

February 22, 2022

At a scheduled meeting of the Walker County Commission held in their office in the Walker County Courthouse Annex, Jasper, Alabama, at 9:30 a.m. on the 22nd day of February 2022, Chairman Miller gave the welcome and called the meeting to order.

After Chairman Miller gave the invitation for comment from citizens and other elected officials, the County Administrator called the roll and commissioners present were: Keith Davis, Jeff Burrough, Jim Borden and Steven Aderholt.

Mr. Joe Fowler gave the invocation and Mr. Jim Underwood led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:

None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to amend the Agenda to add Item 4 – Weather Discussion, to approve the Agenda as amended and to approve the Minutes of the February 7, 2022 meeting.

With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

County Administrator Robbie Dickerson stated that this year they wanted to put more emphasis on their safety program, that they have two meetings a year to do county-wide and that they would probably do a couple more if possible. She said, "Also, Dave Sexton is attending one of our first safety meetings today in Cullman, that's for the Road and Bridge Department. The next ones will be the March 2nd and 3rd for Correction Officers. And this Program is extremely important, not only obviously for the safety of everyone, the public and employees, but also helps us with our workmen's compensation that we pay each year. Also, April 5th and 6th is our wellness screening.

This is a one-time event, so I'll be reaching out to all the department heads to make sure they really put an emphasis on this. And we will have our first county-wide safety meeting March the 16th. And also to the Commissioners, the second meeting of March is the beginning of spring break, kind of keep that in mind as that tends to be a family week for a lot of us and also sometimes you guys will take time off during that, so just keep that in mind as we go forward into next month."

County Engineer Mike Short stated, "Just to echo what Robbie had to say, I know sometimes it may be a little bit difficult for you to consider releasing your employee to attend these things, but it is financially, extremely important and it also adds to the training of our personnel and, in particular, the Sheriff's Department. It's difficult for them to get off and allow their Jailers and Sheriff Deputies to attend classes for a day or so in Montgomery, but the importance of that is immeasurable. So, I would encourage you to help us achieve some of those benchmarks. I don't know that we've been successful in the past couple of years, but we were before that. But I would like to get back to the highest rung of that area through the ATCA, which that's who is managed by County Risk Assessment. And, also as you know, we've had a lot of rain, we've got some more scheduled. I've had one notification that I've forwarded to Commissioner Borden and probably going to have some trees down and maybe some culverts that are stopped up that cause you problems and if you need me, please call."

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion to approve the amended minutes of January 18, 2022.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the amended minutes of January 18, 2022.

With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of the Resolution ARPA Program Director.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, input by Chairman Miller, and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to elect Chairman Steve Miller as the Resolution ARPA Program Director.

With no further discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of the IAC Agreement of fee schedule.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to approve the IAC Agreement of fee schedule.

With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open for discussion procedures for closing the courthouse due to impending weather this week.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis that if there are adverse weather conditions this week, that the Chairman have the discretion to close the courthouse as he sees fit.

With no further discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to retire to Executive Session and to reconvene.

With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

(Commission retired to Executive Session)

(Commission reconvened)

Chairman Miller called the meeting back to order.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Davis stated, "I just want to make mention again, thank everybody for their attendance here this morning, I've said this for the past ten years and I mean it when I say it, I work for the people of this county. I take that job serious. I take my responsibilities serious. A lot of hard decisions have had to have been made the past ten years, put a lot of thought and prayer and guidance in those decisions, so please continue to pray for this commission and pray for me. Not easy days sometimes, it's not easy decisions sometimes, but I pride myself on doing what's right, so I can lay my head down at night and sleep. So, I do this job to help this county period. That's the reason I'm here. That's the reason I do what I do. And again, thank you for coming. I appreciate your input. I appreciate your zeal and you presenting your side of an issue. I pray one issue doesn't separate me and my relationship with y'all, because I'm not a one issue guy. There are thousands of issues that we have to decide on and we have debate and make a decision on to help this county. So, again, I covet your prayers on those decisions. Thank you."

Commissioner Burrough stated, "I also want to take the time to thank the people for coming out. I want you to know that I've spoken to one or two of you and, you know, we're not here to dodge a problem or to – you know, we're just here to try to investigate and try to figure out what's the best thing to do for our citizens. And what that may be, we've got, like I said, two or three years to figure that out and we're looking at every alternative that there is and studying and how we run our own solid waste and what can happen with it and where it could go. And, you know, I appreciate each of you speaking up. And I listen to you, I look at you, and I listen and I hear you. I've seen your emails and I know you're passionate about this thing. And we will make informed decisions, I don't even think it's going to be our decision. I'm just saying, you know, we listen and we're not – we don't take angles." He stated that he sort of resented all the smirking remarks that had been made to all of them, that they are listening, and that he appreciates them coming and giving their side of the issue. He said that they've got some roadwork that they are about to start in District Two, that they've issued the P.O.'s for Fish Hatchery Road and that they are just waiting on good weather for that road to be asphalted. He said he was getting excited about what's going to come this summer and hoping that they can take some of the ARPA funds and start paving roads, that each commissioner has his own list of what they're going to try to fix. He thanked everyone again for coming.

Commissioner Borden stated, "I just want to thank everyone for coming. Again, I thank the speakers. Most of what I was going to say Commissioner Burrough covered it. As he said, we have several years left. We have to get our information. The landfill opened some 25, 30 years ago, I think '91 is what they're saying. A lot of the people that were alive at that time are gone. I talk to guys that were kids when that landfill was formed. Now those are young adults. Some of them in the 30's and 40's. They have opinions, so I want what's best for the taxpayers and the citizens of this county. And that's where, as we move forward, to try to make a good, informed decision for what's best for the citizens, try to work with everybody in this group. Again, thank everyone for coming out. "

Commissioner Aderholt stated, "I just appreciate everybody for being here today. I'll reserve comments for another meeting. We've got these good folks that have been waiting quiet a while. I apologize for the extended executive session we had. It was probably one of the longest ones I've ever been in. So, again, y'all be patient with me, I'll get with you shortly."

Chairman Miller stated, "I, too, would like to say thank you for all the folks coming out. I appreciate each and every one of you. Again, listening to the comment, we totally hear you and, you know, back in the '90s, I guess I would have been in my young 20's. Boy those were the days. But today, you know, we as the Commission, these guys are listening, like they said, and we appreciate each and every one of you. Back to our roads, we have an opportunity here to do a lot for Walker County with this ARPA funding and roads, roads, roads. And then our bridges, I think we have a couple of bridges that we're getting a lot closer on about getting those put back in place. And correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Short, but Brown's Bridge and Smith Chapel is the two."

Mr. Short stated, "Yes, Brown's Bridge is scheduled for the March Alabama Department of Transportation letting and Smith Chapel will be soon after that."

Chairman Miller stated, "I appreciate that. At this time I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

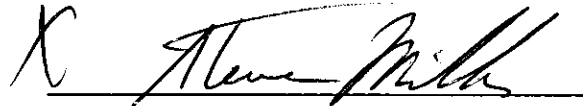
ADJOURN:

Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden, that this meeting be adjourned to reconvene at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at the call of the Chairman.

With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye; District Four: Aye.

With no opposition the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Read and Approved:


Chairman


Attest