

***PUBLIC HEARING FOR  
Notice to Vacate Right of Way /Pittsview, Alabama  
Wednesday, October 23, 2024***

A public hearing was called to order by Russell County Chairman Rod Costello.

**BUSINESS:**

Attorney Hope Hicks presented the resolution notice to vacate the right of way in Pittsview, Alabama.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments made.

Commissioner Corbett moved to close the public hearing; seconded by Commissioner Screws. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to adjourn the public hearing.

**Russell County Commission  
Meeting Minutes October 23, 2024  
Russell County Commission Chambers  
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 County Administrator Chandra Wright.

Commissioner Screws led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments.

Chairman Costello thanked our Keith Lee with the Russell County Commission IT Department for Facebook Live, The Citizen of East Alabama for covering the meetings. He welcomed our elected officials, department heads, media, and guests.

County Administrator Chandra Wright called roll of the Commission. Members present were Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Gentry Lee, Commissioner Chance Corbett, Commissioner Larry Screws, Commissioner Cattie Epps, Commissioner Ronnie Reed, and Chairman Rod Costello. Also, present were County Attorney Hope Hicks, and County Administrator Chandra Wright, who kept the minutes.

A quorum was established by the County Administrator Chandra Wright.

Chair Costello stated that the agenda was approved at the work session on Monday night, October 21st.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chair Costello requested approval of the minutes from the Commission meeting on October 9, 2024. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. 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 proclamation for "The Soul of the Hike, Comin' Home." No one was present to accept the proclamation. County Administrator Chandra Wright read the following proclamation aloud and it will be given at a later time:

**Russell County Commission**  
**Proclamation**  
**“The Soul of the Hike” Comin’ Home**  
**October 18th – 20th, 2024**

**WHEREAS**, the Russell County Commission is proud to proclaim that Russell County, Alabama is the host county for “the Soul of The Hike” Comin’ Home celebration on October 18-20, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, to honor the origin and lineage of the prominent families of “The Hike” on Brickyard, we have gathered for a coming home celebration; and

**WHEREAS**, the families include: Preer, Harper, Alexander, Williams Woods, Jackson, Abercrombie, Perry, Miles, King, Fleming, Reed, Rolder, Echols, Lewis James, Basha, Jenkins, Lyles, Spivey, Cotton, Chadwick, Evans, Tarver, Stephens, Jones, Joseph, Wright, Deloney, Hill, Kelly, Robinson, Bellamy; and

**WHEREAS**, Families will be reunited to the special place that shaped their values and where they learned that it takes a village to raise a family and grow a community; and

**WHEREAS**, by divine counsel and inspiration Fillise F. Preer answered the call to preserve the rich legacy of the Brickyard area; and

**WHEREAS**, to reignite the flame of the brotherhood and sisterhood amongst the families of “The Hike” the tri-city area and throughout the United States so that future generations will not forget their heritage and will embrace one another in Love, Faith, Hope and Unity; and

**WHEREAS**, The Russell County Commission believes that “The Soul of the Hike” Comin’ Home celebration will be a monumental, extraordinary, and blessed event that will serve as a memorial for the families.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE RUSSELL COUNTY COMMISSION** proclaims Sunday, October 20, 2024, as a day to honor and congratulate “The Soul of The Hike” Comin’ Home celebration 2024, Fillise F. Preer, Founder.

**DONE** this 23rd day of October, 2024.

Commissioner Reed moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Screws. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to approve the proclamation.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented a proclamation for National Head Start Awareness Month while County Administrator Chandra Wright read the following proclamation aloud:

**Russell County Commission**  
**PROCLAMATION**  
**National Head Start Awareness Month**

**WHEREAS**, Enrichment Services Program, Inc. (ESP) is a non-profit, community action agency founded in 1965. The mission of ESP is to eliminate poverty through Education, Services, and Partnerships. Serving ten counties in Georgia and one county in Alabama; and

**WHEREAS**, Enrichment Services Program, Inc. is committed to increasing the awareness of the impact of poverty and implementing strategies for reducing it; and

**WHEREAS**, ESP motivates residents toward a desirable future and encourages them to become a healthy contributor to the life of our community; and

**WHEREAS**, Head Start is a national school readiness program that provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition and parent involvement services to children between the ages of birth to five years; and

**WHEREAS**, Head Start has nurtured the promise of a better future for children and their families; and more than 1,317 children will benefit from enrollment in the Head Start Program; and

**WHEREAS**, October is National Early Head Start and Head Start Awareness Month.

**NOW**, We, The Russell County Commission do hereby, proclaim do hereby October 2024 as

**“HEAD START AWARENESS MONTH”**

In Russell County we call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hand this 23rd day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to approve the proclamation. Ms. Tracy Belt received the proclamation.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

There were no discussion items presented.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented the second reading for the Policy for Assigning Voting Actions which was read aloud by County Administrator Chandra Wright as follows:

**COUNTY COMMISSION RESOLUTION NUMBERING SYSTEM**

To allow for the effective and efficient indexing and searching of all Russell County Commission actions, the Commission votes will be designated as resolutions. The resolutions will be designated by the year made, month, date, department, and the chronological number of the action. The minutes of each Russell County Commission meeting will list the resolution number and detail the action taken by the Russell County Commission.

For example, if a motion is made regarding a general County Commission matter in 2024, it will be designated as 2024.10.23 (CM)-1 then the detail of the matter will be listed. If a motion is made regarding a Highway Department matter in 2024, it will be designated as 2024.10.23 (HW)-1 and then the detail of the matter will be listed. A letter will be designated for each County department. See below department designation listing.

This policy will be effective beginning at the first meeting in November 2024.

Adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October 2024.

<u>Department</u>	<u>Designation</u>		
Commission Office	CM	Sheriff Office/Dept.	SH
Judicial Center	JU	Jail	JL
Probate Office	PR	EMA Department	EM
Revenue Department	RV	Coroner Office	CO
Tag Office	TG	Building Inspections	BU
Board of Registrars	BR	Enforcement Office	EN
Maintenance Dept.	MN	Highway Department	HW
Mapping /Appraisal	MA	Sanitation Department	SD
		Parks & Rec. Dept.	PR

Commissioner Corbett stated, that since this is the second reading, he moved to approve the new resolution of the numbering system; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Chief Appraiser Heath Crowe who presented the annual renewal for Flagship GIS subscription contract in the amount of \$15,300 which will be paid out of the reappraisal budget. Mr. Crowe also presented the second renewal request for the E-Ring annual subscription for the camera system that runs both the Appraisal and Mapping as well as the assessment collection office (Revenue Office). The total contract is \$121,885 which breaks down in which it will be paid is the reappraisal budget will pay \$101,163 and the assessment collection budget will pay \$20,722. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the Flagship GIS

subscription request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to approve the proclamation. Secondly, Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the E-Ring subscription renewal; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized EMA Director David Martin who presented a signature request from the chair for the FY2024 Federal EMPG (Emergency Management Performance Grant) Cooperative agreement in the amount of \$49,878. Commissioner Corbett moved to allow the chair to sign it; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Epps who presented the project money request for the Sammy Lee Van Scholarship fund in the amount of \$5,000. Commissioner Epps moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Screws. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Judge Harden who presented the approval for the Latisha Salaam family cemetery application request. He stated that they have met all cemetery requirements with soil testing, engineering, and approval from the Health Department, as well as the Planning Commission, so it has his approval, and he requests the Commission's final approval. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Epps. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello presented the request to sign the Interstate 14 project petition letter which was brought to the Commission by Ms. Justice Armstrong, which was supported by the previous county commission from 7 years ago. Chairman Costello moved to approve the request by signing the letter of support; seconded by Commissioner Screws. Both Commissioner Lee and Commissioner Corbett abstained from voting because they wanted to see more definite route information. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized County Administrator Chandra Wright presented to the Commission that the upcoming Veterans' Day holiday and the Commission work session on November 11<sup>th</sup> issue. She recommended moving the work session into the Commission meeting that Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett who presented Ms. Jeanes who shared a DHR Christmas for Children presentation. Commissioner Corbett moved to allocate \$400 from his project money to DHR. Commissioner Lee allocated \$400, Commissioner Chambers allocated \$400, Commissioner Costello allocated \$400, and Commissioner Screws allocated \$400 to DHR. Commissioner Corbett amended his motion to give a total of \$2,000 to DHR, which is the total from all of the Commissioners. Commissioner Reed seconded the motion. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

#### **COUNTY ENGINEER:**

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney had nothing to present at this time.

#### **SANITATION:**

Sanitation Director Ward Dudley presented a rate change request for a second garbage can at any residence who already has service set up with their department that they supply. He stated it will be \$11.00 additional added to the bill to bring the total bill to \$33.00, and if they want a 4<sup>th</sup> can after that, it will be \$11 per can after that. Mr. Dudley stated that for businesses, their current rate is \$37.50 so their second can will be \$18.70 bringing the bill for an extra can up to \$56.25. Mr. Dudley stated that the current additional can rate is \$22.00, and he finds that does not get a lot of purchases. Commissioner Lee stated, for the record, they are lowering the price. Commissioner Corbett stated this is a result of citizens asking these questions on how they can not use their own cans. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Lee.

In discussion, soon they will be addressing about not picking up any personal cans. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR:**

County Administrator Chandra Wright presented the approval of the 2025 holiday schedule calendar. Commissioner Corbett moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

County Administrator Chandra Wright presented the 2024/2025 Russell County depositories. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Epps. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

County Administrator Chandra Wright presented the Alabama State and Local Cybersecurity Grant program and requested permission to apply and sign for the grant. She stated that there are no funds, this is just services. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Epps. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

**CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:**

Chairman Costello recognized County Administrator Chandra Wright who presented the Diversified Computer Services invoice. She requested permission to pay the invoice for the software we use for reporting ARPA in the amount of \$12,000. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. County Administrator Chandra Wright took a roll call vote of the Commission as follows: District 2: Commissioner Chambers, yes; District 1: Commissioner Lee, yes; District 6: Commissioner Corbett, yes; District 7: Commissioner Screws, yes; District 5: Epps, yes; District 4: Commissioner Reed, yes; and District 3: Chairman Costello, yes. Motion carried.

**ATTORNEY:**

Attorney Hope Hicks spoke about the public hearing at the beginning of this meeting regarding the petition to vacate an alley in the Pittsview area, which was a petition received from the Pittsview Methodist Church and the Pitts Family Management, LLC. This is in Commissioner Screws district, and he previously made the motion to proceed with the vacation of the right of way. This has been appropriately advertised, posted here at the Commission office, and written notice was given to the adjoining landowner, as well as a few other landowners in the area, and there's been no opposition. Attorney Hicks presented a resolution, and if the Commission chooses to vacate the right of way, the resolution would be signed by the chairman and would be sent to the newspaper for publication within the next fourteen days. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All other Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Below is the resolution passed.

**RESOLUTION OF THE RUSSELL COUNTY  
COMMISSION**

The Russell County Commission received a Petition to Vacate a portion of the right-of-way of a 20- foot alley located adjacent to The Methodist Church of Pittsview, Alabama. This petition was filed by The Methodist Church of Pittsview, Alabama and Pitts Family Management, LLC who are the adjoining property owners. Upon a motion by District 7 Commissioner Larry Screws, the Commission voted to move forward with the vacation of the right-of-way as requested.

The land to be vacated is more particularly described as follows:

**All that certain tract of parcel of land, being a portion of the public 20 feet alley between the North half and the Sough half of Block 17, according to the plat of the "Map of Pittsboro, Alabama," now known as Pittsview, Alabama, as recorded in Plat Cabinet B, Folio 37, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Russell County, Alabama, containing 400 square feet, being more particularly described as follows:**

**Starting at the Intersection of the East right of way of Pecan Street and North right of way of a 20 feet alley, being the Southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 17, also being the POINT OF BEGINNING, go Southeasterly 20.0 feet along the North right of way of the 20 feet alley, thence Southwesterly 20.0 feet to the South right of way of the 20 feet alley, thence Northwesterly 20.0 feet along the South right of way of the 20 feet alley to the intersection of the East right of way of Pecan Street and the South right of way of the 20 feet alley, also being the Northwest corner of Lot 17, Block 17, according to the aforementioned plat, thence Northerly 20.0 feet to the North right of way of the 20 feet alley to the POINT OF BEGINNING.**

**Being the identical property shown on that certain plat prepared for The Methodist Church of Pittsview of a 20-foot alley in Block 17, City of Pittsboro located in Section 19, Township 14 North, Range 29 East Pittsview, Russell County, Alabama prepared by Barrett Simpson, Inc. on April 23, 2024, a copy of which is attached herewith as Exhibit A and made apart herefor.**

A public hearing was scheduled for October 23, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. EDT in the Russell County Commission's Chambers of the Russell County Commission located in the Russell County Courthouse at 1000 Broad Street, Phenix City, Alabama. Written notice of this public hearing was provided to The Methodist Church of Pittsview, Alabama and Pitts Family Management, LLC as adjoining landowners. Written notice was also provided to Paul Hartgrove and Marsha Hartgrove. Notice by publication was also given at the Russell County Courthouse and by publication on September 26, 2024, October 3, 2024, October 10, 2024, and October 17, 2024, in The East Alabama Citizen.

A public hearing was held on October 23, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. EDT in the Russell County Commission's Chambers of the Russell County Commission located in the Russell County Courthouse at 1000 Broad Street, Phenix City, Alabama. Following the conclusion of the public hearing, upon a motion made by

District 7 County Commissioner Larry Screws, the Russell County Commission did affirmatively vote to vacate the right of way as described above.

Accordingly, be it hereby RESOLVED this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2024, the Russell County Commission does hereby find that it is in the best interest of the public that such alley as described above be vacated, that such vacation will not deprive other property owners of any right they may have to convenient and reasonable means of ingress and egress to and from their property, and that said alley as described above is hereby vacated.

A copy of this Resolution is to be filed in the office of the Probate Judge of Russell County, Alabama. Notice of this Resolution will be published in a local newspaper within 14 days of the date of this Resolution.

Done this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2024.

### **COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:**

Commission Epps received various plaques and flowers for her retirement after serving 24 years as a Commissioner of Russell County. A reception followed the meeting which included her family, elected officials, and county employees.

Chairman Costello recognized Commissioner Corbett for his work spearheading the Crawford Senior Center project and him receiving an award from the Southeast Area of Aging Agency in Orange Beach.

Commissioner Corbett shared a tourism video representing Russell County and the community with both Commissioner Corbett and County Administrator Chandra Wright narrating.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Announcements were made.

There being no further business, Commissioner Epps moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Corbett. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. The meeting was adjourned.