

**Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Meeting Minutes October 26, 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 Richie Ashburn with Silver Run Baptist Church.

Commissioner Screws led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments were made.

Chairman Corbett thanked BEAM Cable TV for broadcasting the meeting live for the public on Facebook, and The Citizen of East Alabama for covering the meetings. He welcomed the elected officials, department heads, media, and guests.

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

A quorum was established by the County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

Chairman Corbett stated that the agenda was approved at the Monday night work session on October 24, 2022.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Corbett asked for approval of the October 12, 2022 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

There were no Proclamations, Resolutions and Presentations presented.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no Discussion Items presented.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chairman Corbett recognized Sheriff Heath Taylor with a request for approval of an ABC license for Mr. Walter Dix with Dix Convenience Store at 912 Prudence Road, Hurtsboro, AL 36860. He reported that they had conducted their usual investigation process and have no issues with Mr. Dix receiving an ABC license. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the license request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Corbett recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson with the approval request of a pre-budgeted mini excavator purchase from Thompson Tractor Company for a 2023 303 mini excavator for an amount of \$66,351.25. If approved, he will also request a small budget transfer on this item. Commissioner

Costello moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Screws. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed. Mr. Watson then requested a budget transfer from Line Item 239 (other maintenance and repairs) in the amount \$1,351.25 to Line Item 541 for the purchasing of this equipment. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the budget transfer request. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Corbett recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who presented the roofing bid update. Mr. Watson requested the Commission reject the bids they received for the roofing at the Extension Building due to the excessive cost amount. He stated that one of the roofs was a pre-budgeted item, so he requested the Commissioner to approve the rejection of the bids and rerun the bids (run in the local Phenix Citizen) starting on 11/4/2022 for three consecutive weeks to 11/18/2022 to reflect an addendum on the roof replacement. Commissioner Epps moved to accept the recommendations. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. Chairman Corbett, stated for the minutes, asked Mr. Watson if he has been in touch with Attorney Hicks. Mr. Watson agreed and stated due to the amount of the addendum, they had to rebid it. Chairman Corbett stated that they came in higher than the budgeted amount. Mr. Watson agreed, it was almost time and a half over. Mr. Watson clarified that they receive the bids on 11/28/2022 at 10:00 am, and they will open them in the Commissioner chambers at 10:30 am on November 28th. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

COUNTY ENGINEER:

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the Briar Creek lease agreement renewal request. Mr. Blakeney requested to go into a new five-year lease agreement with the Core of Engineers on Briar Creek Park. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

SANITATION:

Nothing was presented from the Sanitation Department.

ADMINISTRATOR:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert requested approval of the county depositories for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Commissioner Costello moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert requested to open a new bank account at Synovus Bank for the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) established by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Mrs. Colbert stated that the Examiners of Public Accounts of Alabama is requiring a new fund be opened to record the revenues and all related expenses for the LATCF. She reported that Russell County has received \$50,000.00 for fiscal year 2022 and is eligible to receive \$50,000.00 for fiscal year 2023. She also stated that this is for eligible revenue sharing counties and the funds may be used on any governmental purpose except for a lobbying activity. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the Medical Cannabis Resolution. She stated that before a license can be considered by the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission, a resolution authorizing the operation of medical cannabis dispensing sites must be approved for the Chair's signature. A copy of the resolution was included in the Commissioner's binders. Commissioner Lee moved to accept the resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. Chairman Corbett clarified that this is not approving any sites or licenses and that this is one of the pieces of the legislation requirements before any can be considered in our county. Commissioner Lee also stated that the approval is by state board, not by us (the Commission), and is limited for the whole state, so the chances that Russell County gets one is slim. Chairman Corbett also stated that it will be in pill form, and not grown in backyards. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert provided the Commissioners the monthly approved expenditures/amounts paid from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund update report included in their binders.

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Attorney Hope Hicks updated the Commission on the work she is doing on the lease with the Russell County Board of Education for the Pittsview property that will be used as a walking trail. She stated she has a couple of things left to iron out with the Board of Education's attorney, specifically as to the deed and she should have the lease finished today or tomorrow. She requested to authorize the chairman to sign the lease with the term of 99 years, for \$1 annual rent. She stated that this would allow the County to use the property and part of the lease would be that you could remove the structures that are on the property, at the Commission's discretion, and could do a walking trail or other public park uses for this property. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the Chairman to sign the lease, and asked was it included that if we don't do anything, it reverts back? Ms. Hicks agreed. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Chairman Corbett asked if there were any restrictions on what can be done on the property? Ms. Hicks stated that the lease states it would have to be park related and it allows the removal of buildings, putting up buildings, requires responsibility of maintenance of the property or any structures on the property, or the maintenance of the current structures. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Costello discussed with Attorney Hicks the school board lease space agreement for the Annex Building across from the courthouse.

Commissioner Screws discussed their county redistricting meeting completed the day before in Montgomery. Judge Harden clarified that this redistricting has no effect on the upcoming November 8th election, no polling places will change for this election.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements were made.

Commissioner Screws moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All were in favor by saying aye. The meeting was adjourned.