

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

Commission Chairman Toby Seay called the meeting to order and welcomed guests present. Commissioner Wilks opened the meeting with prayer. Chairman Seay led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no elected officials requesting to make public comment.

There were no citizens requesting to make public comment.

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

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve Minutes of September 28, 2020. Commissioner Brannon made a motion to approve the minutes of September 28, 2020. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.
2. Proclamations: None
3. Bids: None
4. Board Appointments: None

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Spec Building – Progress is made on the footers and stem wall.
2. Bids – Bids for Road & Bridge were opened and presented at the September 14, 2020 Commission meeting. There was another bid received for stone from Vulcan Materials which was received timely but was mixed in with other mail in the Probate Office and not opened at the meeting. Engineer Barfield stated he plans to rebid so the bid will remain sealed. No action is needed.
3. Courtroom Renovation – Mr. Mike Rutland will be at the October 26, 2020 Commission Meeting.

REPORTS OF STAFF:

Sheriff: Sheriff Helms stated he was unable to attend the September 28, 2020 Commission Meeting when the budget was approved. He stated one of his deputies had an accident the night of Hurricane Sally and totaled a 2013 Tahoe. He continued that only \$5,000.00 will be received from the Insurance carrier after the deductible. He has spoken with the City of Geneva and they will sell him a 2014 Ford Explorer for \$14,500.00. He is aware that the Commission did not approve a vehicle purchase for him in FY2021. Sheriff Helms stated he didn't understand the decision given the age of his fleet and the number of miles his vehicles travel. On average his deputies put 300 to 350 miles per shift on a vehicle and the wear and tear this puts on any vehicle is difficult but when you factor in the amount of dirt roads that they travel it is added wear and tear on them. The vehicle that the School Resource Officers drive just travels to the Geneva City Schools and back, but he feels it is unsafe. He has three part time deputies that do not have vehicles and they get one when they check in, if one is available. The Sheriff is asking for his budget to be amended to allow him to purchase a vehicle to replace the one that was totaled. The Commissioners asked the Sheriff many questions regarding his current inventory list which includes thirty-one vehicles and whether all those vehicles are currently in used or should some be removed from his inventory list or could some be sold. If vehicles can be sold, those funds could be put toward the purchase of a new vehicle. The Sheriff stated four vehicles are used by the Drug Task Force for undercover and not used daily. He also does not believe he has thirty-one vehicles that should be on his inventory list and he will get with the Administrator to go over his inventory. The Commissioners explained they had to make cuts in the budget where they could due to the funds available for the County and they did not see any way they could add funds for vehicle purchases to his budget for this fiscal year. The Sheriff also stated the sale of weapons is where he could make money, however, he found that the Bill that allows him to sell weapons states, he is only allowed to sell to licensed dealers in Geneva County and to his knowledge there is only one licensed dealer in the County and that is the Pawn Shop in Geneva. Chairman Seay stated the Commission could speak with Representative Sorrells and request he bring it up to amend the Bill to include the Sheriff would be allowed to sale weapons in the State of Alabama to any licensed dealer. The Chairman also explained it would be next year before the Bill could be changed. Commissioner Hammer asked to review the Sheriff's copy of the Bill. After reviewing he agreed that the Sheriff was only allowed to sale weapons to licensed dealers in Geneva County. Commissioner Hammer asked Attorney Eldridge if a motion was needed to adopt a resolution for Representative Sorrells to present to amend the current Bill for sale of weapons by the Sheriff in Geneva County to read he can sale to licensed dealers in the State of Alabama. Attorney Eldridge answered in the affirmative. Commissioner Wilks made a motion to adopt a resolution for Representative Sorrells to present to amend the current Bill which allows the Sheriff to sale weapons in Geneva County to licensed dealers to read he can sale weapons to licensed dealers in the State of Alabama. Commissioner Spivey seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

County Administrator: Nothing to report.

County Engineer: Engineer Justin Barfield stated he had a Pit agreement through ALDOT for Revels Pit, the charge is \$.80, and we charge \$.10 over. Commissioner

Hammer made a motion to accept the Pit agreement through ALDOT for Revels Pit. Commissioner Brannon seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

The HRRR guardrail project still in progress pouring end treatments and this project should be complete by next meeting.

Rebuild Alabama road projects are complete. The permanent stripping has been laid down on the remaining roads.

Engineering Aide II Jim Rucker has now retired, and advertising will begin this week for a new Engineering Aide II however, Mr. Barfield would like to ask the Commission to consider hiring Mr. Rucker as a contract employee, when needed at a payrate of \$18.75 per hour. Mr. Rucker has handled all the bridge inspections for the County for many years now and is going to be difficult to replace. Another Engineering Aide II, Tim Tanton is planning to retire March 2021. Bill Benroth is still working as an Engineering Aide II, so the plans are to only have two Engineering Aide II positions. Chairman Seay asked Mr. Barfield if hiring Mr. Rucker as a contract employee was within his current budget and Mr. Barfield stated it was. No action was required.

Mr. Barfield also stated that his employee that works at the Landfill worked his last day and he currently has an employee in the testing phase to be able to step in the position. Three bridges are still out as a result of Hurricane Sally. All three were wooden bridges that will be replace with concrete bridges.

As a result of Hurricane Sally the County has around \$1.3 million in damages. Mr. Barfield, EMA Director Eric Johnson and the State AEMA have all verified these damages and it has been submitted to FEMA. As of today, there has been no word from FEMA regarding the damages.

County Attorney: Mr. Eldridge stated he has the annual contract from SpectraCare for the jail which is the same contract as last year. A motion is needed to approve and allow Chairman Seay to sign the contract. Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the FY2021 contract with SpectraCare and allow Chairman Seay to sign the contract. Commissioner Spivey seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

He also has the fire alarm monitoring contract from Harris Security for the jail in the amount of \$68.95 per month that needs approval. Commissioner Wilks made a motion to approve the fire alarm monitoring contract with Harris Security and allow Chairman Seay to sign the contract. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

Attorney Eldridge stated that back in April a notice of non-payment had been received from one of the jail contractors, Old Castle, for \$17,000+. He stated this dispute had been resolved between Old Castle and Bear Brothers for \$3,865.00. He has a signed agreement and has requested a paid statement from Old Castle so that we will have proof of payment. The County should be about two weeks out from making final settlement with Bear Brothers Construction for the jail project.

The lawsuit with the Pharmaceutical Company in the opioid drug case is proceeding. One of the cases is set to begin trial October 19, 2020. A bankruptcy has been filed in the matter. Mr. Eldridge is hopeful the County will get some form of payment from a settlement.

Chairman Seay: Chairman Seay stated he had the FY2020 EMA agreements from the State which are for reimbursement on a portion of the EMA Director's salary and

expenditures. Commissioner Brannon made a motion to authorize Chairman Seay to sign the FY2020 EMA agreements. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

Chairman Seay stated Jon Hilyer with Bear Brothers had been in contact regarding the utility conversion from Bear Brothers to the County. Administrator Cindy Williams had been notified of this and had contacted the company's, but Alabama Power has not made the conversion yet. Mrs. Williams will contact them again regarding the billing.

Chairman Seay stated that the CDBG grant for The City of Samson's water project is complete. That will allow the County to apply in the Spring for a grant. The County can apply for a surface treatment grant for a portion of a dirt road in a low-income area.

Engineer Barfield will be working with Emily VanScyoc with SouthEast Regional Planning & Development on this grant project.

There are at least two more offices in the Courthouse that could use Workplace Modifications due to the Coronavirus and they are the Reappraisal Office and the Sheriff's Department Office. With the Commission's approval Chairman Seay will seek quotes on these projects that should be under the \$15,000 threshold. Commissioner Wilks made a motion to allow Chairman Seay to seek quotes on the Workplace Modifications for Courthouse offices. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

It has come to our attention that Local Amendment 429, passed in 1982, states that a municipality can purchase land but not build buildings on the land. In 2004 a State-wide amendment was issued which changed this, however if there was a local law it did not apply. Chairman Seay is asking the Commission to ask Representative Sorrells to repeal Amendment 429, however it must be on the ballot and that will not be for another two years. Commissioner Hammer made a motion to allow Chairman Seay to ask Representative Sorrells to have the repeal of Amendment 429 placed on the next ballot for vote. Commissioner Brannon seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

Revenue Commissioner: Not present

EMA Director: Mr. Johnson stated he has worked with Engineer Barfield, State EMA and FEMA over the past week regarding the damages from Hurricane Sally. The County currently has 799 total cases of Covid and 7 seven deaths.

The PPE previously discussed in a prior meeting should arrive today. There are 25 pallets which include gloves, masks, shields, etc. Houston County has a large storage facility and can store this for us until we can locate a suitable storage facility in the County.

He will be attending a Flood Plains workshop next week.

Solid Waste: Not present.

E-911: Not Present

Auburn Extension: Not present.

Commissioner Brannon: Nothing to report.

Commissioner Hammer: Nothing to report.

Commissioner Spivey: Nothing to report.


Commissioner Wilks: Nothing to report.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brannon seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

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



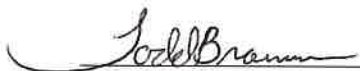
Chairman, Toby Seay



Cindy Williams
County Administrator



Commissioner Weston Spivey



Commissioner Todd Brannon



Commissioner Bart Wilks



Commissioner Hammer