

STATE OF ALABAMA §

LAUDERDALE COUNTY §

The Lauderdale County Commission convened at the Lauderdale County Courthouse in the City of Florence, Alabama at 5:00 p.m. on the 10th day of July, 2017. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman of the Lauderdale County Commission, Danny Pettus. Upon roll call, the following members answered present:

Danny Pettus	Chairman of Commission
Brad Holmes	Commissioner, District 1
Roger Garner	Commissioner, District 1
Joe Hackworth	Commissioner, District 2
Fay Parker	Commissioner, District 2
Legal Counsel:	
Christopher A. Smith	County Attorney

Chairman Pettus, upon declaration of a quorum being present, opened the meeting for the transaction of business.

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was delivered by Commissioner Roger Garner.

Awards and Presentations: none

Commissioner Hackworth moved, seconded by Commissioner Parker that all items listed on the regular business agenda be approved for immediate consideration. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Agenda is herein recorded and made a part of these minutes.

Commissioner Holmes moved, seconded by Commissioner Garner that the minutes of the last regular meeting be approved for recording. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved.

Commissioner Garner moved, seconded by Commissioner Parker to approve a resolution that authorizes the existing contract between Environmental Grinding Service, Inc. and the Lauderdale County Commission along with Lauderdale County Solid Waste to be renewed for the final year of the contract with all prices and terms to remain the same. The contract will expire on September 30th, 2018. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Resolution is herein recorded and made part of these minutes.

Commissioner Holmes moved, seconded by Commissioner Garner to approve a resolution that authorizes the existing contract between BFI Waste Systems of Alabama, LLC, a Republic Services Company and the Lauderdale County Commission along with Lauderdale County Solid Waste to be renewed for the final year of the contract with all prices and terms to remain the same. The contract will expire on September 30th, 2018. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Resolution is herein recorded and made part of these minutes.

Commissioner Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Garner that a resolution be approved to amend by line item only the Reappraisal Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. Overages occurring in the line item shall be reconciled by excess funds in Aerial Photography, according to the attached Budget Revision Request. There being no further discussion and upon vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Resolution and attachment is herein recorded and made part of these minutes.

The Lauderdale County Jail Director, Jason Butler, has requested that Fred Jackson Austin be allowed to attain Military Leave of Absence from his position as Detention Office for the Lauderdale County Jail. The leave is to be for four hundred days and upon release of Mr. Austin back to reserve status, he will resume his current position with the Lauderdale County Jail. Commissioner Holmes moved, seconded by Commissioner Hackworth to accept the leave. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Military Leave is approved and made part of these minutes.

The Lauderdale County Sheriff, Rick Singleton, has requested that one of his deputies be placed on Family Medical Leave which will begin on May 25th, 2017 and be effective through August 20th, 2017. All medical paperwork has been completed and filed. Commissioner Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Garner to approve Family Medical Leave. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Family Medical Leave is approved and made part of these minutes.

The Lauderdale County Jail Director, Jason Butler, has requested that one of his employees be placed on Family Medical Leave which will begin on May 31st, 2017 and be effective through July 2nd, 2017. All medical paperwork has been completed and filed. Commissioner Garner moved, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to approve the Family Medical Leave. There be no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Family Medical Leave is approved and made part of these minutes.

In compliance with competitive bid laws of the State of Alabama, sealed bids were advertised for Bid No. LA-2017-1, "Various Print Bids". Bid responses were received, publicly opened and read aloud on July 7th, 2017. A bid tabulation sheet was prepared for the Commissions review. Chairman Pettus referred to the Lauderdale County Administrator, Brenda Bryant, for recommendations. Ms. Bryant stated that there was only one item on the bid list which was Revenue Affidavit to Verify Exemption and there was only one bidder on this item which is Printers & Stationers of Florence, Alabama. Ms. Bryant stated that she recommends that the bid be awarded to Printers & Stationers. There being no discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved. Bid to be awarded to Printers and Stationers of Florence, Alabama. Bid tabulation is herein recorded and made a part of these minutes.

The invoiced bills were audited, allowed, and ordered to be paid upon a motion by Commissioner Hackworth and seconded by Commissioner Parker. There being no further discussion and upon a vote taken, motion unanimously approved.

CHECKS ISSUED JUNE 26TH, 2017 THROUGH JULY 9th, 2017

GENERAL-SPECIAL CHECK # 52186-52223	\$562,827.85
AGRI-BUSINESS FUND CHECK # 3566-3571	\$1,033.01
LEPA FUND CHECK # 7824-7830	\$4,347.77
GASOLINE TAX FUND CHECK # 16408-16417	\$162,509.98
PUBLIC BLDG., R & B SPECIAL CHECK # N/A	0.00

PUBLIC HIGHWAY & TRAFFIC FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
AL. TRUST CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
RRR GASOLINE TAX FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
REAPPRAISAL FUND CHECK # 11113-11122	\$25,268.05
REAPPRAISAL MONEY MARKET CHECK # N/A	0.00
TOURISM, REC. & CONVENTION FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
RSVP FUND CHECK # 16951-16957	\$2,428.57
CHILD PROTECTION FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
SERIES 2001 DEBT SERVICE FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
CDBG FUND CHECK # 374	\$2,017.00
SOLID WASTE FUND CHECK # 6909-6918	\$91,856.98
ACCOUNT PAYABLE FUND CHECK # 39088-39149	\$172,918.92
FIRE PROTECTION FEE FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT TAX FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00

TOBACCO TAX FUND CHECK # 2992	\$15,435.00
TVA TAX FUND CHECK # N/A	0.00
TOTAL	\$1,040,643.13

Scheduled Public Hearings: none

Staff Reports: none

Public Comment Period:

Jennifer Patrick of 4587 County Road 16, Florence, Alabama. Ms. Patrick read a statement to the Commission concerning the closing of the bridge on Lauderdale County Road 16 – copy of the statement is attached.

John Killen of 255 Betsy Ross Lane, Florence, Alabama stated that he is opposed the closing of the bridge on Lauderdale County Road 16. Mr. Killen is concerned that the bridge will never re-open and he stated that he has to drive eight miles to get to Savannah Highway. Mr. Killen stated that this part of the County has the best people, land, and natural resources and the Commissioners could fix the bridge and address the safety issues without costing the County any resources.

John Fields, owner of the old HON Furniture building, stated that he needs the bridge replaced due to the resources that he has put into the building and that the bridge closing will have a negative impact on his business along with any businesses that may be interested in the building.

Betty Hooks of 4416 County Road 16, Florence, Alabama stated that she is cut off from everything and that the bridge was the resource to other roads. Ms. Hooks also stated that the new Sheriff has the best department ever but they would have more break-ins in the area surrounding the bridge closure. Ms. Hooks feels that people will come and turn around. Ms. Hooks stated that they need a bridge.

Ricky Hooks of 4567 County Road 16, Florence, Alabama stated that the bridge needs to be replaced and that the study on the bridge limited the traffic to a weight of three tons or less. The bridge closing cut them off from church and school.

Commissioner Parker stated that he talked to several people and ask the Lauderdale County Engineer, Eric Hill, to discuss the pros and cons and other issues with the citizens who are in attendance of tonight's meeting. Mr. Hill stated that the closing of the old bridge was solely a decision made for safety reasons and that he is in constant contact with the AECOM consultant that is working on the new bridge design. Mr. Hill also stated that the new bridge and design are a work in progress but there have been some hurdles that have hindered the project such as environmental issues, the presence of nearby wetland areas, and the presence of extensive cultural resources. Mr. Hill further stated that they are still working on pin pointing the new location and cost of the bridge and that one million seven-hundred thousand dollars that had been allocated for this project but due to issues discovered during the design process, the current cost of construction has increased to two million three-hundred thousand dollars. Mr. Hill stated that this cost does not include the cultural resource mitigation that will be required and that if the construction of the bridge was started today, it would still take three years to complete. Commissioner Hackworth stated that he wanted to address an article about the West Lauderdale Water Department. Mr. Hackworth stated that the article was written about Highway 20, South of Gunnerford Road and the article was incorrect when it quoted the size of the water lines. Mr. Hackworth stated that the West Lauderdale Water Department does have sewer lines that are six inches in size moving down to three inches in size. Mr. Hackworth further stated that the West Lauderdale Water Department does a wonderful job serving over six thousand customers and over two hundred and fifty miles of lines. Mr. Hackworth stated that he wants to thank former Commissioner Bobby McCormick for coming to tonight's Commission meeting. Mr. Hackworth stated that once the decision was made to close the bridge, he wanted to help the County with all steps necessary to build a new and modern bridge that will meet the needs of schools buses and farm equipment. Commissioner Parker stated that he really wants to go forward with the bridge project but the current bridge had to be closed due to safety concerns for our citizens. Mr. Parker stated he wants the bridge project to move forward and that he wants to keep this project on tap. Mr. Parker further stated that he appreciates all the concerned citizens that came to the Commission meeting tonight and while he likes history, we have to move forward. Mr. Parker stated that the State Department determined that the bridge was not safe and because of the safety of our loved ones, it must remain closed.

Martha Ringalstien of 7345 County Road 16, Florence, Alabama stated that she has a business in Petersville. Ms. Ringalstien asked please don't close the bridge and she stated that she believes that the bridge is passable.

The Lauderdale County Engineer, Eric Hill, stated that three years ago the bridge was limited to travel for only vehicles under three tons. Mr. Hill further stated that the Alabama State Troopers did a survey and found that they could write tickets all day long for over-weight vehicles crossing the bridge because even a truck pulling a boat would be over the three ton limit.

Marion Edmondson of 4704 County Road 137, Florence, Alabama stated that the County had not put enough pressure on people or the State and that he has built things for forty years and things could be done faster.

Commissioner Holmes stated that he was not part of the Commission in 2013 and that the bridge should have only been used by passenger cars and vehicles under the three ton weight limit but instead, the bridge was used by dump trucks and other vehicles over the weight restriction limit which could have contributed to the deterioration of the bridge. Commissioner Holmes also stated that he is a first responder and he gave a lot of consideration to the closing of the bridge but closing it was the only option and the County must follow policy along with the State and Federal Government to get the funding needed. Mr. Holmes stated that this was not just a regular bridge replacement because there are a lot of factors to consider such as the wetlands and the new design that the project will require. Mr. Holmes also stated that bridge safety was placed above everything else and that is what drove him to support the closing of the bridge.

Lisa Robinson of 459 Betsy Ross Lane, Florence, Alabama state that she was glad that the bridge was closed because the bridge was dangerous and she was scared that someone was going to be killed on the bridge but she does want a new bridge built to replace it. Ms. Robinson also stated that she has another issue to address with the Commissioners. Ms. Robinson stated that she cannot safely walk her dogs because of pit bulls in the area and that she had to build a fence to protect her dogs from being attacked in their own yard by pit bulls. Ms. Robinson said that this issue needs to be addressed by the Commissioners.

Chairman Pettus stated that we are not through the process and that the residents of the area should contact their State and Federal Representatives because citizens calling can help the situation. Chairman Pettus stated that he did appreciate everyone attending the meeting and that the more people that call, the more the representatives will hear the voice of the citizens.

There being no further business to come before the Commission and upon a motion made by Commissioner Holmes and seconded by Commissioner Parker, the meeting was duly adjourned until the next regular meeting subject to call.

LAUDERDALE COUNTY COMMISSION

Danny Pettus, Chairman

Brad Holmes, Commissioner

Roger Garner, Commissioner

Fay Parker, Commissioner

Joe Hackworth, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Brenda Bryant, County Administrator