

**Russell County Commission
Meeting Minutes January 8, 2025
Russell County Commission Chambers
9:30 A.M. EST**

An adjourned meeting of the Russell County Commission was called to order by Chair Chance Corbett.

The invocation was given by Reverend Steve Pace with Summerville Baptist Church.

Commissioner Darty led the Pledge of Allegiance since Commissioner Reed was not in yet.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

Chairman Corbett requested cell phones to be silenced during the meeting and thanked 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 Rod Costello, Commissioner Gentry Lee, Commissioner Scott Chambers, Commissioner Cedric Darty, Commissioner Larry Screws, and Chairman Chance Corbett. Commissioner Ronnie Reed arrived later to the meeting. 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.

The agenda was approved at the Monday night work session on January 6, 2025.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2025.01.08 (CM)-1: Approval for December 11, 2024 Commission Meeting Minutes

Chair Corbett requested approval of the minutes from the Commission meeting on December 11, 2024. Commissioner Costello moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried to approve the minutes.

PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Presentation: January 2025- Employee of the Month

Chair Corbett recognized Human Resources Director Max Herring who presented the January 2025 Employee of the Month to Toni Madden Dean from our Russell County Tag Office.

Presentation: United Way- 2025 Point in Time Count /Pat Frey

Chair Corbett recognized County Administrator Chandra Wright who then recognized Ms. Pat Frey, the Vice President of Home for Good with the United Way, with their annual Point in Time Count presentation.

Presentation: Proclamation for Ariel Smith

Chair Corbett presented a proclamation to Ms. Ariel Smith along with a presentation as the first Director for the Legacies Senior Center at the Crawford Community Center. The proclamation was previously approved at the December 11, 2024 meeting.

2025.01.08 (CM)-2: Proclamation: Al Sharif Court Number 232, Daughters, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA) & 2025.01.08 (CM)-3:Proclamation: Al Sharif Court Number 252, Shrine, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA)

Chair Corbett recognized Commissioner Darty who presented proclamations for both Al Sharif Court #232 and Al Sharif Court # 252. County Administrator Chandra Wright read the following 2 proclamations aloud:

Russell County Commission

PROCLAMATION

Al Sharif Court Number 232, Daughters, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA)

WHEREAS, the Al Sharif Court number 232, Daughters, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA) is a subordinate Court under the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions. Inc. January 5th, 2019, (36) daughters were created Under then IC Daphanie Mitchell and January 25th of 2019 (3) more were created under then 1st; Lt. Daughter Sandy Gainey. The Court received its charter on August 2019 in Baltimore Maryland; January 5th: Dt. Daphanie D. Mitchell, Illustrious Commandress, Dt. Sandy D. Gainey, 1st Lt., Dt. Kimberly Ingersoll, 2nd Lt. Dt. Sarah Wiltshire, Recordress, Dt. Andrea Taylor Treas., Dt. Mary Bynam HP, Dt. Alfreida Walton OG, Dt. Nakkia Mack 1st CD, DT. Celeste Sumbry 2nd CD, Dt. Terri Pass IS, Dt. Leatha Cyprian OS, Dt. Cartrena Rembert, Dt. Shannon Davis, Dt. Latoya Rembert DT Carolyn Erkins, Dt. Kendra Evans, Dt. ShaRhonda Tukes, Dt. Shanel Gainey, Dt. Sharon Gill, Dt. Sharon Williams, Dt. Cherry Griffin, Dt. Adrienne Wiltshire Dt. Shawnta Harrell Dt. LaCoya Brown Dt. Sierra McKissic, Dt. Vanessa Carr Dt. Lakeitra Feagins-Momon DT Karen Carter, Dt. LaSandra Moore, Dt. Kendra Carter, Dt. Ayanna Pass, Dt. Paula Cook, Dt. Jibrell Crump, Dt. Denise Ramsey, Dt. Sandra Beavers. January 25th: Dt. Jayneice Johnson, Dt. Barbara Kosmsky, Dt. Teronda Pettway; and,

WHEREAS, the Al Sharif Court number 232, PHA is a charitable organization whose mission is to; ever enrich the legacy of making good women better through fraternal Sisterhood, to provide aid and assistance for distressed sisters wives, mothers, daughters and orphans, and ultimately contribute to the county at large through service, scholarship, charity, commitment, training, and sisterhood; and

WHEREAS, for 5 years, the members of the Al Sharif Court number 232, the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions. Inc. strive to service and support the country. The Court established a successful D.I.M.E. program collaborating with the local school throughout the district of Phenix City, Alabama the Court gives monetary donations for numerous educational needs to students at the Russell County Alabama School District to provide educational and professional mentorship to the students; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Al Sharif Court number 232, the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions. Inc. has sponsored Back-to-School supply drives, free haircuts for minors; and The Court is partners with the Pearls Leadership Academy where they serve as mentors for young ladies and their parents, and they sponsor time and monetary donations. "NCHI" National Community Health Initiative Diabetes Awareness is where, the Court hands out literature to help combat diabetes awareness to the community, this also includes a Blood Drive throughout Russell County with Life South; They also assist with services, to the Annual Community wide Easter Egg Extravaganza, to include but not limited to providing food, eggs, games and entertainment for the children. A few other yearly initiatives are: the Easter Seal donation, Autism Awareness donation, John B Amos Cancer Center donation, Radiothon donation and time, they also assist with the Temple's One (1) Mile Marker to Keep Phenix City Beautiful; and

WHEREAS, on November 23rd, 2024, two more daughters were created under IC Leatha Cyprian, Dt. Tashundra Jones Isheka Grant- Bowens. We reside at the two-story building at 321 South Seale Road, Phenix City, Alabama. Here, the Court's members, both past and present, who has shown sisterhood at its finest and who through selfless service and commitment have served the community faithfully for 5 years and will continue to be a beacon of Encouragement, Engagement and most importantly Expounding on the future of our community and children.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Russell County Commission do hereby thank the Al Sharif Court number 232, the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions Inc. in Russell County, Alabama for

5 YEARS OF SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

This Proclamation is adopted and approved this 8th day of January, 2025.

Russell County Commission

PROCLAMATION

Al Sharif Court Number 252, Shrine, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA)

WHEREAS, the Al Sharif Temple No.252, Shrine, Prince Hall Affiliated (PHA) is a subordinate Temple under the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions. Inc. The Temple received its charter in August 2015; and

WHEREAS, the AL Sharif Temple No. 252, Shrine, PHA is a charitable organization whose mission is to; ever enrichen the legacy of making good men better through fraternal brotherhood, to provide aid and assistance for distressed brothers and their widows and orphans, and ultimately contribute to the community at large through service, scholarship, charity and training; and

WHEREAS, for over 10 years, the members of AL Sharif Temple No.252, Shrine, PHA, strive to service and support the local community. The Temple has awarded numerous educational scholarships to students of Russell County Alabama School District. The Temple has also partnered with Meadowlane Elementary and Sherwood Elementary Schools to provide educational and professional mentorship to the students, as well as contribute time and monetary donation to the Russell County Commissioners Toy Drive; and,

WHEREAS, the members of the Al Sharif Temple No. 252, Shrine, PHA, has sponsored Back-to-School supply drives, free haircuts for minors, as well as have initiated winter coat drives which thrive to support parents and students in financial distress, and initiated numerous food service events to include but not limited to holiday basket giveaways, can-good drives and meal preps, miscellaneous food items; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Al Sharif Temple 252, Jointly host the "NCHI" National Community Health Initiative Diabetes Awareness where, the Temple hands out literature to help combat diabetes awareness to the community, this also includes a Blood Drive throughout Russell County with Life South; They also assist with services, to the Annual Community wide Easter Egg Extravaganza, to include but not limited to providing food, eggs, games and entertainment for the children. A few other yearly initiatives are: the Easter Seal donation, Autism Awareness donation, Radiothon donation and time. We also adopted a One (1) Mile Marker on Seale Road to Keep Phenix City Beautiful; and

NOW, THEREFORE, on behalf of the Russell County Commissioner's, we do hereby thank the Al Sharif Temple No 252 the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and its Jurisdictions. Inc. for

OVER 10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

in Russell County, Alabama.

This Proclamation is adopted and approved this 8th day of January, 2025.

Commissioner Lee moved to approve both proclamations; seconded by Commissioner Darty. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no discussion items.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

2025.01.08 (EN)-1: Abatement for 21 Bayview Drive, Phenix City, Alabama

Chair Corbett recognized Enforcement Bill Friend who presented a presentation with property photographs, along with his request for an abatement for 21 Bayview Drive, Phenix City, Alabama. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Mr. Friend then requested a public hearing be scheduled on 22nd of January, 2025, at the next scheduled Commissioner's meeting. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried for the public hearing.

2025.01.08 (EN)-2: Abatement for 4200 Freedom Court , Phenix City, Alabama

Chair Corbett recognized Enforcement Bill Friend who presented a presentation with property photographs, along with a request by resolution to declare the property a public nuisance and abate this nuisance for 4200 Freedom Court, Phenix City, Alabama. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Mr. Friend then requested a public hearing be scheduled on 22nd of January, 2025, at the next scheduled Commissioner's meeting. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Costello. All Commissioners present were in favor and said aye. Motion carried for the public hearing.

Commissioner Reed arrived in the meeting.

2025.01.08 (EN)-3: Abatement for 37 Whiterock Road, Phenix City, Alabama

Chair Corbett recognized Enforcement Bill Friend who presented a presentation with property photographs for a nuisance complaint request, or for this to be abated for clean-up, at 37 Whiterock Road, Phenix City, Alabama. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Mr. Friend then requested a public hearing be scheduled on 22nd of January, 2025, at the next scheduled Commissioner's meeting. Commissioner Chambers; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried for the public hearing.

2025.01.08 (EN)-4: Request for Lawsuit Filing for 7 Gauntt Road, Phenix City

Chair Corbett recognized Enforcement Bill Friend who presented a presentation with property photographs for a lawsuit filing request on 7 Gauntt Road, Phenix City. After prior nuisance complaints on this property and an extension for clean-up, the property owner has done nothing. Mr. Friend spoke with our County Attorney, she requested we file a lawsuit and to bring it before the Commission for approval, then take him to court. Mr. Friend requested permission for the county attorney to file a lawsuit. Attorney Hicks stated that this is the most cost effective way for the county because we can ask the court to declare that it's a nuisance and make the owner clean it up, or if he doesn't, let us do it and assess the taxes to him but also he would have to pay the attorney's fees for the fact that we've had to bring this to court. Commissioner Costello moved to follow the attorney's recommendation; seconded by Commissioner Chambers. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

2025.01.08 (SH)-1: Congressional Direct Spending: Senator Katie Britt

Chair Corbett recognized Sheriff Taylor who presented an approval request for himself and County Administrator Chandra Wright to apply for congressional spending with Senator Britt's office, and to allow the chair to sign any documents or letters needed. Commissioner Costello moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. Commissioner Costello stated that this is for an application to begin the process to receive a grant. Sheriff Taylor said it's not a grant but for congressional direct spending. Commissioner Corbett stated that it's an appropriation. Sheriff Taylor added that there is no match and that they are in conversation with the senator's office to determine the Commission's fiscal responsibility. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

2025.01.08 (BR)-1: County Agreement for National Voter Rights Act (NVRA)

Chair Corbett presented for Board of Registrar Chair Brindlea Griffin, the request for the chair to sign the County Agreement for National Voter Rights Act (NVRA). Commissioner Costello moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

2025.01.08 (CM)-4: Award Bid for LED Signs (Tourism)

Chair Corbett presented the award bid for LED signs to be purchased and installed all in Russell County. The installation included being installed to the poles that were set and provided by the county. From the two bids received, the lowest is R&K Signs located in Russell County for the price of \$31,392.20. Chairman Chambers moved to award the bid to R&K Signs; seconded by Commissioner Darty. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Chairman Corbett stated that they probably will purchase more signs, and they will come back at the next meeting for the locations, and the budget for it because we have the maintenance portion as well as that they have to prep for. Current plans now are that that one would be put in front of the Crawford Fire Department at 169, one on Woodland Drive to replace the one that's aged and needs to be replaced, and then they've received a request to look at and consider one at the Sports Complex in Seale (on the old Seale Highway).

2025.01.08 (CM)-5: Project Money Donation: Veterans Treatment Court

Chair Corbett recognized Commissioner Screws who presented a project money donation request for the Veterans Treatment Court in the amount of \$1,500, Commissioner Darty requested to donate \$500 from his project money, and Commissioner Costello requested to donate \$500 from his project money, totaling \$2,500 to the Veterans Treatment Court. Commissioner Screws moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

2025.01.08 (MA)-1: Mapping /Appraisal Interim Director

Chair Corbett shared the resignation of Mr. Heath Crowe in the Mapping and Appraisal office, so Chair Corbett moved to appoint Ms. Sharon Traywick as the Interim Director of the Russell County Mapping and Appraiser's office for the next 6 months, for the ease of transition to work towards getting a job description and advertising to hire a director. Chair Corbett also requested an interim stipend of ten percent of her salary, in addition to her salary, for six months. He stated that if it is not filled within six months, it will be brought back for reconsideration. Chairman Corbett moved to approve the request; seconded by Commissioner Reed. In discussion, Attorney Hicks spoke about considering clarifying the motion to appoint and give the stipend "up to" six months because if a permanent person is found sooner, then it does not have to be cleared up. Chairman Corbett agreed and modified his motion to say for a period of up to six months. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried.

2025.01.08 (CM)-6: Portable Electric Space Heaters /1st Reading of Policy

Chair Corbett recognized County Administrator Chandra Wright with the portable electric space heaters policy. Ms. Wright stated that Attorney Hicks has the policy for the first reading. Ms. Hicks read the following a loud:

Space heaters are not allowed to be used in any Russell County Commission building except in extraordinary circumstances. In the event of an extraordinary circumstance, the Maintenance Director's approval must be obtained to use a space heater in a Russell County Commission building. The Maintenance Director will supply any space heater authorized to be used.

Commissioner Lee moved to approve the first reading; seconded by Commissioner Reed. All Commissioners were in favor and said aye. Motion carried. Chair Corbett stated that they didn't really have to vote on the first reading, but it's ok. In discussion, Commissioner Screws asked Mr. Watson about him purchasing heaters. Mr. Watson stated that they will try to adjust their space temperature to achieve that they don't need them so it's going to be a non-use unless he has to give them a temporary heater while their heater is being repaired.

COUNTY ENGINEER:

2025.01.08 (HW)-1: FY 2024: County Rebuild Alabama Annual Report

County Engineer Shawn Blakeney presented the following annual FY 2024 County Rebuild Alabama Annual Report for approval. He stated the below report will be posted at the courthouse and on the county website. Mr. Blakeney said that no vote from the Commission was required.



FY 2024 County Rebuild Alabama Annual Report
Russell County



Reg. Dist.	Project No.	Road Name/Number	Begin		End		Road Improvement Project	Bridge Improvement Project	Project Length (miles)	Description of Work	Amount of Rebuild Alabama Funding Expended in Current Fiscal Year	Method in Which Rebuild Funds Were Utilized			Percent Complete	Original CTP (Yes or No)	CRAP or FAEP	CRAP Amount	FAEP Amount						
			Lat.	Long.	Lat.	Long.						Amount Expended Utilizing Competitive Bids Contracts	Amount Expended Utilizing Public Works Contracts	Amount Expended through Competitive and/or Public Works Contracts											
Beginning Balance																		\$1,435,264.94	\$161,657.97						
Annual Revenue Received by County																							\$1,314,178.46	\$482,262.66	
Rebuild Funds Received from Municipalities through MUIS																								\$0.00	\$0.00
1	RA-RCP-57-002-23	Garretts Road	32.0619	85.1601	32.0862	85.1563	X		1.87	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip from County Line to Genevieve Highway	\$15,094.48	\$15,094.48		100.0%	Y	FAEP		\$15,094.48							
2	RA-RCP-57-002-02	Flanigan Road	32.3913	85.2357	32.4033	85.1717	X		3.45	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip from Flanigan Road to AL-1071 RD	\$549,121.88	\$549,121.88		100.0%	Y	CRAP	\$549,121.88								
3	RA-RCP-57-001-23	Rubell Road	32.7043	85.3627	32.2239	85.3175	X		3.20	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Hubel Road from Hubel Road to Hubel Road	\$0.00	\$0.00		99.0%	Y	CRAP	\$0.00								
4	RA-RCP-57-001-24	Brown Road	32.4121	85.2181	32.4563	85.1367	X		1.30	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Brown Road from Flanigan Road to New Placement	\$0.00	\$0.00		100.0%	Y	CRAP	\$0.00								
5	RA-RCP-57-002-24	Batki Road	32.3025	85.1626	32.3036	85.0160	X		1.74	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Batki Road from New Placement to AL-1077 ST	\$0.00	\$0.00		100.0%	Y	CRAP	\$0.00								
6	RA-RCP-57-002-24	St Luke Road	32.3727	85.3045	32.2545	85.3161	X		1.70	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip St Luke Road from AL-1071 On to 1.700 Miles	\$0.00	\$0.00		0.0%	Y	CRAP	\$0.00								
	RA-RCP-57-003-24	Owens Road	32.2684	85.1658	32.2481	85.0732	X		1.58	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Owens Road from New Placement to New Placement	\$0.00	\$0.00		0.0%		CRAP	\$0.00								
	RA-RCP-57-005-24	Walker Road	32.2800	85.3367	32.2029	85.3419	X		3.00	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Walker Road from Strip Green Road to 3.000 Miles	\$0.00	\$0.00		0.0%		CRAP	\$0.00								
	RA-RCP-57-006-24	Woodland Drive	32.4251	85.1851	32.4695	85.0947	X		3.43	Resurfacing and Traffic Strip Woodland Drive from Sandfort Road to US-1071 RD	\$0.00	\$0.00		0.0%		FAEP		\$0.00							
Net in Debt		Total Miles Addressed		21.27		Total Rebuild Funds Expended This Fiscal Year		\$164,216.36	\$0.00	\$164,216.36	\$0.00					Total CRAP/FAEP Remaining	\$2,200,321.02	\$626,766.10							
Percent of Rebuild Funds Expended in Compliance with Section 761(2)(f) on the Rebuild Alabama Act																	100%								

Remarks RA-RCP-57-001-23, RA-RCP-57-001-24, RA-RCP-57-002-24 were bid in FY24 and awaiting construction
RA-RCP-57-003-24 was removed from Transportation Plan
RA-RCP-57-005-24 and RA-RCP-57-006-24 will be bid in FY25

SANITATION:

Sanitation Director Ward Dudley updated the Commission on the scrap tire dumpster program that they approved to help Phenix City.

ADMINISTRATOR:

The County Administrator had nothing to present.

CORONAVIRUS RESCUE ACT FUND:

Nothing was presented in this area.

ATTORNEY:

The County Attorney has nothing to present.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Reed shared medical issues with his knee and why he was later to the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements were made.

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