

The Geneva County Commission met in regular session on Monday, January 13, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at the Geneva County Courthouse in Geneva, Alabama.

Commissioner Todd Brannon called the meeting to order and welcomed guests and media present. Commissioner Spivey opened the meeting with prayer. Commissioner Brannon led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no elected officials or citizens requesting to make public comment.

The Commission recognized Solid Waste Director Eileen Bottoms on her retirement. Mrs. Bottoms was presented an award for her twenty-seven years of service to Geneva County. Mrs. Bottoms was an employee in the Sheriff's Department for twelve years from 1992 until 2004. She has spent the past fifteen years as the Solid Waste Director. Mrs. Bottoms had previously submitted her intent to retire with the Commission as of December 31, 2019.

Commissioner Brannon called the roll and the following members were present: Commissioners Sandy Hammer, Weston Spivey, and Bart Wilks. The County Attorney, Phil Eldridge; County Engineer, Justin Barfield; EMA Director, Eric Johnson and Assistant Administrator Cindy Williams were also present. The following business was transacted:

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Approve Minutes of December 9, 2019. Commissioner Spivey made a motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2019. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0.
2. Proclamations: N/A
3. Bids: N/A

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Jail Construction: Commissioner Brannon updated that construction was progressing. Schedule is a little behind due to issues with the roof. The panels have been ordered for the electrical, however they cannot be installed until the roof is covered. There will be a walk-through meeting at the jail construction site on January 22, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.
2. Board Appointments: N/A
3. Bids: N/A

**REPORTS OF STAFF:**

**Sheriff:** Sheriff Helms stated he had been told by the construction crew they should have the metal for the roof on the jail by January 15, 2020. After the roof is installed the inside work should progress quickly. Sheriff Helms stated he was currently two vehicles down in his department due to accidents and had requested information from Cindy Williams regarding the amount of insurance money he had received for the two totaled vehicles. (Mrs. Williams stated that information was on her desk and she would provide it to the Sheriff after the meeting). Sheriff stated he was still on the waiting list with the State of Kansas regarding used vehicles. Sheriff's department is working with Road & Bridge to clean up roadways and bridges. Ernie Tyson is now the roadside deputy transporting inmates around the county to clean up the roadways.

**County Administrator:** Cindy Williams presented information from The Retirement Systems of Alabama regarding converting current Tier II employees to Tier I employees which provides a better retirement for employees. The total unfunded actuarial accrued liability to the county at this time would be \$77,000.00. The cost will be spread out over fifteen years as an increase in the yearly contribution rate. The Commission had previously elected to opt into the shared cost with the employees. This would not require a lump sum payment but would be an increase in the retirement contribution factor of approximately .67%. If elected before October 1, 2020 these figures would be good and would go into effect FY2021. Any election after October 1, 2020 the rates would increase due to payrolls and would not be effective until FY2022. Commissioner Brannon stated he would like to put this on the agenda for the January 27, 2020 meeting for a vote when Chairman Seay will be present and all four Commissioners can vote.

**County Engineer:** Mr. Barfield presented a report for 2019. The department had sixty-four work orders completed. Driveway pipe installs were down in 2019 with only eighty-six being installed. There were 1,387 miles of roadway sprayed with herbicide. Miles of dirt roads graded were 3,688.5. Right of ways cleared totaled 173.3 miles and right of ways mowed totaled 309.25. There were 39,201 feet of ditches dug. Cross drains installed for the year totaled fifty-five. Signage completed was three hundred seven. The C & D Landfill cell has been completed and is awaiting inspection by ADEM. The Hazard Mitigation grant applied for was not awarded. Mr. Barfield noted again at this meeting about the CRS Tank. He stated he had a current price of between \$49,000.00 - \$52,000.00 just for the tank which would not include installation. Mr. Barfield stated this could have a monthly payment of \$1,500 - \$1,600 per month. There are still no immediate needs and when needed they are borrowing a tank from Coffee County. That just slows down the process since it takes several hours to drive their and drive back. Mr. Barfield asked for a resolution from the Commission for High Risk Rural Road programs for several guardrail projects. The guardrail projects will be on County Road 17 over Samson Branch, County Road 8 over Long Branch and County Road 16 over UT to Justice Mill Creek. The total estimate for the project is \$131,233.81 which would cost the county a 10% match of \$13,123.38.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion that the Geneva County Commission sign a resolution for the HRRR program for the guardrail project. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0.

Mr. Barfield stated he was requesting one more resolution be signed for another High Risk Rural Road program for a four way stop at the intersection of County Road 28 and County Road 49 in District One and County Road 85 & County Road 44 in District 2. The estimate on this project is \$4,000.94 and the cost to the county for the 10% match would be \$400.09.

Commissioner Spivey made a motion that the County Commission sign a resolution for the HRRR program for the Traffic Control project at County Road 28 & County Road 49 and County Road 85 and County Road 44. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0.

**County Attorney:** Attorney Eldridge stated that Commission Chair Toby Seay had discussed adding a separate account for Industrial Development. Currently the Industrial Development is budgeted under the General Fund with set line items. Money from new Probate fees is going into the Industrial Development as well as rent monies from the Industrial Park. A motion is needed to set up a separate Industrial Development account. Commissioner Wilks made a motion that a separate account be set up for the Industrial Development. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0.

Over the holidays Chairman Seay was contacted by Representative Jeff Sorrells regarding the \$35.00 service fee the Sheriff had requested for In State and Out of State service would require a Constitutional Amendment. Representative Sorrells stated that if the In State service was dropped and it was only for Out of State it probably would not require a Constitutional Amendment and it could be done with a local act. Sheriff Helms stated he would be at the Sheriff's Conference next week and would confer with his fellow Sheriff's whether they had both In State and Out of State and would present his findings at the next Commission meeting. Mr. Eldridge asked that the Sheriff get the information as soon as possible because it would require that this be published (advertised) four times. Commissioner Brannon requested this item be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Have received a resolution from the ACCA Liability Self Insurance Fund regarding a longevity bonus if the county will commit to an additional three years to remain in the fund. It will be a one-time bonus of 10% of the 2020 premium contribution. The resolution is required by March 15, 2020 and will be paid out to be used during the 2019-2020 budget year. Commissioner Spivey made a motion for the Commission Chairman to sign a resolution from the ACCA Liability Self Insurance Fund for a three-year commitment to the fund to receive a Longevity Bonus of 10% of the 2020 premium contributions. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0

Over the holidays the county received a request for open public records and several have been received over the years which require a lot of time from employees to provide the information. The current request was very extensive and did require a substantial amount of time from the Commission Office which is already one person short. Commission Chair Seay requested from Attorney Eldridge that he prepare a policy for open records request and a form to be completed regarding the request for records. The Attorney General has stated that a reasonable amount can be charged for the service of producing

the records for inspection and copies. Basically, the charge would be the hourly rate of the employee providing the records by the quarter hour and rounded up and copy expense. The form and policy have been prepared on case law and the Attorney General opinion. This policy must be uniformly applied to all requests. You cannot provide records free of charge to someone you personally know requesting the records versus an unknown person or entity. If the Commission wishes to adopt this policy, it will require a resolution. Commissioner Hammer made a motion to adopt the Open Records Request Policy. Commissioner Spivey seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0. Copies are being provided to Cindy Williams to distribute to the department's heads for their departments.

**Revenue Commissioner:** Mary Ann Ellison was present and presented that her department is still collecting taxes. Delinquent notices should be going out in the next few days. There is still approximately \$325,000 left to collect in property taxes.

**Chairman Seay:** Attending Probate Judge's Conference

**EMA Director:** Eric Johnson regarding the weather situation this past weekend and we were very fortunate. The weather did not get as bad as was predicted and we only had minor issues with a few trees being down. This weather situation did allow Mr. Johnson to connect with all the city departments. Mr. Johnson stated he was very glad his first situation was not bad, and he learned a lot during the experience. He stated shelters could be an issue in the event of a real disaster and he was collecting information on possible shelters and the liability concerns for the county.

**E-911:** Mr. Jeremy Williams stated that like the Road & Bridge department the E-911 had been denied a Hazard Mitigation grant. E-911 will be moving forward to replace their twenty-year old generator with a new one that will run the entire building if needed. Only received a few calls during the weather event this past weekend and ninety percent of those were for Road & Bridge department regarding downed trees. A few power outages were reported.

**Auburn Extension:** Not present

**Commissioner Hammer:** Nothing to report.

**Commissioner Brannon:** Nothing to report.

**Commissioner Spivey:** Appreciation to the Sheriff and the Road & Bridge department for their efforts in District 1.

**Commissioner Wilks:** Nothing to report.

Commissioner Hammer made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0.

The above constitutes the minutes of the meeting of the Geneva County Commission held on Monday, January 13, 2020.

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Chairman, Toby Seay

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Marietta Webster  
Chief Administrative Clerk

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Commissioner Weston Spivey

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Commissioner Todd Brannon

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Commissioner Bart Wilks

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Commissioner Hammer