

**Russell County Commission
Russell County Commission Chambers
Meeting Minutes October 11, 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 Grant Parker with Epworth Church.

Commissioner Epps led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments made.

Chair Costello thanked the Commission's IT department for broadcasting the meeting on Facebook live for the public, and The Citizen of East Alabama for covering the meeting. 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.

Chair Costello requested approval of today's October 11, 2024 agenda since there was not a work session this past Monday due to the holiday closure. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Costello requested approval of the minutes from the Commission meeting on September 27, 2023. Commissioner Epps moved to accept the minutes; seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to approve the minutes.

PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented a request to prepare a proclamation for Lieutenant Holland. Commissioner Reed moved to approve the preparation request and for it to be presented at a later Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Lee. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Chairman Costello recognized Chief Building Official Bubba Roberts which presented a salary schedule adjustment request for his employees for educational purposes which was included in his budget. Commissioner Lee moved to add this to the next meeting under Business. This will be moved to the next meeting and under Business.

Chairman Costello recognized EMA Director David Martin who presented the request to purchase a new 2024 F-150 truck for \$44,430 that will replace their Chevy 1500 that does not work anymore. Mr. Martin stated this as notification of a budgeted item purchase for over \$15,000.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Chairman Costello recognized Chief William Alexander who presented the awards for the 2023/2024-year Jail Food Bids as follows: award Merchants Foods the Jail Food Bid, Bimbo Bread Company for the Jail Bread Bid, and Columbus Paper Company for the Jail Supplies Bid. Commissioner Lee moved to accept the award recommendations; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Chief Appraiser Heath Crowe who presented the request to pay Flagship GIS annual subscription in the amount of \$15,330. Commissioner Lee moved to accept the request; seconded by Commission Screws. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Chief Appraiser Heath Crowe who presented the request to pay the E-Ring Inc. annual subscription in the amount of \$59,204. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the request; seconded by Commission Epps. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Revenue Commissioner Naomi Elliott who presented the request to pay the E-Ring Inc. annual subscription in the amount of \$19,735. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the request; seconded by Commission Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented a request to make a project fund donation to Mother Mary Mission in the amount of \$7,000, Commissioner Corbett requested to donate \$1,000, and Commissioner Lee requested to also donate \$1,000 for a total of \$9,000.00 from their project funds. Motion to approve the requests by Commissioner Screws; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Reed who presented a request to make a project fund donation to Phenix City Housing Authority in the amount of \$500. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commission Epps. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Tag Commissioner Carrie Bowman who presented the request to pay annual computer maintenance to S&W, Inc. for \$39,723.96. Commissioner Screws moved to accept the request; seconded by Commission Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and 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 in this area.

CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:

Chairman Costello recognized County Engineer Shawn Blakeney who presented the request to purchase the lighting at Ladonia (purchase poles and lights) from Musco Sports Lighting, off the Sourcwell bid, purchase for contract # 071619-MSL in the amount of \$ 445,000 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Motion to approve by Commissioner Corbett; Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. 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. The motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized County Engineer Shawn Blakeney who presented the request to approve a change order from S. Electrical Contractors to run underground power for the Ladonia scoreboards in the amount of \$26,517.00 from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. Motion to approve by Commissioner Lee; Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. 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. The motion passed.

Chairman Costello recognized County Engineer Shawn Blakeney who presented the bid award results for the restrooms at Ladonia and Ft. Mitchell. This includes everything except the septic and sewer to the restrooms. The lowest bid is from Hosey-Lancour Corp. in the amount of \$289,000. This is to be paid from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund, but this will put us over what was budgeted for pavilions and restrooms. Mr. Blakeney stated that including the sewer it will be about \$45,000 over. Motion to approve the request by Commissioner Lee. Seconded by Commissioner Epps. Attorney Hope Hicks stated that she would like to look at this since they will be going over the million because there would be a different justification for it. She wants to make sure that she can meet those qualifications and then approve this at the next meeting. She wants to make sure that we are spending the ARPA money like it is supposed to be spent. Commissioner Lee withdrew his motion. Chairman Costello approved his withdraw and stated that this will be moved to the next meeting under the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund area, and it will give Attorney Hicks time to go over this.

County Administrator Paulette Colbert presented the request to pay an invoice from Diversified Computer Services, LLC in the amount of \$12,000 for the annual PROCORE Software System license from the Coronavirus Rescue Act Fund. She stated this is the software used to file our reports with the Treasury Department. Motion to approve by Commissioner Screws; Seconded by Commissioner Epps. 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. The motion passed.

ATTORNEY:

Attorney Hope Hicks presented the Limited Self-Governance Act proposed ballot language for the November 2024 general election outside the city limits as follows:

**Alabama Limited Self-Governance Act
Ballot Language
For General Election 2024**

Should the provisions of Alabama Code §11-3A-1 et seq. which would allow the Russell County Commission authority to exercise limited health and safety powers including the abatement of weeds, the control of animals, the control of litter, the abatement of noise nuisances, and the removal of unsanitary sewage apply in the unincorporated areas of Russell County, Alabama?

Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the ballot language proposal; 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. The motion passed.

Attorney Hope Hicks presented a sanitation payment drop box contract agreement to review with both the Russell County Water Authority and the Fort Mitchell Water System which would allow drop boxes at both

locations for payments. Fort Mitchell Water System Director David Ellis stated that he would take the contract agreement to the water board for approval before drop boxes are installed. Commissioner Corbett motioned to approve both agreements and to be signed by the chair. Seconded by Commissioner Chambers. Attorney Hicks stated that each party will have their own drop box at each location and their own key access for pickups. 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. The motion passed.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Corbett reminded everyone about the upcoming Crawford Heath Resource fair this Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 10 am to 2 pm EST.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements were made.

There being no further business, Commissioner Lee moved to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Corbett seconded. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. None opposed. The meeting was adjourned.