

**Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Meeting Minutes January 25, 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 Karen Seifert with Summerville Methodist Church.

Commissioner Screws 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 Cattie Epps, Commissioner Chance Corbett, Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, Commissioner Larry Screws, and Chairman Rod Costello. 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 23, 2023.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Costello asked for approval of the January 11, 2023 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye, except Commissioner Epps who abstained since she was not at the January 11th meeting. Motion passed.

PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented two proclamation approvals for School Board Member Recognition Month for both Russell County Board of Education and Phenix City Board of Education. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the following proclamation:



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 and the Phenix City Board of Education by proclaiming January 2023 as School Board Member Recognition Month.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED, this 25th day of January, 2023.

Commissioner Corbett moved to accept both of the proclamations. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no discussion items.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented an ALDOT Feasibility Study request to place traffic lights in three intersections due to increased traffic flow and sight issues. One is US 80 and Alabama State Route 169 South, one is US 80 and Alabama State Route 169 North, and one is Alabama State Route 165 and County Road 39 (Nuckols Road). Commissioner Corbett moved for the Chair to sign a letter to be sent to the Alabama Department of Transportation, and request our county engineer assist writing the letter, requesting a study for these 3 intersections. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized General Manager of the Russell County Water Authority Sheppard Dearing who thanked the Commission for approving money from the ARPA Funds for infrastructure improvements with the water authority and shared a listing of 2023 projects.

COUNTY ENGINEER:

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented, under the Parks and Recreation budget, the following budget transfer request: increase Line-Item No. 304 /Contract Services by \$1,500.00 and decrease Line-Item No. 219 /Other Misc. Supplies by \$1,500.00 due to them having to contract out the removal of two trees from the Maintenance Club facility site in Crawford. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

There were no items in this area.

ADMINISTRATOR:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the ACCA Liability Fund participation renewal. She reported that if the Commission wishes to continue participating in the liability self-insurance fund with the Association of County Commissions of Alabama a resolution and a participation agreement will need to be signed by the Chair. This renewal is for the 2024-2026 period. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the Chair to sign the documents. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert discussed receiving the first payment from the Alabama Local Plaintiff Opioid Recovery Fund because of the McKesson settlement in the amount of \$8,120.27. She stated that these are restricted funds and shall be used solely for opioid remediation. She requested to open the Opioid Settlement Fund as per the Examiners of Public Accounts of Alabama at Truist Bank. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:

County Administrator Paulette Colbert stated that on December 14, 2022, the Commission approved to use Coronavirus Rescue Act Funds for digitization of the older marriage records in the Probate Judge's office in the amount of \$122,858.60. Mrs. Colbert requested to pay an invoice from RDI Technologies Incorporated who are requesting payment be made directly to the service provider, which is Cott Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$97,620.00 Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Paulette Colbert took a roll call vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, 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 Administrator Paulette Colbert presented invoices number 3 & 4 from Hosey-Lancour Construction, LLC totaling \$258,518.31 for project RCSO-Covid Supply Storage Building and requested to pay these invoices from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert took a roll call vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, 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 Administrator Paulette Colbert presented an invoice from Hecht Burdeshaw Architects, Inc. in the amount of \$2,916.27 for architectural services rendered through December 31, 2022 on project 2022-006 RCSO Covid Supply Storage Building and requested to pay this from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Paulette Colbert took a roll call vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, 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 Administrator Paulette Colbert presented three requests for remittance of the approved funds from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. One from Ladonia Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$140,000.00, one from Safe Landing for Veterans in the amount of \$10,000.00, and one from the Russell County Historical Commission in the amount of \$10,000.00. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve all three requests. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert took a roll call vote of the Commission as follows: District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 5: Commissioner Epps, 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 on the lease with the Board of Education for the Pittsview property and she discussed the Ladonia sewer and her research process for getting the sewer system lines put in Ladonia. She stated that there was no method to compel the city to tie the lines in. The city would have to agree to tie in and unless we contract differently the lines would automatically become the city's lines.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Corbett discussed the Ladonia sewer and Ft. Mitchell sewage.

Commissioner Reed asked Economic Development Tourism Director Victor Cross for an update on the grant for the Ft. Mitchell sewage.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements were made.

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