

**Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Meeting Minutes January 11, 2023
9:30 A.M. EST**

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

The invocation was given by Reverend Don Abrams with Trinity UMC.

Commissioner Costello led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments were made.

Chairman Costello 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 Gentry Lee, Commissioner Chance Corbett, Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Larry Screws, and Chairman Rod Costello. Commissioner Cattie Epps was not present. Also present were County Attorney Hope Hicks, and County Administrator Paulette Colbert who kept the minutes.

A quorum was established by the County Administrator Paulette Colbert.

Chairman Costello stated the agenda was approved in Monday's work session on January 9, 2023.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Costello asked for approval of the December 28, 2022 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Chairman Costello presented approval for proclamations on both James B. Sellers and Coach William "Pete" Ingersoll. Commissioner Corbett moved to accept the proclamations. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello presented a proclamation that was approved in a prior meeting honoring the retirement of District Attorney Kenneth Davis. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the following proclamation that was previously approved by the Commission.

**RUSSELL COUNTY COMMISSION
PROCLAMATION HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
KENNETH EDWIN DAVIS**

WHEREAS, Kenneth Edwin Davis served the citizens of Russell County, Alabama in the District Attorney's Office tirelessly for more than 44 years; and

WHEREAS, In 1983 Kenneth Edwin Davis was appointed District Attorney and was elected to six consecutive terms making him the longest serving District Attorney in Alabama history; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Edwin Davis has lived his entire life in Phenix City, Alabama, married Emily Carpenter Davis and together had one son, Kenneth Davis, Jr. Mr. Davis was a 1965 distinguished graduate of Central High School, was an honor graduate of the first class of Chattahoochee Valley Community College, an honor graduate of Auburn University and Samford University Cumberland School of Law; and

WHEREAS, During his career, Mr. Davis was appointed by five different Attorney Generals to serve in seven Alabama counties as Assistant Attorney General; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Edwin Davis served on many boards and committees including being President of the Alabama District Attorney's Association and being on the Board of Directors for the Russell County Shelter for Battered Women and the Russell County Child Advocacy Center for which he was instrumental in both their establishments; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Edwin Davis served in the United States Army and the Alabama National Guard for eight years; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Edwin Davis holds one of the highest conviction rates in Alabama history and was named the "Top Gun" prosecutor by Mothers Against Drunk Drivers and was the recipient of the Joe Hubbard White Hat Award which signifies the fighter of good fights and champion of the weak, the defender of innocence, the conqueror of evil, and a voice for those who have none. This distinction is to those who have humbly and extraordinarily distinguished themselves in the pursuit of justice; and

THEREFORE, we, the elected members of the Russell County Commission, hereby proclaim that it is our privilege and honor to approve this Proclamation to recognize the retirement of District Attorney Kenneth Edwin Davis who has served with distinction and honor the citizens of Russell County and the State of Alabama.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED, this 11th day of January, 2023.

Chairman Costello presented the proclamation for James B. Sellers. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the following proclamation approved by the Commission.

Russell County Commission

PROCLAMATION

TO HONOR

James B. Sellers

WHEREAS: *the Russell County Commission along with the families and community of Russell County wish to salute James B. Sellers, a born leader, servant, risk taker, and lover of mankind has helped many people to be successful in life. Born in Phenix City, AL as the first child of the late Mr. & Mrs. Tillman Sellers. Educated in the Phenix City School System, attended Susie E. Allen Elementary, and a 1963 graduate of South Girard High School. Further, he received an Associate Degree in Business Education from Southern Union Community College in Opelika, AL.*

WHEREAS: *James is a dedicated member of St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Crawford, AL. Sellers began his leadership role early as a bold, God-fearing young man serving as a Steward and Trustee. Later, he chose to do one task and was appointed as a Trustee. Presently, he is serving as President of the Trustee Board and Trustee for the Montgomery, Phenix City, and Opelika Districts. He takes these positions seriously: therefore, he makes himself available to aide all the churches in the District when called upon.*

WHEREAS: *Sellers was employed with the Michelin Tire Company, Opelika. He worked faithfully for the Local Union for 12 years as Division Chairman. Ultimately, because he was a risk taker and leader, he traveled extensively to various seminars, conferences and informative meetings that added to his repertoire of skills. He was better able to serve the employees while at the same time protected their employment rights. He retired after 35 years of service. Additionally, he is a proud Vietnam War Veteran.*

WHEREAS: James, a prominent citizen of Russell County, a very outspoken individual is a founding member of the prestigious organization, United to Save Ourselves (USO) in Phenix City. Meanwhile, he has served as President for the past 12 years. This organization was formed to help the youth in the community become productive members of society.

*Throughout the community, Mr. Sellers serves on the following:
Russell County Children Advisory Council, Board of Directors for Columbus Times Advisory Council,
and Vice President of South Girard Alumni Association.*

WHEREAS: James knows that his strength, endurance, patience and perseverance come from God; therefore, he believes, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

THEREFORE, we, the members of the Russell County Commission, hereby extend James B. Sellers our sincere and grateful appreciation for his dedicated service to Russell County, Alabama, our congratulations and our best wishes to him and his family for continued success and happiness for years to come.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED, this 11th day of January, 2023.

Chairman Costello presented the proclamation for Coach William "Pete" Ingersoll. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the following proclamation approved by the Commission.

Russell County Commission PROCLAMATION TO HONOR Coach William "Pete" Ingersoll

WHEREAS: the Russell County Commission along with the families and community of Russell County wish to salute Coach William "Pete" Ingersoll who attended and graduated from Mother Mary Mission. In high school he lettered in football and basketball for four consecutive years.

WHEREAS: in football he was the team starting quarterback and team captain. In basketball he was the team captain and the starting point guard. The all-time leading scorer with an average of 24.5 points per game. In one game he scored 51 points and was named the team's Most Valuable Player in 1963.

WHEREAS: in his spare time, he played baseball for several local baseball teams as a superb 2nd baseman from 1967-1979. He played for teams like the American Legion Phenix City Baseball teams, Phenix City Braves, Phenix City Cardinals, and the Mount Olive All Stars. He also served as a lifeguard at the Rosemont Park.

WHEREAS: after high school, Pete Ingersoll attended Fort Valley State University where he starred on the Men's Varsity Basketball and Baseball Team. He was on the Fort Valley 1966 NALA Baseball Team. He was Co-Captain and starting point guard on the basketball team from 1962-1966 where he consistently led the team in assists and as a top scorer. Pete was voted Most Versatile at Fort Valley State.

WHEREAS: after his college days, he continued his career as an Educator and Coach. He taught History and Science, coached football, and was head baseball and basketball coach as follows:

*Head Basketball Coach at Mount Olive High School: (1966-1983) Reginal Champs 1977,
1980 State Playoffs, 1980 State Final 4.
Head Basketball Coach at Chavala High School (1983-1984)
Head Basketball Coach at Pacelli High School (1984-1998)
Head Basketball Coach at Russell County High School (1998-2013)
Athletic Director at Russell County High School*

WHEREAS: he accumulated 47 years of teaching, coaching and assisting many students into college academically and athletically.

THEREFORE, we, the members of the Russell County Commission, hereby extend Coach William "Pete" Ingersoll our sincere and grateful appreciation for his dedicated service to Russell County, Alabama, our congratulations and our best wishes to him and his family for continued success and happiness for years to come.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED, this 11th day of January, 2023.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no discussion items.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chairman Costello presented the request and moved to appoint Enforcement Officer Bill Friend to complete the term remaining due to Mr. Lunsford's resignation on the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello presented the request Rylo's ATM, LLC and he moved to place one of his ATM's in the Judicial Center, after contract paperwork is signed. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized EMA Director David Martin who presented the request to approve the purchase of a F-250 2022 pickup truck that was a budgeted item on the state contract for \$43,436.00. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

COUNTY ENGINEER:

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the request to purchase a 2024 Mack single axle dump truck in the amount of \$106,783.00, which was a budgeted item, off the ACCA County Joint bid. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the request to purchase a 2023 MowerMax Boom cutter with a mulching head (like the one they bought a couple of years ago) in the amount of \$210,700.00, which was a budgeted item, off the ACCA County Joint bid. This includes both the machine and the head. Commissioner Chambers moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the annual Fiscal Year 2022 Rebuild Alabama Report from the Rebuild Alabama County Funds.

SANITATION:

Sanitation Director Ward Dudley reminded everyone that the garbage will not be picked up on Monday due to the federal holiday, and they will do Monday and Tuesday's pickups together on Tuesday.

ADMINISTRATOR:

There was nothing presented in this area.

CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented a request from Russell County Child Advocacy Center for approved funds payment of \$10,000.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. Commissioner Corbett stated that these projects fund payments have already been approved, but she is asking to vote when the checks are cut. County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the request from New Life Center for Change, Inc. for approved funds payment of \$10,000.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett amended his motion to cover all three requests to include the Exchange Club, as well. Mrs. Colbert presented the request from The Exchange Club of Phenix City for approved funds payment of \$10,000.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. There was already a first and second motion for all three of these requests. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes; District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes;

District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion passed.

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Attorney Hope Hicks updated the Commission that the Pittsview property survey is being conducted and she is now reviewing the lease, and stated that she should have it back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Commissioner Corbett requested and moved for the attorney, based on the Monday night's work session involving two projects that they are working on, to look into the sewage jurisdictions contract that they have with the city to accept the sewage from our current systems and future systems, and also, any options moving forward on those projects. Chairman Costello stated that the motion is to have the attorney to look over the legalities of their two different projects involving sewer. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes; District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes; District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Reed reminded the Commission of their redistricting appointment on February 7th. Commissioner Corbett stated he would verify it, but as far as he knew nothing has changed, and he will report it back at the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements were made.

Commissioner Screws moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners present were in favor by saying aye. Meeting was adjourned.