

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR FAIR HOUSING  
APRIL 26, 2023**

The public hearing was called to order by Chair Rod Costello.

Business included Fair Housing general information presented by Mr. Ben McGarr with Lee-Russell Council of Governments.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Reed seconded to adjourn. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**Russell County Commission  
Russell County Commission Chambers  
Meeting Minutes April 26, 2023  
9:30 A.M. EST**

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

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

Commissioner Epps led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments.

Chair 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 Chair 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.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Commissioner Corbett requested adding an item to the agenda under business to change the bid date opening for the pavilion due to the need for extra advertisement in the event the cost meets or exceeds the \$50,000.00 Public Works requirement. Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Lee seconded to approve the agenda with the requested addition. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chair Costello requested approval of the minutes from Commission meeting on April 12, 2023. Commissioner Epps moved; Seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

Commissioner Epps requested approval to compose a proclamation for Florence Williams to be presented at a later date. Commissioner Epps moved; Commissioner Screws seconded to approve composing the proclamation. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Corbett requested approval to compose a proclamation for Arthur "Buster" Sanders to be presented at a later date. Commissioner Corbett moved; seconded by Commissioner Lee to approve composing the proclamation. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Commissioner Screws discussed the Russell County Water and Sewer Board expansion. Attorney Hope Hicks requested to postpone this and allow her to review their resolution. Commissioner Epps moved; seconded by Commissioner Corbett to postpone this for the Attorney to review. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Chair Costello recognized Sheriff Heath Taylor with a budget amendment request. Sheriff Taylor requested to amend the Sheriff's Department budget as follows:

Decrease line item 212 (fuel and lubricants) and increase line item 163 (Data Processing Services)  
\$15,000.00

Decrease line item 212 (fuel and lubricants) and increase line item 234 (Motor Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance) \$85,000.00

Commissioner Corbett moved; Seconded by Commissioner Chambers to approve the Sheriff's request. All Commissioner in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

David Martin, EMA Director requested approval for the Chair to sign the AAEM EMPG Cooperative agreements. Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Chambers seconded the request. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Corbett requested to change the previously approved dates for soliciting bids for a pavilion due to the possibility the cost could meet or exceed the \$50,000.00 Public Works requirement. He requested to advertise in the newspaper on May 4<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup>, and May 18<sup>th</sup> and open the bids on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm ET in the County Commission Chambers by the County Administrator. Commissioner Corbett moved; seconded by Commissioner Reed to amend the advertising and bid opening dates as requested. All Commissioners in favor said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**COUNTY ENGINEER:**

The County Engineer had nothing to present.

**SANITATION:**

The Sanitation Director had nothing to present.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

The Economic Development Director had nothing to present.

**ADMINISTRATOR:**

The County Administrator had nothing to present.

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

EMA Director, David Martin reported that he returned four outdoor AED cabinets that were purchased for the County parks due to them not being conditioned and could shorten the life of the AEDs. A refund in the amount of \$2,396.00 has been received. He requested the purchase of four cabinets that are conditioned in the amount of \$2,676.00. The difference in price is \$280.00. He requested making this purchase with the additional amount of \$280.00 to be paid from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Lee moved; Commissioner Corbett seconded the request. 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 unanimously.

County Administrator, Paulette Colbert requested paying an invoice from Hecht Burdeshaw Architects, Inc. for architectural services rendered through March 31, 2023 for project 2022-006 RCS Covid Supply Bldg in the amount of \$2,859.28 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Chambers seconded to approve the request. 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 unanimously.

County Administrator, Paulette Colbert requested paying an invoice from Ball, Ball, Matthews & Novak in the amount of \$90.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Screws moved; Commissioner Corbett seconded to approve the request. 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 unanimously.

County Administrator, Paulette Colbert requested paying an invoice from Hosey-Lancour Construction LLC for project RCSO-Covid Supply Storage Building in the amount of \$264,416.40 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Commissioner Corbett moved; Commissioner Chambers seconded to approve the request. 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 unanimously.

County Administrator, Paulette Colbert stated that the monthly ARPA report was in their binders for review.

### **ATTORNEY:**

Attorney Hope Hicks presented the Public Records Access and Rates Schedule as follows:

#### **PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS AND RATES SCHEDULE**

The County Commission and its departments will accept written requests for information from the public. Once staff receives the Public Records Access Request, the requested information will be made available to the requestor within fifteen business days; however, requests that require substantial time to collect may take additional time. In such cases when staff anticipates the collection of documents will exceed fifteen business days, staff will inform the requestor of an anticipated date and time when the documentation will be available for review. In order to provide said public records and continue to maintain proper office operation, a time will be arranged for the requestor to come to the County office where the requested records are located to inspect and view the files, provided that the requested records are not covered by the Right to Privacy Limitations or other sensitive document restrictions. The requestor has the right to request assistance in locating said records and to have copies made of the same.

**COSTS:** The County is permitted by law to recoup reasonable costs incurred in providing public records which can include retrieval, research, preparation, and duplication costs. The requestor will be provided in advance with the estimated cost for materials, labor and shipping or delivery.

**LABOR:** No labor charge is imposed when a nominal amount of staff time is needed to respond to a request. Requests requiring more than 15 minutes of staff time shall be charged at the hourly rate of the least-paid staff member of the applicable department who can respond to the request.

**DEPOSIT:** A deposit is required when the County Administrator determines that more than one hour of staff time will be needed to respond to a request. If the final cost is less than the deposit, the difference will be refunded; if greater, the additional cost must be paid prior to delivery or review of the records.

**RATES SCHEDULE:**

Standard copies (up to 11" x 17") are 25¢ per page. Charges for maps, plats and other large documents are set by the applicable department.

Certifications are \$1.00 per certification.

Staff Labor is charged at the hourly rate of the least-paid employee of the applicable department who can respond to the request billed at quarter hour increments. The Department Head is responsible for logging staff time and providing that time to the County Administrator who will direct an invoice to be prepared to be submitted to the requestor.

Staff will retain copies of all information/documentation provided to the requestor.

Commissioner Epps moved; Commissioner Corbett seconded to approve the Public Records Access and Rates Schedule as presented by the County Attorney. 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 unanimously.

**COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Corbett mentioned the SAFE Kids program and the benefits of that program.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Announcements were made.

Probate Judge, Alford Harden reported the scanning of the books in his office paid from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund has been completed. He also reported that the recent archery tournament that was held in Russell County was very positive for the County.

There being no further business, Commissioner Lee moved; Commissioner Reed seconded to adjourn the meeting.