

May 5, 2025

At a scheduled meeting of the Walker County Commission held in their offices in the Walker County Courthouse Annex, Jasper, Alabama, at 9:30 a.m. on the 5th day of May 2025, 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, County Administrator Amy Frederickson called the roll and Commissioners present were John Dunagan, Jeff Burrough, Jim Borden, and Steven Aderholt.

Reverend Ralph Williams gave the invocation and Revenue Commissioner Jerry Davis led the pledge of allegiance.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATION:

1. An informative presentation was given by Ms. Craft and Ms. Haynes of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham.
2. Richard Fikes of the Walker County Volunteer Fire Department gave an update on the 16-hour Wildland Firefighting course that is going to be given by the Alabama Fire Fighters Association. Mr. Chris Wright of the Alabama Forestry Commission was present and was introduced.
3. Reverend Ralph Williams gave an uplifting presentation on the upcoming Juneteenth holiday festivities that will be held in Cordova.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve the Agenda; to Approve the New Vendor List for April 2025 and to Approve the Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 21, 2025.

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.

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

County Administrator Amy Frederickson stated that she had nothing to report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- (1) Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval to Allocate \$2,000,000.00 to Districts for Purpose of Paving County Roads (Each District will receive \$500,000.00 for Designated Road Projects), and to Authorize the Chairman to Secure and Distribute Funds.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and input by all four of the District Commissioners, Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan to Approve to Allocate \$2,000,000.00 to Districts for Paving County Roads (Each District will receive \$500,000.00 for Designated Road Projects), and to Authorize the Chairman to Secure and Distribute Funds.

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.

- (2) Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Archive Building Project Proposals, listed below, with Payments to be Made from Capital Improvement Fund.

After explanation by Judge of Probate Lee Tucker, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan to Approve the Archive Building Project Proposals, listed below, with Payments to be Made from Capital Improvement Fund:

a. Rolling Door Purchase and Installation (\$5,744.00) by Overhead Door Company; and

b. Brick Repair and Patchwork (\$4,976.00) by D&R Masonry.

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.

- (3) Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of \$76,185.90 Bid by Good Works Furniture & Fabrication, LLC, for Fabrication and Installation of Framework and Installation of Framework & Fencing Inside Jail Dorms.

After explanation by Sheriff Nick Smith, input from Chairman Miller that this would be paid out of Fund 107, motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve the Bid by Good Works Furniture & Fabrication, LLC, for Fabrication and Installation of Framework & Fencing Inside Jail Dorms.

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.

- (4) Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Request to Close Fund 170 Account, to Transfer Balance (\$64,815.25) to General Fund and to Allocate as Increase to Courthouse Maintenance Budget, Fund 001-51110.

After explanation by County Administrator Amy Frederickson, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan to approve the Request to Close Fund 170 Account, to Transfer Balance (\$64,815.25) to General Fund and to Allocate as Increase to Courthouse Maintenance Budget, Fund 001-51110.

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.

- (5) Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Request to Close Fund 318 Account and Transfer Balance (\$1,442.61) into General Fund.

After explanation by County Administrator Amy Frederickson and input by Chairman Miller, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to Approve the Request to Close Fund 318 Account and Transfer Balance (\$1,442.61) into General Fund.

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.

- (6) Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval to Purchase Six (6) New Side Loader Trucks from Ingram Equipment for Solid Waste Department at \$1,859,310.00 (Less Trade-In Values for Vehicles Below), and to Give Chairman the Authorization to Secure Financing for Remaining Balance. Trucks to be Traded are as follows:

- a. 2014 Freightliner VIN#1FVACYCY3EHFS6411
- b. 2014 Freightliner VIN#1FVACYCY5EHFS6412
- c. 2015 Freightliner VIN#1FVAG5CY8FHGR8552
- d. 2015 Freightliner VIN#1FVAG5CYXFHGR8553
- e. 2020 International VIN#1HTEJTAR5MH166882

After explanation by Chairman Miller, input by Commissioners Burrough, Borden and Dunagan and much discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve to Purchase Six (6) New Side Loader Trucks from Ingram Equipment for Solid Waste Department at \$1,859, 310.00 (Less Trade-In Values for Vehicles Below), and to Give Chairman the Authorization to Secure Financing for Remaining Balance. Trucks to be traded are as follows:

- a. 2014 Freightliner VIN#FVACYCY3EHFS6411
- b. 2014 Freightliner VIN#FVACYCY5EHFS6412
- c. 2015 Freightliner VIN#1FVAG5CY8FHGR8552
- d. 2015 Freightliner VIN#1FVAG5CYXFHGR8553
- e. 2020 Freightliner VIN#1HTEJTAR5MH166882.

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 this motion carried.

- (7) Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval to Authorize Chairman to Purchase from Lowest Bidder Two (2) Used Tractor (Road) Trucks for Solid Waste Department. Lowest Bidder will be Determined at Bid Opening on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and a brief discussion, Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Borden to Approve to Authorize Chairman to Purchase from lowest Bidder Two (2) Used Tractor (Road) Trucks for Solid Waste Department. Lowest Bidder will be Determined at Bid Opening on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

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.

- (8) Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval to Classify as Surplus Property and Sell on GovDeals.com Assets from Solid Waste Department as Follows:

- a. 1999 Ford Econoline Van (VIN#1FBSS31L4XHB61349)
- b. 1996 Caterpillar 320B Excavator (VIN/Serial#6CR02467JK32728)
- c. 1996 Caterpillar D6H Doer (VIN/SERIAL#08Z900208TE01814)

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to Approve to Classify as Surplus Property and Sell on GovDeals.com Assets from Solid Waste Department as follows:

- a. 1999 Ford Econoline Van (VIN#1FBSS31L4XHB61349)
- b. 1996 Caterpillar 320B Excavator (VIN/Serial#6R02467JK32738)
- c. 1996 Caterpillar D6H Dozer (VIN/Serial#08Z900208TE01814)

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.

- (9) Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Courthouse Security Sergeant Positions and Pay Scales. Related Job Descriptions and Qualifications to be Approved and Set by Walker County Civil Service Board.

After explanation by Chairman Miller, Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve the Courthouse Security Sergeant Positions and Pay Scales. Related Job Descriptions and Qualifications to be Approved and Set by the Walker County Civil Service Board.

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.

- (10) Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Request to Hire Mr. James Michael Mathis, Jr. as Full-Time Common Laborer with District Four, with Expected Start-Date of May 7, 2025.

Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve Request to Hire Mr. James Michael Mathis, Jr. as Full-Time Common Laborer with District Four, with Expected Start-Date of May 7, 2025, subject to successful completion of the Walker County Civil Service Board drug-test and hiring paperwork.

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.

- (11) Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Request to Hire Ms. Cheryl Jackson as Full-Time Common Laborer in the Probate Judge's Office, with Expected Start Date of May 7, 2025.

After explanation by Judge of Probate Lee Tucker, motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the Request to Hire Ms. Cheryl Jackson as Full-Time Common Laborer in the Probate Judge's Office, with Expected Start-Date of May 5, 2025, subject to successful completion of the Walker County Civil Service Board drug-test and hiring paperwork.

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.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Dunagan stated, "I need to add Number 12 to the Agenda, The Sheriff's Department is wanting to donate a vehicle to the Saragosa Fire Department; a Crown Vic that they were going to sell with last four digits of tag number being 90C0."

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to add Number 12 to the Agenda, Discussion and Approval for the Sheriff's Department to donate a vehicle to the Saragosa Fire Department; a 2010 Crown Vic that they were going to sell with last four digits of tag number being 90C0.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

- (12) Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan to open discussion of Discussion and Approval for the Sheriff's Department to donate a vehicle to the Saragosa Fire Department; a 2010 Crown Vic that they were going to sell with the last four digits on the tag being 90C0.

After explanation by Sheriff Nick Smith and input by Commissioner Burrough, motion was made by Commissioner Dunagan and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the request for the Sheriff's Department to donate a vehicle to the Saragosa Fire Department; a 2010 Crown Vic that they were going to sell with the last four digits on the tag being 90C0.

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.

Commissioner Dunagan continued: "I want to thank everybody for coming today. Going back to the road paving, we're all the same, we wish we could do more for our areas. Maybe pretty soon we can get some more money coming in to be able to do that. With our tax structure the way it is, we've got to have some changes. The school system needs the money and they get the money that we give on taxes. Nobody argues and disagrees about that, but our infrastructure needs some help. We appreciate everybody coming in and helping us on the storms this weekend, the fire department, EMA, my crew. I sure do appreciate everybody."

Commissioner Burrough stated, "It does seem like when we get -- it can't just rain, it's got to come a tornado or something, you know. But we do appreciate every fire department. I mean, they're every -- it didn't matter where I went this weekend or my crew people went, they would meet with the fire departments. And they're there to either stand beside us or to get the road clean or do whatever they're asked. Or either sometimes they're small trees they've already got the road clean sometimes by the time we get there. And the same thing for Alabama Power. They're wonderful to work with.

They send people. And the majority of them this past weekend did have a lot of power lines in them, so they really had to work hard. We appreciate those guys. But I'll get into my funding again here in a minute, but I want to recognize Mr. Williams. I don't know if I've ever met him before today. And I know Willie and some of the others back there that's here with him, but man, what a true leader you are for Cordova. That's very impressive and, you know, I root you on and just tell you that Cordova is blessed to have you living in their area. Thank you for coming. And back on, you know, the money we got to do the roads, I just sort of while we were sitting here, looked at the emails that the engineers sent back with me, and the America Recovery Act, you know, the ARPA money that we had and I'm just going to read off. These are things that were on my list in the last two years, you know, we got to do approximately roads here. I've got Self, Fish Hatchery, Nauvoo-Saragossa, Redmill-Saragossa, Moon Road, Holly Grove, Mountain Valley, Patton Hill, Swindle Loop, Mill, Coal Valley. That's just some on them we named that we were able to put asphalt on this year, I mean, the last two years with that particular money. Now that was a little over Two Million plus some of our local money that we had to do that with. And now, we're back, it's gone. Now, we're back to where we got that Eight Hundred Thousand that we're dealing with. And like I said, I have a few more men than they do. We can employ maybe eight people at the most and that's going to eat up Four Hundred and Something Thousand Dollars of your money. And then you add fuel cost in there. I mean, we might come up with Two Hundred Thousand Dollars to pave one mile a year. And we're back to those times. And it's going to be hard to navigate it. And we're going to try to create ways to try to get some money to do two or three more miles a year, but, you know, we've got twelve hundred miles in this county. And then if we have new things coming to this county, we've got to figure out how to monopolize that to help our infrastructure, because our schools can't keep – the buses can't keep driving on some of these roads and we certainly have got to be creative and as we move forward to try to, you know, put more asphalt on the roads. And other than that, I want to thank each of you for coming and being interested in our county government."

Commissioner Borden stated, "I want to thank our presenters, Mr. Fikes and Mr. Wright with the Forestry Commission. Again, a shout out to all of our volunteer fire fighters across the county. They do above and beyond. I say it every time, most people don't realize what they do for us, because you're not at that spot at that time. But they do a tremendous job. Ms. Craft and Ms. Haynes, we need money. We need grants. We need monies. So, I'll leave y'all with that. Ralph, excellent presentation. I look forward to getting with you in the coming days, Juneteenth will be here quick. So, I support you in this and we'll have more conversation, but again, thank you for coming. Everybody that's here today, this is what this is about, people like this that come in and made their presentations, the citizens that come in and listen to those presentations. All of you have an opportunity to stand at that podium and vent. Whatever you want to do, this is your building, your room. We'll listen. We may not can solve the problem at the time, but we do listen. I would like to see this place packed every Commission meeting. The more people that are here, the more people learn the facts and then they go out and they tell their friends and family, 'hey, I found this out.' A lot of information is not true information

out there. A lot of opinions and ideas about how County Government works, the money the County has. Like I tell people all the time, if I had the magic wand, I would have already waved it. I told a lady – I tell people this all the time, but a lady in particular, I said, ‘Do you think I’m sitting listening to this conversation that she and I were having on the phone, the complaints, the daily complaints, some are –they get kind of personal to you, but I’m willing to sit on a pile of money and choosing not to fix your road?’ That doesn’t make sense. I said, ‘I’d spend every penny I’ve got, but you can’t –you have to make prudent decisions.’ You can’t go out here and go crazy and say, ‘Well, I’m tired of it, I’ll fix it, bankrupt your district, technically, for the next four to five years.’ My job is to do the best I can, be a good steward of the finances of this District, do all I can do for the District and leave it to the people that come behind me with an opportunity to carry the torch forward. I think that’s what the bulk of this – the people are in agreement with me on that. You can’t go out and just make rash decisions. But, again, I get to ranting, I guess. But again, thank everyone for being here and we’ll continue to do the best we can for you.”

Commissioner Aderholt stated, “Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with – I’m one of those that’s part of the bulk that agree with you, Mr. Borden. I think every commissioner up here is on the exact same road paving plan for Walker County and it is this, we want to pave all of them. That is Walker County Road Paving Plan. We want to pave every road in Walker County. But we pave based upon the revenue that we receive and we have to spend it as responsibly as possible. We’re constantly looking for new resources that come into the County. We certainly thank all the presenters today. I will echo what some of the other Commissioners have said, we need help to identify grants and any new funding resources we can for the County. But know that we are working for you, not just Monday through Friday, its seven days a week. Sometimes I lay in the bed at night and think about, you know, ‘What can we do different? Where can we pull a resource from? What can we do to help make our County move forward?’ We are working for the citizens of Walker County, more than forty hours a week most weeks. Again, thank everybody for being here, the Planning Commission. Mr. Williams an excellent job. Thank you so much for what you do and what you stand for. Richard Fikes, thank you for what you’re doing. You’re a great public servant and always have been. And I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention one of our East Walker County Mayors, Mr. Hezekiah Walker. Thank you for being here. Thank everybody for being here.

Chairman Miller stated, “I, too, would like to say thank you for being here. This Commission works hard as these gentlemen are telling you to find funding. I know, I got to talk about our administrator just a little bit. We started working on insurance funding and insurance cost and she has really, really since she’s came to this office, really been on top of this stuff. We put that insurance together, she did, and basically saved this County in the high ninety-thousand-dollar range in premiums, which is savings. Then, you know, we’ve worked on getting this money together. We have sat and talked about these things with our account Randy Dodd and we have really, you know, struggled to find the funding. And you have to make some decisions as far as what’s going to happen, so you have to be a little bit presumptuous, I guess I would say, and everything continues to roll our way, it

seems like, in the funding department. We've got a lot of monies on CDs over here. Those funds are basically free money that has not been brought into this county in times past, but we're working on that. We continually work, Ms. Amy does, towards keeping those CDs, you know, going. And when one comes due, they're hollering at me to go renew it. As a matter of fact, I've got one to do today. So those are the things that we're working on. I certainly would like to say that a few days ago -- Mr. Aderholt, I haven't had a chance to tell you other than just a while ago, just spoke about I -- but the four acres, our attorney is working on the four acres over towards the Sipsey Fork that we purchased. And that money is just a pass through us. We have to buy the property for the Canoe and the property over there that ties us to the road for the Sipsey Fork, camp ground and all. So, that's a plus. So, we're working on those things. Mr. Williams, we certainly appreciate you being here and it's an honor to have you here and see the leadership that you have. Continue that. Continue to come into this Commission, and if you need me, just pick up the phone and call.

Mr. Fikes, Ms. Haynes, Ms. Craft, we appreciate y'all, Ingram Equipment Company, Mayor Hezekiah Walker, you know, we appreciate everybody here. As these gentlemen have talked about roads, you know, there are approximately twelve hundred miles of roads in this County. Twelve hundred miles of roads, it's eleven eighty something, I think it is, but a hundred and eighty million to two hundred forty million depends on what asphalt costs. You know, we're sitting here working on two or three million a year maybe, you know, if we're lucky. We're doing everything we can. This County is poised because of I-22 to explode in industry, housetops, all kind of things that can come into this County to better this County. We're working on those things that are coming in to support this County financially, support this Commission, support you the voter, you the folks that live on those roads that needs paving, we are working hard for you in the background in things that are coming to this County. So, one day, we hope without additional tax, to be able to pave those roads. That's what we're hoping for. That's what this Commission is working for. And also, onto our solid waste, we're working very hard on the solid waste. And back four years ago when Mr. Borden and I got here, we started working on things and this Commission voted to keep the Solid Waste out here and work on a plan to move this County forward with this Solid Waste Department. And I've got a statement here that I want to read.

Thirty-five years ago, in 1990, members of the Walker County Commission created a Solid Waste Department, named the Walker County Solid Waste Authority. A Certificate of Incorporation was filed with the Alabama Secretary of State on May 2, 1990. The public corporation initial directors were; Mr. John Ed Robers; Mr. Horace Ivey, Mr. Clyde A. Polly Clark, Mr. Neil Akins and Mr. Andy Naramore. Over two years later, October 5th of 1992, Articles II and VIII of the Corporation Articles of Incorporation were amended. And an agreement was made for the Commission to manage the department along with several municipalities. These amendments were approved unanimously by the Commission. Other changes were made during this time, but the amended certificate set up the Solid Waste Department for our County. And again, that was in 1992. Around that time a landfill, named the Bryan Landfill, which is also known as Pineview Landfill was used for county garbage disposal. But pursuant to a 1992 Court Order, the landfill was deemed to

close in 2025. Pineview operated for many years, but the impending time clock eventually forced the hand of the current Walker County Commission having inherited events set in motion by prior County Commissioners and mandated by the Judicial system. Understanding this deadline this Commission has considered several options with regard to disposal of the waste of our county and the future of the landfill. The consensus of this Commission, we believe it's most feasible course of action, is to let the Pineview Landfill close on June 28th and transport the County's solid waste to Big Sky Landfill in west Jefferson County. This change will see increased tipping fees for waste tonnage as previously the County has been paying \$1 per ton and the new rate will be \$29 per ton. Unfortunately, this will necessitate an increase in customer rates. The new fee for the County garbage service will be in the high sixty range, if this Commission approves it, per quarter, increasing about eighty dollar-ish a year. This change in rates allows the County to be able to pay its bills and remain solvent in the Solid Waste Department. The rate is also compatible to other counties and municipalities in the Northwest Alabama area. Some counties are currently paying around \$91 a quarter. This Commission understands that any increase ultimately affects the pocketbooks of our citizens, but the increase is necessary to keep our garbage service viable. We hope you understand and know that we are doing all we can to limit fees while giving you the best customer service possible. And this will be on the agenda for the next Commission Meeting. With that said, I would entertain a motion to adjourn."

ADJOURN:

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Dunagan 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