

**CULLMAN COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 24, 2009**

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Cullman County Commission was held Tuesday, March 24, 2009 in the County Commission Office Conference Room. Chairman Graves called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed all visitors.

CALL OF ROLL TO ESTABLISH QUORUM, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Charlotte Slatton, County Clerk, called the roll; present were Chairman James Graves, Commissioner Doug Williams, Commissioner Wayne Willingham and County Attorney Dan Willingham. The invocation was given by Attorney Willingham and Commissioner Wayne Willingham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 13, 2009 MEETING, APPROVE APPROPRIATIONS, EXPENDITURES, REQUISITIONS, TRAVEL EXPENSED; AND APPROVE ALL JOURNAL ENTRIES TO BE POSTED.

Commissioner Doug Williams made the motion to approve the March 13, 2009 minutes, approve appropriations, expenditures, requisitions, travel expenses and approve all journal entries to be posted. Commissioner Willingham made a second to the motion and upon a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Graves recognized two students from Vinemont High School to address the Commission. Will Hasenbein, President of the Senior Class at Vinemont, and Ashley Robertson, Senior Class Valedictorian, encouraged the Commission to pass the one half cent for education funding.

Kim Brown, Vice President of the Cullman County Education Association and member of the Hanceville City Council, urged the Commission to pass the sales tax for education.

Commissioner Doug Williams stated the Commission is pro education. He challenged the group in attendance to have the County Superintendent of Education present the Commission with the “hard numbers” where the County School Board and administration are making reductions in their expenditures. Commissioner Williams stated the Commission has previously requested this information from the Superintendent in order for the Commission to justify to the public that the sales tax increase is necessary. As of this date, the Commission has received generalities regarding spending reductions planned by the School Board. If more definite figures are presented and the figures justify a sales tax increase, Commissioner Williams stated he would be the one to make the motion to pass the sales tax. However this would be a temporary tax until it could be put on the ballot either in June or November of 2010 for a vote of the people.

Randy Dunlap, Chief Financial Officer for Cullman County Schools, stated the Cullman County School system will be getting some stimulus money however the exact amount is unknown. The county has 42 teachers that are locally funded; reduction in local teacher funding will necessitate some teacher lay-offs. The school system this year has absorbed an approximate \$5 million deficit because of the decision not to lay-off any teachers during the 2008-09 school year. This deficit in funding will affect the budget for several years to come. The school system is still waiting on the state budget numbers for the 2009- 2010 budget. The State Department of Education will hold a meeting April 2 at the County Board of Education where more information will be available.

Chairman Graves asked the members of the County Board of Education that were present to arrange a meeting with the School Board, the County Superintendent and the County Commission where these issues can be discussed. Chairman Graves reported that Chris King from the sales tax office states a half cent sales tax would generate \$3.9 million; the City School System would receive 21% of the tax or \$900,000 with the remaining \$3 million going to the County School System.

Commissioner Willingham mentioned the possibility of passing a one cent sales tax, with the understanding the City of Cullman would rescind their current half cent tax. This would create more revenue for the County School System.

Chairman Graves thanked the large crowd for their attendance at the meeting and stated that anyone that needed to leave was welcome to do so at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month

Chairman Graves read a Proclamation proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Cullman County. Commissioner Wayne Willingham made a motion to proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Commissioner Doug Williams made a second, and upon a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The Chairman made mention of the three (3) facilities; Pilot House, Daystar and Victims Services in Cullman County that assist with children and adult victims of abuse.

Discussion that the Cullman County Board of Education (CCBOE) will be unable to fund a \$400,000 match for a storm shelter

Chairman Graves stated the CCBOE has received a grant to build a storm shelter behind the Child Development Center in South Vinemont. The CCBOE has informed the Commission they will be unable to fund the \$400,000 match for this

grant. The project has been put on hold and other avenues of funding the match are being researched. He stated that two other schools, Welti and Garden City, were also to receive grants to build storm shelters and additional matching funds will also have to be found for these projects to continue.

Discuss a request for a 6” waterline along County Road 825

Chairman Graves stated the Commission has received a request from Edwin Guthrie, a resident of County Road 825, for a 6” waterline to be installed along County Road 825. A 6” line is needed in order to install fire hydrants, which in turn will lower the insurance rates in this area. Chairman Graves stated that Cullman County has an extensive infrastructure of waterlines that were installed in 1972-1973; most of these lines are 3” or smaller. The estimated cost of replacing the existing with 6” lines and installing fire hydrants is approximately \$20 million. He stated that it will be this fall before the County learns what appropriations from Washington will be available for infrastructure upgrades.

Surplus property from the Senior Citizens Center at New Canaan.

Chairman Graves requested the following items from the New Canaan Senior Center be declared surplus and offered for sealed bid: two (2) stainless steel steam tables, one (1) stainless steel vent cover, one (1) commercial gas stove. Commissioner Williams made a motion to declare the items from the New Canaan Senior Center as surplus and offer for sealed bid. Commissioner Willingham made a second, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2009-17 – Consider Approval of 2009 Sales Tax Holiday for Cullman County, August 7-9, 2009

Chairman Graves stated the sales tax holiday has been done for several years. This exempts payment of sales tax on the purchase of school clothes and supplies for the weekend of August 7-9, 2009. Commissioner Willingham made a motion to approve the resolution for the sales tax holiday. Commissioner Williams seconded, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Consider granting a one (1) year extension on the proposed plat for Rocky Springs Subdivision located in District 2 on County Road 67.

Mr. Keith Creel, Assistant Engineer, stated the plat, located in the Cold Springs area, was approved in April 2008. The subdivision has 2.7 miles of roadway with 120 lots. The work has not been completed and the developer is requesting a one year extension. Commissioner Willingham made the motion to grant a one (1) year extension for the Rocky Springs Subdivision. Commissioner Williams made a second, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Authorize the Chairman to sign the cooperative agreement with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) for additional Federal EMPG funding for FY 2008.

Ms. Phyllis Little, Director of EMA, stated this is in conjunction with Act 2007-462 which the State Legislature passed raising the qualification standards for EMA directors. Ms. Little has met the standards for certification therefore, Cullman County will receive an additional \$8,058.00 from the 2008 funding. Commissioner Williams made a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement with AEMA for the additional funding. Commissioner Willingham seconded, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Consider surplus of 1992 Sun Voyager motor home (mobile command vehicle) at EMA.

Ms. Little stated this vehicle had been used by Madison County as an EMA mobile command vehicle. It was given to the Cullman County EMA; however it was discovered that it has extensive water damage and the floor is rotten. The engine and radio equipment have been removed and will be reused or recycled. Approximately \$3,000.00 has been spent on repairs and insurance. Ms. Little requested that the 1992 Sun Voyager (VIN # 4CDB4XG29M2102662) be declared surplus and sold to help recoup EMA's expenditures. Commissioner Williams made a motion to surplus the 1992 Sun Voyager motor home. Commissioner Willingham seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2009-18 to authorize the County to apply for an Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) for Victim Services.

Ms. Sammie Danford, Director Economic Development Office, stated this is a \$60,000.00 project with a 50% match. Victim Services has assured the County that they have the matching funds, part of which will be the property. Commissioner Willingham made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the County to apply for the grant for Victim Services. Commissioner Williams seconded, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Consider surplus of approximately 50 sheets of tin, 3’ X 12’, located at the CARTS site.

Commissioner Williams made a motion to surplus the sheets of tin and accept sealed bids. Commissioner Willingham seconded, upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Consider awarding Bid No. 996 – Tree Service

Chairman Graves stated on advice of the County Attorney, all bids will be rejected. Commissioner Williams made a motion to reject all bids and rebid for tree service. Commissioner Willingham made a second, upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Extension of Bid No. 945 – Traffic Signs

Mr. Fred Penn, County Engineer, stated that Traffic Signs, Inc. has given excellent service and recommended extending the bid. Commissioner Willingham made a motion to extend the bid for traffic signs to Traffic Signs, Inc. for one year. Commissioner Williams seconded, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Reappointment of Johnny Duke to the Walter Water Board

Commissioner Williams made a motion to re-appoint Johnny Duke to the Walter Water Board to serve a six (6) year term to expire March 1, 2015. Commissioner Willingham seconded, and upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously

Reappointment of Joe Golden to the Joppa Water Board

Commissioner Williams made a motion to re-appoint Joe Golden to the Joppa Water Board to serve a six (6) year term to expire March 1, 2015. Commissioner Willingham seconded, upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously

Reappointment of Rita Nicholas to the Cullman Area Mental Health Authority

Commissioner Willingham made a motion to re-appoint Rita Nicholas to the Cullman Area Mental Health Authority to serve a six (6) year term expiring April 1, 2015. Commissioner Williams seconded, upon a voice, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Graves announced the People Against a Littered State (PALS) clean-up will be April 4, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. until 12 noon. He also mentioned that during the month of May the residents of Cullman County will be able to dispose of unwanted items at no charge at the county landfill. A “Free Day at the Dump” pass will be mailed with the April Cullman Electric Co-op bill; the pass must be presented to the landfill.

Resolution 2009-19 – Set the speed limit on County Road 866 at 25 mph

Commissioner Willingham stated the residents of County Road 866 have requested a reduction in the speed limit due to children in the area. The Engineering Department has recommended the speed by lowered to 25 mph. Commissioner Willingham made a motion to lower the speed on County Road 866 to 25 mph. Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEXT REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009

Chairman Graves announced the next regular Commission Meeting will be Tuesday, April 14, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Commission Office Conference Room.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

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James D. Graves, Chairman

J. Douglas Williams
Associate Commissioner

Wayne Willingham
Associate Commissioner