

**Russell County Commission**  
**Russell County Commission Chambers**  
**PUBLIC HEARING FOR ABATE NUISANCE COMPLAINTS**  
**Hearing Minutes for December 28, 2022**

A public hearing for abatement nuisance complaints was called to order by Chairman Rod Costello.

Chairman Costello recognized Enforcement Officer Bill Friend who presented the public hearing for three abatement nuisance complaints by resolution from the Commission meeting on December 14, 2022. He presented the first property abatement at 58 Duke Drive, Ft. Mitchell, Alabama.

No public comments were made.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Corbett. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. The public hearing for 58 Duke Drive, Ft. Mitchell, Alabama was closed.

Chairman Costello recognized Enforcement Officer Bill Friend who presented the public hearing for abatement for the property at 16 Bob White Court, Phenix City, Alabama.

No public comments were made.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Corbett. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. The public hearing for 16 Bob White Court, Phenix City, Alabama was closed.

Chairman Costello recognized Enforcement Officer Bill Friend presented the public hearing for abatement for the property at 29 Blueberry Road, Seale, Alabama.

No public comments were made.

Motion to close the public hearing was moved by Commissioner Corbett. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. The public hearing for 29 Blueberry Road, Seale, Alabama was closed.

Commissioner Lee moved to adjourn the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. The public hearing was adjourned.

**Russell County Commission**  
**Russell County Commission Chambers**  
**Meeting Minutes December 28, 2022**  
**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 Corbett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

General Manager Sheppard Dearing of Russell County Water Authority shared updates in reference to the weather and added helpful information in conserving water at this time.

Ms. Annie Long with 187 Battle Road spoke about issues with her driveway she wished to be resolved because of her personally parking a county school bus in her driveway. Commissioner Screws shared information on her issue since it's on private property.

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 presented the December 28, 2022 agenda for approval since Monday was a holiday and there was no work session. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Costello asked for approval of the December 14, 2022 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. Six Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Commissioner Screws abstained because he was not present for the December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Motion passed.

#### **PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented a proclamation honoring the retirement of Judge Michael J. Bellamy. County Administrator Paulette Colbert read the following proclamation that was previously approved by the Commission.

**RUSSELL COUNTY COMMISSION  
PROCLAMATION HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF  
JUDGE MICHAEL J. BELLAMY**

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy selflessly served the citizens of Russell County, Alabama for over 46 years; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy served as Assistant Russell County District Attorney in 1977, was appointed in 1998 and elected without opposition in 2000 as the first Black District Court Judge in Russell County, Alabama. He was appointed as the first Black Circuit Court Judge in 2013 and first Black Presiding Circuit Judge of Russell County's 26<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit in 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy was raised in Phenix City, Alabama and is married to the former Florence Weeks, and has four children, Christy, Leslie, Michelle, and Joseph. Judge Bellamy, was a 1966 graduate of Mother Mary Mission School, a 1970 graduate of South Girard High School, a 1973 graduate of Tuskegee Institute and a 1976 graduate of Southern University School of Law with a Juris Doctorate Degree; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy truly has a servant's heart for he has and continues to serve on a multitude of professional, civic and spiritual organizations that enriches our community and all of Alabama.

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy spearheaded Russell County's first adult drug court, mental health court, and juvenile and family drug court programs for which he received an award from the Chattahoochee Valley Accountability Courts Symposium. These programs continue to have a significant impact in the lives of many who through these programs have reunited families and have become productive citizens of our community; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy served for fifteen years in the United States Army Reserve as Captain and Platoon Leader; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael J. Bellamy has received numerous awards including the Howell Heflin Award, the Unity Award Alpha Phi Alpha, the Lee-Russell Ministerial Alliance Unity Award, the National TRIO Achievers Award, the Troy University Leadership Excellence in Community Service award, the Paul Harris Fellows Rotary Club award, the Hometown High Achievers award and the Chattahoochee Valley Boys Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen award; and

**THEREFORE**, we, the members of the Russell County Commission, hereby extend to Judge Michael J. Bellamy our sincere and grateful appreciation for his dedicated service to Russell County, Alabama, our congratulations on his well-earned retirement, and our best wishes to him and his family for continued success and happiness for years to come.

**PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED**, this 28th day of December, 2022.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Chairman Costello recognized EMA Director David Martin who recognized Mr. Randy Collinge with many of his recent accomplishments along with him completing his Alabama Association of Emergency Managers Basic Level Certification, the first of four levels of certification for emergency managers.

Chairman Costello recognized EMA Director David Martin who updated the Commission on the progress of the construction of the Russell County Public Safety Logistics Building.

#### **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Chairman Costello recognized Enforcement Officer Bill Friend who presented the abatement nuisance complaints for three properties of 58 Duke Drive, Ft. Mitchell, Alabama, 16 Bob White Court, Phenix City, Alabama, and 29 Blueberry Road, Seale, Alabama and by resolution, to declare the properties a public nuisance and order the abatement of the nuisance. Commissioner Epps moved to accept the recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized Enforcement Officer Bill Friend who presented an abatement nuisance complaint for 6 Pickins Street, Phenix City. Mr. Friend asked the Commission, by resolution, to declare the property a public nuisance and order the abatement of the nuisance and requested that a public hearing be scheduled for this property on January 11, 2023, at 9:30 am, at the next scheduled Commission meeting. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed. Mr. Friend added that since they are storing vehicles that belong to another person on the property, he will get with our attorney to possibly get a court order to remove them off of the property because you cannot legally just remove vehicles off of the property. He will do the cleanup, then look into removing the vehicles, which will be a 2-part cleanup.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented Rylo Swift with Rylo's ATM, LLC with the request to have his ATM placed in the Russell County courthouse. Mrs. Colbert stated that she has not heard from Phenix Girard on the original contract for their ATM on our property. Commissioner Reed moved to allow the ATM from Rylo's ATM, LLC be placed at the courthouse. The motion died for lack of a second. After further discussion, Commissioner Screws asked Mrs. Colbert to look further into the Phenix Girard contract and add it to the next meeting agenda. Commissioner Epps verified if the county would be liable with issues with customers. Mr. Rylo stated that the commission will not be liable.

Chairman Costello recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who presented the request to reject the sole sealed roof bids for 506 & 508 14<sup>th</sup> Street buildings that totaled \$210,600 which was over the budgeted amount for the project. He also stated that this was the second time this was bid. Commissioner Corbett moved to accept his request. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who presented the request to award the roofing projects for each 506 & 508 14<sup>th</sup> Street to Superior Roofing. Mr. Watson requested to accept the quoted amount of \$34,000 for 508 14<sup>th</sup> Street (Extension Office building) from Superior Roofing. Commissioner Corbett moved to accept the request. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. Commissioner Corbett noted, for the auditors, that these are being handled as 2 separate projects, not as one project. Mr. Watson stated that this is a pre-budgeted project that came in under what they budgeted for. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized Maintenance Director Leon Watson who presented the request to accept the roofing project quote for 506 14<sup>th</sup> Street (Board of Education building) from Superior Roofing in the amount of \$24,300. Mr. Watson stated that this is a non-budgeted item but reminded the Commission that they approved a certain amount of money for the Board of Education building roof a few meetings ago to be paid from the Capital Improvement Fund. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the quote request. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented, in the form of a motion, the CVCC Hall of Fame sponsorship request in the amount of \$2,500 paid out of the Contingency Funds from the Commission since Ms. Peggy Martin, a prior Russell County commissioner and chair will be awarded in this year's CVCC Hall of Fame event. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. After further discussion, Chairman Costello requested to pay \$1,250 of his project funds towards the \$2,500 sponsorship. Commissioner Corbett amended his motion request to be \$1,250 paid out of the commission Contingency Funds for the sponsorship and \$1,250 from Commissioner Costello's project fund. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

Chairman Costello presented the Ladonia sewage project which was discussed at the last Commission meeting. He moved for the Ladonia sewage project to go as planned and requested to pay \$1.375 million out of the ARPA Funds to complete the project. Commissioner Corbett seconded the request. After discussion, Commissioner Reed asked Attorney Hicks if we are legal to purchase sewage in the Ladonia area. Ms. Hicks stated that it is legal for us to fund sewage in the Ladonia area. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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 ENGINEER:**

Nothing was presented in this area.

#### **SANITATION:**

Nothing was presented in this area.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR:**

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the 2023 Severe Weather Preparedness annual sales tax holiday that is scheduled for February 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023. She stated in order for Russell County to participate, a resolution needs to be signed by the chair and returned to the Alabama Department of Revenue before January 24, 2023. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor by saying aye. Motion passed.

#### **CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:**

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented and moved a request to give an appropriation of \$10,000 to Safe Landing for Veterans from the ARPA funds, which was left off the appropriations distributed in the last meeting. Mrs. Colbert stated Safe Landing for Veterans was on the original appropriation listing that was approved by Attorney Hicks. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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, abstained; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the request to pay an invoice from Hecht Burdeshaw Architects, Inc. in the amount of \$1,428.00 for architectural services rendered through November 30, 2022 for the design contract on the Russell County Public Logistics Building, as listed as project 2022-006 RSCO COVID Supply Storage Building, from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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 a request from Mother Mary Mission, Inc. for approved funds payment of \$10,000 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Reed. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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, abstained; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion passed.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the requests from the Crawford and Ft. Mitchell fire departments for remittance in the amount of \$140,000 for each from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Lee. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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, abstained; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion passed.

#### **COUNTY ATTORNEY:**

Attorney Hope Hicks updated the Commission and presented an estimate from Nathan McBride to do a survey for the Pittsview school property (so the Commission can consider entering into a lease with the Board of Education) in the amount of \$7,400 to do an updated boundary survey of both parcels, to rough flag the boundary lines, resetting missing corners, do a legal description, and then record the plat with the Probate Office. She stated that the deeds have passed through a couple of different sales over the years and stated that this is the best way to have a legal deed to enter into the lease, if it is going to be used as walking trails and a park area in Pittsview for 24 acres. Mrs. Colbert stated that there would be money in the Road and Bridge Fund under Other Professional Services to be used for this. Commissioner Screws moved to accept this recommendation from the attorney. Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. County Administrator Paulette Colbert called 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.

#### **COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Lee discussed his liking voice votes on everything so there is no discrepancy.

Commissioner Reed verified their Montgomery redistricting meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Commissioner Corbett thanked our different departments on all of their work during this holiday season. Chairman Costello added his appreciation to them also. Chairman Lee spoke of water leaks during the cold.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Announcements were made.

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