell County to encourage vaccinations. They were asking for the Commission's support on it. Chairman Corbett stated that this is about a \$130,000.00 project that Columbus Consolidated Government is going to partner in, and Ray Smith with Phenix City is very interested and involved in this. The targeted money for this is from the ARP money we have received that is very strict on what you can spend this money on. Phenix City has not received their money yet because it will be going through ADECA and will be held up and they'll have to apply for it, so at this time they will not be able to participate, but they asked, from what he understands, if the county come in at \$30,000.00 of the \$130,000.00 and it will cover our entire area. Chairman Corbett said he had checked with the County Attorney Hope Hicks, and he put it on record today, asked her if they can use the funds for this education? County Attorney Hope Hicks stated that under the ARP guidelines, she thinks that education about COVID guidelines would be an approved expense. County Attorney Hope Hicks replied that there is not a U.S. Treasury Fund rule, based on the interim rule it's an appropriate expense. She stated the final rule is not yet issued and she can't imagine that this would change under the final rule because everything about ARP money deals with COVID, so she doesn't have any hesitation in saying that this money can be used for this project. Discussion included Commissioner Reed verifying with the county attorney that from the approximate 6 million dollars we've received, we can take this \$30,000 out of it. Chairman Corbett stated that we have approximate 11.3 million total (not yet received). County Attorney Hope Hicks stated that yes, the \$30,000.00 would be an appropriate expense out of the ARP funds, from the approximate 6 million that we have now, from the approximate 11 million to be received. Commissioner Screws asked what was mentioned about \$100,000.00. Ms. Covington stated that it's \$130,000.00 total, and to be clear, the Community Foundation is the 501c3 that would receive this money and they have a Coronavirus Response Fund that would hold the money and administer it. It's one of the 335 different funds that live at the Community Foundation. Chairman Corbett stated that this is \$30,000.00 and the remaining money will come from other partner organizations which would include, hopefully, Phenix City down the road but it will definitely include the Columbus Consolidated Government and the Coronavirus Response Fund. Ms. Covington agreed. Commissioner Epps asked if this is a decision that needs to be made today since she's not had time to read the information or do any research on it and thinks they should give the Commission a little more time to do some reading and research before they make a decision about it. Chairman Corbett stated that he has sat through their presentation and thinks this is one the most unique programs he has ever seen and believes it will be very good for the county and the community area. Our hospital systems and first responders are overloaded right now. Chairman Corbett stated that he doesn't want to wait 2 more weeks and wants to get this going. He asked, as their Chair, they put their trust into the work and preplanning that's been done on it and since they missed their last meeting (3 weeks ago while at the ACCA Conference), he'd like to go ahead and vote on it. Commissioner Reed motioned Commissioner Chambers seconded to give \$30,000.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund to the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley. Call for vote was done by County Administrator Paulette Colbert: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts with the Russell County Building Inspection Department with a budget transfer request since the money was used to buy permits and placards to cover job sites. The budget request transfer is as follows: \$1,000 from Line Item #113 /Salaries to Line Item #211 /Office Supplies. Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented an appropriation request, ahead of the budget vote, for B.L.O.O.M. (for Blessed Ladies Open Overcoming Mentors) from Deloris Allen. Chairman Corbett stated that the Commission had their budget meeting and B.L.O.O.M didn't realize it was supposed to be turned in then, so they have requested to be here. He stated the Commission has addressed each of these requests, up to this point, in the budget proposal. So, he requested to address this ahead of the budget approval that comes later in the agenda. Commissioner Lee stated that he will give \$500 from his discretionary fund and Commissioner Reed stated he will give \$1,000 from his discretionary fund from the Fiscal Year 2022 budget project money. Motion to approve Commissioner Reed and seconded by Commissioner Lee. Call for vote was done by County Administrator Paulette Colbert: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented EMA Director Job with the updated job description in their packets. Chairman Corbett stated that he would like to make a few more revisions and he requested that the same search committee that's searching for the Sanitation Director's position that ends September 30th, search for this job position as well. He would like to open the EMA Director's job for applications on October 1st, close them at the end of October, and then receive them all by November 5th. This will give a full 30 days and it will be on record when they are doing it. He stated to the Commissioners that he would have the final job description that will actually be posted on October 1st and if they want to make any changes or have any concerns, they can be addressed at the next meeting for the EMA Director's job position. Motion to approve for the advertising time and receiving the applications by Commissioner Screws and seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott with the Digital Information Cooperative Agreement. Ms. Elliott stated that she received a letter from the Alabama Department of Transportation with a mapping agreement that it needs to be signed by the Commission. Motion to approve by Commissioner Screws to allow the Chair to sign the agreement. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented the Interim EMA Director Martin with the Pandemic Plan update. Mr. Martin stated that there was a copy of the Pandemic Plan from an emergency meeting the Commission had on March 17, 2020. He stated the only thing that has changed in this plan is where the vaccine has been introduced on page 3, under the Workplace Policies, under the second check mark under "Exposure Event." It should say the following modeling the CDC Guidelines:

- ✓ **Exposure Event** – *Quarantine for 14 days if you have been in close contact (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been fully vaccinated. People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have symptoms. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.*
Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks or more since receiving the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or two weeks or more following receipt of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Motion to change the language in the Pandemic Plan that has been worked on by the County Administrator, as well. Motioned by from Commissioner Screws, seconded by Commissioner Lee. Commissioner Epps wanted to make sure this is passed to all the employees. Chairman Corbett agreed and said that the County Administrator will make sure it will be distributed to the department heads and beyond

Chairman Corbett presented adjusting Interim EMA Director David Martin's salary with a 10% stipend and retro back pay for him being the interim EMA Director until the new EMA Director is filled. Attorney Hope Hicks asked to table this motion for 2 weeks. Under the Alabama

constitution doing back pay is a little tricky. She doesn't want to have any issues with the examiners. Motion to table this was made by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott with a budget amendment transfer request. Ms. Elliott requested to transfer \$6,500 from Line Item #541 Equipment & Furniture to Line item #252 Postage. Motion made by Commissioner Lee, seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented Commissioner Screws with a \$3,500 donation from the remainder of his project money to the Uplift Foundation, who gives scholarships to children going to college. Motioned by Commissioner Screws and seconded by Commissioner Lee. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called the vote as follows: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented Enforcement Bill Friend with an Abatement Nuisance Complaint on 801 Bonanza Drive, Phenix City. Mr. Friend reported that this nuisance currently exists, and the case was opened back open on May 4, 2021. Mr. Friend stated that the property owner was notified by certified mail and has been unresponsive. The property was checked and rechecked on August 4, 2021, and the property remains the same. At that time, our County Attorney sent a certified letter out to the property owner on July 19, 2021, with still no response. Mr. Friend stated it is a burnt-out mobile home and he has received the fire report after it was released, and there's no investigation or anything on it. Mr. Friend requested, at this time, by resolution, to declare the property be a public nuisance in order of the abatement of the nuisance and he also requested a public hearing be set for the next Commission meeting on September 22, 2021 at 9:30 am. County Attorney Hope Hicks stated that Mr. Friend is following the procedure he is supposed to follow. Motion to approve the abatement process by Commissioner Screws and seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

Chairman Corbett presented the courthouse video conference project. He stated that he asked the Administrator to look into coordinating and purchasing video conferencing equipment in the Commission conference room due to having several meetings where laptops had to be pulled out so he would like to try to make this happen. Mrs. Colbert stated that Mr. Watson turned in two quotes which was in their packets. One from Columbus Tape and Video for \$8,765.71 and one from National Audio Visual Services for \$5,568.42. Chairman Corbett stated this is to have video conferencing meetings inside the conference room, which many of the meetings they go to on our Department Head levels and Commission levels are starting to do Zoom or Teams meetings and right now we do not have the capability to do it at the courthouse. Mrs. Colbert requested these funds be paid from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Attorney Hicks stated this can be voted on today and she would get Mrs. Colbert an answer as to her opinion on whether the funds can be paid from the ARA money. Commissioner Epps motioned to have the system purchased and installed for \$5,568.42. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert polled the Commission as follows: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, abstained. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion.

COUNTY ENGINEER:

The County Engineer had nothing to report.

ADMINISTRATOR:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 budget proposal that was presented and reviewed at the August 19th budget meeting. Mrs. Colbert stated the proposed balanced budget including the meeting revisions, along with the revenue figures for their approval is included their packets. Commissioner Reed stated that he had 2 items he would like to get funded, and he doesn't want to use his discretionary funds. Commissioner

Screws motioned to accept the budget as printed. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. For the record, Commissioner Reed stated that he wants to fund the Mayor's Ball for \$5,000 and the second project is funding the basketball team for \$5,000 help the kids traveling teams in the community. County Administrator Paulette Colbert polled the Commission as follows: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, no. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion to approve the budget as printed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the salary schedule for the fiscal year 2021/2022 in their folder which reflects a 3% cost of living allowance. Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. County Administrator Paulette Colbert polled the Commission as follows: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion to accept the salary schedule with 3% cost of living allowance.

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Interim County Attorney Hope Hicks spoke in reference to the money coming from American Rescue Plan. She stated that one of the issues talked about was that we know there will be non-profits that want to be funded, and after her speaking to some of the Commissioners in passing, she has developed a form that non-profits can complete to submit money asking for grants. Ms. Hicks gave the Commissioners copies of the form in the meeting to look over, and in 2 weeks, they can discuss what they like, don't like, or want to change. She stated that this way once they're really start spending this money in earnest, we have it ready to go. Ms. Hicks also spoke about making sure we have a plan for how to spend the money and that the plan is in line with the federal guidelines. She stated that several of the Commissioners attended the ACCA conference and the attorney of the Department of Examiners spoke that they have requested an opinion from the Attorney General's office, because the American Rescue Plan tells us federally what we can do with this money. But the question is, do we have to abide by the Alabama Constitution, or because this is all federal money, do we only have to deal with federal guidelines? Ms. Hicks said she has followed up with the attorney from Department of Examiners and he has explained to her everything they had asked for and that they simply don't have a response. Ms. Hicks stated that she then called the Chief of the Opinions Division and told them that they are tying our hands and we need an answer. She expects an answer in about 4 weeks since he said that their turn around is 90-days, and around 4 weeks from now would be 90-days. Ms. Hicks stated she is also trying to move the Commissioners in a direction as to what their priorities are, she has them a sheet that kind of summarizes what key provisions of the act are and what this money can be spent for (she said she's given them something similar to this before), and then a survey for each one of the Commissioners to complete to give to Mrs. Colbert stating what their priorities ought to be with this money. Ms. Hicks recommends that unless we are very sure it falls in line with the state and federal guidelines, that they not spend any of the money yet, but she's hoping to be only 4 weeks out from having that decision from the Attorney General's office. Whether we agree or disagree with the Attorney General, we will see what they say. Ms. Hicks's passed all the information to them today so they can turn it back in to Mrs. Colbert and Ms. Hicks will have it to review at the next meeting. Another thing, Ms. Hicks stated that she has a copy of a Memorandum of Understanding where the previous grant money that Russell County got \$290,000 through ADECA, even though all of the funds have not been received yet, this is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Chattahoochee Valley Community Foundation and the United Way where Russell County would actually give the money to the foundation and the United Way for them to spend the money and then us be reimbursed with the money once it comes in from ADECA. Ms. Hicks said that she has read the Memorandum of Understanding and has made a couple of corrections or additions to it, that she thinks protects us to make sure we do get reimbursed. She hasn't had a chance to speak with Ms. Covington to make sure that we're on board. Ms. Hicks thinks the Commission might want to go ahead and vote to approve this for the Commissioner to sign once the legal language is completely verified between the parties so that we can go ahead and start funding with the ADECA grant, since it's not quite as strict as the American Rescue Plan money what can be done in the community to use it. Ms. Hicks stated that Ms. Covington might want to comment on what this money is going to be used for. Ms. Covington stated that she received her suggestions, and she and Ben Moser have reviewed them, and they feel comfortable that there are things they can work with, and they

want to be responsive to Russell County for this money. Chairman Corbett stated a few things he wanted to mention before taking action. One is about spending the money and that he's has received several requests from department heads, elected officials and employees about what they will use this money for. Things such as giving employee's money as incentives for getting vaccinations, giving employees money for all the hard work we really appreciate they've done during the COVID times, and COVID times moving forward mainly, because that's what we can really use money for and he feels, in his opinion, this is the bulk of what Ms. Hicks is referring to about being at a holding point right now until we get a better ruling on it. Commissioner Lee stated that he moves the request for the action on this, and for the attorney to do what she stated. Commissioner Reed seconded to let the Chair sign what comes in. Commissioner Screws mentioned she said we wait until we spend any of the money, but we just spent \$30,000 and more money has been spent and we are still spending money, so he is confused since she is telling us to wait. Ms. Hicks said there are a couple of different ways to spend this money. She said some of this money spent absolutely falls in line with Alabama Constitution and with the federal guidelines. If it falls in line with both of those, then she doesn't have any problems with the Commission making some of those expenditures now. She stated that the \$30,000 would be for COVID education and that falls in line with what you can do under Alabama's Constitution and the federal guidelines. Ms. Hicks stated that the money they're talking about with the Memorandum of Understanding is actually through the ADECA Grant, and it's not the American Rescue Plan money. The Memorandum of Understanding would allow us to grant the money to the foundation and the United Way, who would spend the money and when ADECA gives the money back, then we can get paid back. We'll not actually be spending money. We're sort of just fronting money until we get reimbursed. Ms. Hicks said there are several plans that the American Rescue plan says you can spend money on, for example, it says you can actually give individual households rent assistance, mortgage assistance, and utility assistance, but the Alabama Constitution says you cannot do that. Ms. Hicks stated that until we know what the Attorney General's office opinion is on it, and she let us know that the Attorney General office opinion is simply an opinion, it's not the law. She said that since she knows it's been requested, she's prudent to wait to get that response. Ms. Hicks then brought up about paid leave for employees dealing with COVID with 3 paths to take: you don't have to give any paid leave, give paid leave to vaccinated people, or you give paid leave to everyone. That's our choice. She said the thought process is if you give to everyone, you've granted it to everyone. If you give paid leave to who are vaccinated, you still have to miss time because of contact tracing and quarantine, shots, booster shots, or because of childcare it's then used as incentive to encourage people to get the vaccination. She stated that Mrs. Colbert has developed a leave plan that both of them have reviewed, and they know that it's in line with what we can do with the ARP money. Ms. Hicks suggested that that they give the Commission it, as well. So, that 2 weeks from now, the Commission can vote on how they want to do, or if they want to do any expanded leave and how they want to do it. Chairman Corbett stated that this was two pots of money and two different time frames of money. There are two different sets of regulations and the fact the money they have spent out of ARP right now are clear cut, and we can spend it. He stated that the stuff Ms. Hicks asked them to wait on, we're waiting on that opinion. Chairman Corbett also wanted to mention was that the comments Ms. Hicks made, he does not know that the Commission is fully aware yet of what some of the proposals were about adding leave time. He stated that we are following what other counties are doing, and there was an action by the Lee County Commission, that added sick leave time added to their employee's sick leave bank was for all employees. By doing that, he said it took the question out of the pot if you're out on COVID leave or if you're out on sick leave, or what you are out for. You just took sick leave if you were sick. Commissioner Lee stated that they have not approved it yet. Ms. Hicks agreed and said that the Commission hasn't looked at these proposals, and if they haven't looked at what the policy suggestion would be, if you decide to do leave, or if you decide to do 280 hours of leave or 2 hours of leave, or 40 hours of leave, or whatever for everybody. She said it's pretty simple. The Commission just decides on a number of hours, and if they decide to use this as an incentive, both she and Mrs. Colbert have worked together on what the leave could be used for and the time frame that it would be used in. She said they'll give the Commission all of it for them to consider and so they have time to review it before the meeting 2 weeks from now. Commissioner Screws asked if it was legal to ask how many employees have not been vaccinated? The number and not the names? Ms. Hicks said, yes, that we can ask the employee's to voluntarily tell us if they are vaccinated, but we can't require vaccination as a government, but you can certainly ask that question. She said she's been sort of down this path a pretty good ways to look at, and it is legal to give this incentive of leave to

people who are vaccinated as opposed to people that are not. She feels comfortable that you could do that, you could do that if that's your choice that it's completely the Commissioner's discretion. Chairman Corbett stated the original motion was to allow the Chair to sign the MOU for the Cares Act to the attorney, after the attorney approved it. Commissioner Epps stated, on the legal part of it, she was in a meeting the other day with doctors, and she was told that it is illegal for them to ask a patient whether or not they had the vaccine so she wondered if this was two different areas, where the medical field can't ask, but then they, as Commissioners, can ask and employee have they had it? Ms. Hicks agreed and said there is a difference asking a patient and different asking an employee. Ms. Hicks said she can say there are a couple of schools of thought on whether doctors can or can't ask but we're not doctors, so you and I don't have to go down that path. Ms. Hicks said what a Commissioner can ask an employee is different than what you can ask a consumer. Motion to allow the Chair to sign the MOU for the CDBG Cares Act to the attorney, so we can begin paying the money after the attorney approves it. Motion by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert polled the Commission as follows: District 5: Epps, yes. District 2: Chambers, yes. District 7: Screws, yes. District 4: Reed, yes. District 1: Lee, yes. District 6: Corbett, yes. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Reed mentioned to the attorney that he has 4 non-profit organizations that he would like to get money for out of the 6 million dollars. He'd like to make sure some of it gets in the community and would like to find a way where he can handle it. Commissioner Lee stated that he has some organizations too, and he doesn't know what Ms. Hicks is developing, but he's sure that with the federal regulations, one will have to prove a loss based on COVID. He said you can't just say you want \$100,000 because you want it. You'll have to prove that you lost that much because of COVID.

Chairman Corbett shared that he had a Cooperative Agreement form for a Traffic Grant, that allows us to apply for it and he wanted to make the Commissioners were aware of it, and it has been done in the past by the Chair.

Commissioner Screws spoke about a disposable cover for a mic for the audience to use and after one person uses and finishes with it, pull it off and put on a new one. This would help us. Chairman Corbett stated if we don't do that, we need to at least need to have someone manning the mic with alcohol wipes or something when it's passed around and we will look into something for sure. Commissioner Screws it's real cheap, like 100 for \$6. Chairman Corbett asked Ms. Colbert to look into it for the next meeting.

Chairman Corbett commented on the Seale Labor Day outdoor fair that went very well and was received well by the community. Several members of the committee were there, and he appreciated the Sheriff's help, community's help, the engineer's help, and everyone that stepped up to help with it. He stated that they are trying give the community something to do, and even though it was outdoor, it went well, and in his opinion, the social distancing too.

Commissioner Epps thanked the attorney for the information that she has furnished them with. She feels like she's in a new area at this time, and the information that they've been receiving they've not been able to get that type of information before, and she wanted to thank her for her service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

-Crawford Market Days: 9/18 from 8 am to 2 pm ET

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Reed.

The meeting was adjourned.