

Russell County Commission  
Russell County Commission Chambers  
Meeting Minutes January 12, 2022  
9:30 A.M. EST

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

The invocation was given by Pastor Don Abrams with Trinity United Methodist Church.

Commissioner Chambers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Jennifer Davidson with the Extension Office gave a mid-year annual report update.

Chairman Corbett thanked BEAM Cable TV and The Citizen of East Alabama for covering our meetings and stated that our meetings are on Facebook Live for our citizens unable to attend. He welcomed our elected officials, department heads, media, and guests.

Chairman Corbett stated that the agenda was approved at Monday night's work session on January 10, 2022.

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

A quorum was established by County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Corbett asked for approval of the minutes for December 22, 2021 Commission meeting. Commissioner Costello motioned to approve minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

Commissioner Corbett presented Ms. Paula Thompson from the Russell County Board of Education with the School Board Member Recognition Month Resolution and recognized school board member Ms. Eugena Upshaw. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the resolution out loud as follows:

# Russell County Commission

## RESOLUTION

### *School Board Member Recognition Month*



**WHEREAS**, the Russell County Commission recognizes the importance of public education in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Russell County Commission appreciates the vital role played by those individuals who, as local school board members, establish policies to ensure an efficient, effective school system; and

**WHEREAS**, school board members serve as a voice that enables our community to preserve local lay management and control of our public schools; and

**WHEREAS**, school board members are charged with representing our local education interests to state and federal government and ensuring compliance with state and federal law; and

**WHEREAS**, school board members selflessly devote their knowledge, time and talents as advocates for our schoolchildren;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Russell County Commission recognizes and salutes the members of the Russell County Board of Education by proclaiming January 2022 as School Board Member Recognition Month.

This Resolution adopted and approved this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2022.

Motion to approve the resolution by Commissioner Epps. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

No discussion items were made.

#### **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Chairman Corbett recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who requested proposals for bids on the aerial lift. Mr. Watson requested proposals for an aerial lift and if approved will start the bid process January 21<sup>st</sup> and run three consecutive weeks until February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022. He said they will then open bids on February 14<sup>th</sup> in the Commission Chambers and anticipating awarding the bid in the Commission meeting on February 23, 2022. Chairman Corbett asked if he was working with Mrs. Colbert with the advertising. Mr. Watson agreed. Motion to approve by Commissioner Screws. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed.

Chairman Corbett recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who presented the request for bids for re-caulking the exterior of the courthouse. Mr. Watson requested the Commission to approve to accept bids for this project that will be to reseal and precast all the caulk work of the exterior courthouse building flashing and precast work and all of the expansion joints. Tentatively if approved, he would run the with the same dates as the aerial lift, they will start the bid process January 21<sup>st</sup> until February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and award the bid at the February 23, 2022, Commission meeting. Motion to approve by Commissioner Costello. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Judge Harden spoke and discussed the need, and he supported this project due to previous water issues. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed.

Chairman Corbett presented the Sanitation Director position. He spoke about the search committee which was comprised of himself, Commissioner Epps, and Commissioner Chambers to receive applications for the position of the Sanitation Director for Russell County while that position is currently being held as an interim basis by our County Engineer Blakeney. Chairman Corbett stated that (as a recap) they received five applications and four of those applicants were interviewed and the fifth one withdrew before the interview started. He said that after the four interviews were conducted, two candidates rose to the top and those candidates were brought before the Sanitation Board, and they were also in agreement that the top two candidates were well in line with the way they are trying to go in this position. He stated it was brought to the Commission in December and they were asked to postpone due to some health insurance questions being worked on. Chairman Corbett asked the Commission if they can either take action today or at least bring it to the table so that it's fair to this county that we continue to move forward and to the applicants that have put in their applications. He asked at this time what the pleasure of the Commission is. Do they need to move forward with the position or what do they need to do at this point? Commissioner Screws stated he was ready to vote. Commissioner Reed stated that they need to go ahead and move on with this today because it has been put off long enough. Chairman Corbett stated that the Commissioners have had time to look over the applications and resumes of the applicants and the two that have been presented for this position is Mr. Ward Dudley and Ms. Iris Dargan. Commissioner Screws recommended Ms. Dargan as the Sanitation Director. Chairman Corbett nominated Mr. Dudley for the position. Chairman Corbett stated that both candidates have their unique experiences going for them. The Commission voted by a show of hands for each candidate to be offered this position, 3 voted for Ms. Dargan and 3 voted for Mr. Dudley. It was a lock since Commissioner Lee was absent. Motion to postpone to a future meeting was made by Chairman Corbett. Seconded by Commissioner Costello. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called roll of the Commission as follows: Commissioner Ronnie Reed, no; Commissioner Larry Screws, yes; Commissioner Cattie Epps, yes; Commissioner Rod Costello, yes; Commissioner Scott Chambers, yes; and Chairman Chance Corbett, yes. Motion was approved to postpone the vote for the Sanitation Director until the next Commission meeting. Chairman Corbett asked Mrs. Colbert to provide the amount of the current salary for that position for the next meeting.

Chairman Corbett presented requiring all Russell County Commission employees receiving checks to go on direct deposit. Motion to approve by Commissioner Chambers.

Seconded by Commissioner Costello. In discussion, Commissioner Reed did not agree with supporting this. Commissioner Epps asked Attorney Hope Hicks if this would be a policy the Commission is taking on for the county or is this a requirement for all employees to do it? She asked should they vote on a policy for the county, and she wanted clarification on it. Ms. Hicks stated that this came up last week as they were discussing the new policy handbook, so she has taken some time and reviewed it, and has made some revisions and suggestions. Ms. Hicks said that as she was talking to Mrs. Colbert, the Chairman, and others about issues to put in the handbook and this was one of the things that she raised, was that the old handbook said direct deposit was allowed and that employees may have direct deposit. Ms. Hicks stated that her question was, do you, as you're moving forward and we're now in 2022 want to require direct deposit. She said it's a very common policy within a lot of counties and cities because its money saving and timesaving for your staff and especially when she found we have so few people that don't do it now. Ms. Hicks stated that one of the reasons she thinks the Chairman brought this up was because it's a new policy that they would like to include in the new handbook and rather surprise you with the change in rules, he wanted the Commission to be able to vote on this. Commissioner Epps understood but she was just concerned about the wording, and she was thinking if we were going to put it in the policy, would we say the policy of payroll will be direct deposit. Ms. Hicks stated that language will be put in the handbook if they approve that direct deposit is required for payroll. She said clearly the Commission is going to write checks to people but for payroll purposes, direct deposit would be required. Chairman Corbett stated that the Engineer has had to send someone from Seale to pickup checks as an un-needed trip. Commissioner Reed asked the attorney if County Officials would be exempt in this because there are a few that receive a paper check? Ms. Hicks stated that for payroll purposes and ease, everybody would just go ahead and get direct deposit. Chairman Corbett stated that the motion on the table was for anyone that receives a payroll check would be required to receive it by direct deposit. County Administrator Paulette Colbert polled the Commission as follows: Commissioner Ronnie Reed, abstained; Commissioner Larry Screws, yes; Commissioner Cattie Epps, yes; Commissioner Rod Costello, yes; Commissioner Scott Chambers, yes; and Chairman Chance Corbett, yes. Motion passed.

Chairman Corbett recognized Sheriff Taylor who presented the request to send out bid invitations for building to house COVID command vehicle. Sheriff Taylor requested to give Mrs. Colbert the authority to send out a bid for the building that they intend to house their new COVID command vehicle. He would like for her to begin advertising on January 27th, open the bid on February 17th, and award the bid at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Chairman Corbett said this should fall under Public Works due to the amount and will follow under all the money guidelines as well. Motion to accept the recommendation by Commissioner Epps. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Under discussion, Commissioner Screws asked if this was a multipurpose vehicle? Sheriff Taylor stated that it was. Commissioner Screws asked what will be done with it after COVID, or if COVID ever leaves us? Sheriff Taylor answered that it's also a vehicle for any crime scenes, or natural disasters that we may have, or any community events that might come up, so it is going to touch all the bases in our whole county. Sheriff stated that if something needs to be setup in Hurtsboro, then it's going to be there for you. Chairman Corbett added that in pandemic planning is always something in the works with emergency management so he knows this will be used for it



# FY 2021 County Rebuild Alabama Annual Report

## Russell County



as well. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

### COUNTY ENGINEER:

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the Rebuild Alabama Annual report. He stated that by the legislation that was presented by the Rebuild Alabama Act, it is required by the engineers to do an annual report on the monies we used from the CRAF money and FAEF money, which is County Rebuild Alabama money funds and Federal Exchange Funds money. Below is the report presented for approval:

| Map Index  | Project No.      | Road Name/Number   | Begin   |          | End     |          | Road Improvement Project |                     | Project Details   |   | Amount of Rebuild Alabama Funding Expended in Current Fiscal Year |   | Method in Which Rebuild Funds Were Utilized |        |                | Original CIP (Yes or No) | CRAF or FAEF              | CRAF Amount  | FAEF Amount  |
|--|------------------|--------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|--------------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|
|  |                  |                    | Lat.    | Long.    | Lat.    | Long.    | Project Length (Miles)   | Description of Work | Amount Expended in Competitive Bid Contracts            | Amount Expended Utilizing Public Works Contracts                              | Amount Expended except from Public or Public Works Contracts      | Percent Complete                              |   |        |                |                          |                           |              |              |
|  |                  |                    |         |          |         |          |                          |                     | Beginning Balance                                       |   |   |   |   |        |                |                          |                           |              |              |
|  |                  |                    |         |          |         |          |                          |                     | Annual Revenue Received by County                       |   |   |   |   |        |                |                          |                           |              |              |
|  |                  |                    |         |          |         |          |                          |                     | Rebuild Funds Received from Municipalities through MOUs |   |   |   |   |        |                |                          |                           |              |              |
| 1  | RA-RCP 57-002-20 | Lasso Loop Road    | 32.4589 | -85.0991 | 32.4603 | -85.1007 |                          | X                   | 0.70  | Resurface from Suspension Date to Quinceville Trail                           | \$79,817.50   | \$79,817.50                                   |   | 100.0% | Y              | CRAF                     | \$79,817.50               |              |              |
| 2  | RA-RCP 57-003-20 | Ford Davis Road    | 32.2621 | -85.4220 | 32.2620 | -85.4293 |                          | X                   | 0.28  | Signalizing from AL HWY 51 to County Line                                     | \$51,877.30   | \$51,877.30                                   |   | 100.0% | Y              | FAEF                     |                           | \$51,877.30  |              |
| 3  | RA-RCP 57-003-20 | Tulsaage Highway   | 32.2641 | -85.4220 | 32.2659 | -85.4337 |                          | X                   | 1.37  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Hartsboro City Limits to County Line | \$253,828.00  | \$253,828.00                                  |   | 100.0% | Y              | FAEF                     |                           | \$253,828.00 |              |
| 4  | RA-RCP 57-001-21 | Reinold Street     | 32.2344 | -85.4335 | 32.2382 | -85.4231 |                          | X                   | 0.67  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Hartsboro City Limits to County Line | \$80,803.89   | \$80,803.89                                   |   | 95.0%  | Y              | CRAF                     | \$80,803.89               |              |              |
| 5  | RA-RCP 57-001-21 | Owens Road Sec 1   | 32.2702 | -85.0000 | 32.2694 | -84.9787 |                          | X                   | 1.38  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from AL HWY 185 to Pamlico Substation     | \$166,431.89  | \$166,431.89                                  |   | 95.0%  | Y              | CRAF                     | \$166,431.89              |              |              |
| 6  | RA-RCP 57-001-21 | Owens Road Sec 2   | 32.2694 | -84.9787 | 32.2655 | -84.9877 |                          | X                   | 0.50  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from 0.500 Mile                           | \$60,201.41   | \$60,201.41                                   |   | 95.0%  | N              | CRAF                     | \$60,201.41               |              |              |
| 7  | RA-RCP 57-001-21 | Camden Road        | 32.4918 | -85.0428 | 32.5019 | -85.0586 |                          | X                   | 1.22  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Owens Road to Owens Road             | \$147,135.45  | \$147,135.45                                  |   | 95.0%  |                | CRAF                     | \$147,135.45              |              |              |
| 8  | RA-RCP 57-001-21 | Prophet Road Sec 2 | 32.4127 | -85.2790 | 32.3973 | -85.2557 |                          | X                   | 3.01  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Highway Road to Highway Road         | \$383,014.49  | \$383,014.49                                  |   | 95.0%  |                | CRAF                     | \$383,014.49              |              |              |
| 9  | RA-RCP 57-002-21 | Willie Valley Road | 32.4165 | -85.3099 | 32.4400 | -85.3082 |                          | X                   | 1.53  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Phillips Road to US 80               | \$2,000.00  | \$2,000.00                                    |   | 0.0%   | Y              | CRAF                     | \$2,000.00                |              |              |
| 10   | RA-RCP 57-004-21 | Upshaw Folds Road  | 32.1921 | -85.2593 | 32.1514 | -85.2567 |                          | X                   | 3.22  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Producers Road to End of Paved Road  | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   | 0.0%   | Y              | CRAF                     | \$0.00                    |              |              |
| 11   | RA-RCP 57-005-21 | Zion Hill Road     | 32.1928 | -85.2991 | 32.2700 | -85.2754 |                          | X                   | 6.50  | Resurfacing and Traffic Signalizing from Producers Road to Zion Hill Road     | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   | 0.0%   | Y              | FAEF                     |                           | \$0.00       |              |
| <b>Note: Only Rebuild Alabama Funds are intended to be reported</b>                                    |                  |                    |         |          |         |          |                          |                     |   |   | 14.35   | Total Rebuild Funds Expended this Fiscal Year | \$1,203,206.93                              | \$0.00 | \$1,203,206.93 | \$0.00                   | Total CRAF/FAEF Remaining | \$272,767.49 | \$591,745.53 |
| <b>Percent of Rebuild Funds Expended in Compliance with Section 7(d)(6) on the Rebuild Alabama Act</b> |                  |                    |         |          |         |          |                          |                     |   |   |   |   |   |        |                | 100%                     |                           |              |              |

Remarks: RA-RCP 57-002-20 Map Index (1) was bid in FY 20 and completed in FY 21  
 RA-RCP 57-003-20 Map Index (2 & 3) were bid in FY 20 and completed in FY 21  
 RA-RCP 57-003-21 Map Index (9) has been carried forward to the 2022 County Transportation Plan  
 RA-RCP 57-004-21 Map Index (10) has been carried forward to the 2022 County Transportation Plan  
 RA-RCP 57-005-21 Map Index (11) has been carried forward to the 2022 County Transportation Plan  
 No amendments were made to the County Transportation Plan.

Motion to approve Rebuild Alabama Annual report by Commissioner Screws. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATOR:**

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the county depositories for annual approval.

| RUSSELL COUNTY COMMISSION |                                |            |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| BANK ACCOUNTS             |                                |            |                    |
| 2021/2022                 |                                |            |                    |
| 31 ACCOUNTS               |                                |            |                    |
| 001                       | GENERAL FUND                   | 59 06 540  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 002                       | CONTINGENT FUND                | 126068700  | B B & T BANK       |
| 103                       | FT MITCHELL SR CTR FUND        | 1002018222 | SYNOVUS            |
| 104                       | MASONIC LODGE FUND             | 5900725    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 105                       | COURT COST FUND                | 59 55 836  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 111                       | GASOLINE TAX FUND              | 59 00 675  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 112                       | ROAD & BRIDGE FUND             | 10 016 1   | SYNOVUS            |
| 116                       | CAPITAL IMP FUND               | 59 00 287  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 117                       | RRR GAS FUND                   | 126068670  | B B & T BANK       |
| 118                       | SECONDARY ROAD FUND            | 126068689  | B B & T BANK       |
| 119                       | MINERAL SEVERANCE FUND         | 126068530  | B B & T            |
| 120                       | REAPPRAISAL FUND               | 59 06 607  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 194                       | CO LAW ENFORCEMENT FUND        | 1002018230 | SYNOVUS            |
| 195                       | JUVENILE DRG COURT FUND        | 1002272035 | SYNOVUS            |
| 220                       | REBUILD ALABAMA FUND           | 5746280    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 221                       | FEDERAL AID EXCHANGE FUND      | 5063892    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 299                       | CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND    | 5887771    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 230                       | CDBG-CV (CV-NC-2-002) FUND     | 5275881    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 511                       | GARBAGE FUND                   | 59-00-543  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 513                       | GARBAGE FUND ESCROW            | 5900717    | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 710                       | PAYROLL FUND                   | 59 06 623  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 718                       | OPERATION FUND-CLOSE SEPT      | 59 00 667  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 718                       | OPERATION FUND-CLOSED FEB 2021 | 59 000 89  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 718                       | OPERATION FUND-2/25/2021       | 58-390-41  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 750                       | DONATION FUND                  | 126068697  | B B & T BANK       |
| 755                       | LAW LIBRARY FUND               | 59 55 927  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 761                       | WORTHLESS CHECKS FUND          | 59 55 810  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 779                       | MV TECHNOLOGY FUND             | 125411444  | B B & T            |
| 780                       | REV COMM SPEC FUND             | 59 06 631  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 781                       | REV COMM MANUF FUND            | 12 340 4   | SYNOVUS            |
| 782                       | MOTOR VEH SPEC TRAINING        | 59 00 303  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 784                       | MVL COMM SPECIAL FUND          | 1002018214 | SYNOVUS            |
| 785                       | 90-92 MVL COMM FUND            | 135682     | SYNOVUS            |
| 786                       | LAND REDEMPTION FUND           | 125411452  | B B & T            |
| 787                       | JUVENILE SERVICE FUND          | 126068549  | B B & T            |
| 797                       | TOBACCO TAX FUND               | 59 00 295  | PHENIX GIRARD BANK |
| 798                       | BEER TAX FUND                  | 126068557  | B B & T            |

Motion to approve by Commissioner Screws. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented Severe Weather Preparedness Tax Holiday which is the last weekend in February and in order approve this, the Commission will need to authorize the Chairman to sign the resolution to be forwarded to the Alabama Department of Revenue before January 25, 2022. Motion to approve by Commissioner

Chambers. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the 2022 holiday schedule which mirrors the official state holidays for the State of Alabama as shown below.

#### RUSSELL COUNTY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

2022

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Saturday, January 1 <sup>st</sup> .....  | New Year's Day (Observed December 31, 2021)                 |
| Monday, January 17 <sup>th</sup> .....   | Martin Luther King, Jr. & Robert E. Lee's Birthday          |
| Monday, February 21 <sup>st</sup> .....  | George Washington & Thomas Jefferson's Birthday             |
| *Tuesday, March 1 <sup>st</sup> .....  | Mardi Gras (Baldwin & Mobile Counties Only)                 |
| Monday, April 25 <sup>th</sup> .....   | Confederate Memorial Day                                    |
| Monday, May 30 <sup>th</sup> .....   | National Memorial Day                                       |
| Monday, June 6 <sup>th</sup> .....   | Jefferson Davis' Birthday                                   |
| Monday, July 4 <sup>th</sup> .....   | Independence Day  |
| Monday, September 5 <sup>th</sup> .....  | Labor Day   |
| Monday, October 10 <sup>th</sup> .....   | Columbus Day & Fraternal Day & American Heritage Day        |
| Friday, November 11 .....  | Veterans' Day   |
| Thursday, November 24 <sup>th</sup> .....  | Thanksgiving  |
| Thursday, December 1 <sup>st</sup> .....   | <sup>Mrs.</sup> Rosa L. Parks Day (Commemoration Only)      |
| Sunday, December 25 <sup>th</sup> .....  | Christmas Day (Observed Monday, December 26 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Any additional days granted during the year by the Governor                              |   |
| <i>*Mardi Gras Day will be a floating holiday at the County Commission's discretion.</i> |   |

Chairman Corbett stated that every year we bank the Mardi Gras holiday, and he would like to do it in the next few weeks so we can get it out a little earlier to the public. Mrs. Colbert agreed to work on it. Motion to approve by Commissioner Screws. Seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. None opposed. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES:**

Chairman Corbett stated that the Human Resources information is included for the Commissioners in their packets for their reference.

- New Hires for December
- December Job Openings through Alabama Department of Labor
- Remaining Job Vacancies
- Updated Benefits Overview

## **COUNTY ATTORNEY:**

Interim County Attorney Hope Hicks had nothing to discuss.

## **COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Corbett spoke about one of our Russell County employees, Matthew Brown, who had his family home burn down and any help anyone can give would be greatly appreciated. He also shared that all the county volunteer fire departments are in need of volunteers and to please check your near-by volunteer departments to help.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Ft. Mitchell Pioneer Day on April 9, 2022
- Crawford Market Days: Coming in April - November on the 3rd Saturdays
- COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shot Clinic: January 29, 2022  
at the Greater Peace & Goodwill AME Church on Brown Road

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Costello seconded by Commissioner Chambers.

Meeting was adjourned.