

**January 3, 2022**

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 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2022, 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, the County Administrator called the roll and commissioners present were: Keith Davis, Jeff Burrough, Jim Borden and Steven Aderholt.

Commissioner Aderholt gave the invocation and Commissioner Borden led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

After complimentary remarks were made by Commissioner Jeff Burrough, Officer Wyman Wayne Jones was sworn in as the Solid Waste Officer by the Honorable Judge Henry Allred. Commissioner Burrough stated that they will be ordering a new badge to add to Officer Jones' uniform. (Photographs were taken by Ed Howell and Al Blanton)

Chairman Miller stated that they appreciate Mr. Jones and what he does and looks forward to his continued work.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the agenda, to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2021 meeting and to approve the claims against the County for December, 2021.

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, Robbie Dickerson stated, "I just want to wish everybody a Happy New Year and I just have one thing as of now. Considering what this past week has been like, I'm just going to let you know that February 25<sup>th</sup> through February 27<sup>th</sup> is 2022 Severe Weather Preparation Tax Holiday. So, if you don't have a radio, you might consider one along with some other supplies. There's nothing we have to do since we've always participated, we will just roll into it. But I just like to bring it to everyone's attention to prepare for that, prepare for Spring or Summer or Fall or Winter.

County Engineer Mike Short stated that he will have something when Number 5 comes up under New Business.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Addition of Voting Centers.

After explanation by Honorable Probate Judge Lee Tucker, a brief discussion, and Judge Tucker suggesting that the Commission contact the Legislature to introduce a local act which would allow the County Commission to implement change of voting centers in the future, and that if they are going to make any changes in the precinct in this election cycle they would have to do that within 90 days of the election, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to end discussion.

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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to open discussion of the E-911 Board Appointments.

After explanation by Chairman Miller, Commissioner Aderholt adding that the members to be appointed are Billy Waid, Richard Fikes and Mike Short, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the E-911 Board Appointments.

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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to open discussion of Summit Food Contract Amendment.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, County Attorney Richard Fikes stating that he needs a chance to review the contract, input from Sheriff Nick Smith, County Engineer Mike Short and Commissioners Aderholt and Davis, and much discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis to extend the contract for 90 days with a 3% increase until they

have time to investigate and/or negotiate the price increase beginning January 3, 2022.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Commission Meeting for January 17<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

After a brief discussion, it was recognized that when the meeting date falls on a holiday it will automatically be held on the following Tuesday; therefore, the January meeting will be January 18<sup>th</sup> and the February meeting will be February 22<sup>nd</sup>, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to end discussion.

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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Rebuild Alabama Annual Report.

County Engineer Mike Short gave a detailed Rebuild Alabama Annual Report, stating that they have expended funds of approximately \$71,449 to move guardrails and to make guardrail installations possible on Mill Creek Bridge just north of Carbon Hill High School on the Carbon Hill to Nauvoo Road. He further stated that there are two projects that are nearing completion that will be used by the County Rebuild Alabama Funds, which is Smith Lake Dam Road and the northern portion of the Carbon Hill/Nauvoo Road; that they have not been invoiced yet, even though the work has been done; that these funds come in on a monthly basis. He stated, "We do the work, we invoice for the work, pay for the work, so there's a lot of flow in there that may make it look like, well you haven't done anything because you haven't spent any money, but some of the work has been done, probably to the tune of a million and a half dollars, but only a portion of those two projects will be paid for with the Rebuild Alabama Funds." He stated that District One and District Two will pay the remaining portion on those particular roads in their district. He said this is to let the Commission know the status and that this report will go into Montgomery; that this will keep the County in check and let the Legislators know that they're spending the money that they approved, properly.

After a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to end the discussion.

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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of M4A Board Appointments.

After explanation by Chairman Miller, input by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, Commissioners indicating that they have some people in mind but would like to discuss it with them first, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Burrough that this motion be tabled till the next meeting.

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.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Davis thanked Wayne and the litter crew for all the work they do. He stated that the litter crews in District One and District Four is one of the first things he and Commissioner Aderholt started when they came on board ten years ago, that at that time they were using Work Release inmates and when that program ended, the Sheriff stepped up with inmates that they have now and Jeff helped and everybody kind of worked on the Commission and kind of organized what we've got now working with Nick and working with Wayne. He said he was riding roads last week and it was hard to find any litter on the side of the road, that it's just really unbelievable the job that the crews are doing and how well that they're doing. He said, "The only way you can kind of combat this litter is have a systematic system in place like this. It has to be picked up every day. If it's not picked up every day then, you can testify, you'll get behind. But not only that, illegal dumping is down. I know Jeff touched on some of that, too. You know, just a fantastic job."

Commissioner Davis gave an update on the Curry Shelter, stating that bids will be opened on the 11<sup>th</sup> and that bid can be awarded to contractors the next meeting. He said he appreciated everyone's patience with that. He stated, "Happy New Year. I hope 2022 is a better year than the past two years we've had due to the virus, but a lot of good things were accomplished in 2021. The Justice Center, I believe, being at the top of the list and the numerous other projects that we've got. I want to make mention, too, Mike, the paving that was done on Smith Lake Dam Road, the company did a fantastic job. It's really a solid job and that road will last for many, many years. And with 2022 again District One's goal is to extend more paving to Smith Lake Dam Road, try to finish, if we can't it will hopefully be finished up that next spring or summer. It's eleven miles of road and it's about a two-and-a-half, three-million-dollar project. So, it just takes time. What's been done so far is really good quality work. And that company should be commended for that quality of work that they did. That's it. Happy New Year. I appreciate you Judge on what you're trying to work for. I know it's your goal to save taxpayer dollars. I know finding pole workers is getting more difficult as the seasoned

one's age and with COVID the past two years, I mean, I know it's been a struggle, but I appreciate you working on that also."

Commissioner Burrough followed up with that. He said he appreciated Lee, that they have had several conversations on it and that he thinks his district has the most needs. He suggested that maybe they discuss that in a work session. He said Lee had helped him a lot and he appreciated it every time. He said he couldn't say enough about Wayne, that he has his District in better shape and that he reaches out and helps all the Commissioners whenever they call. He appreciates all the work they do. He said he's glad to get back to work and hopes the weather is better this year than it has been the last two years and they can keep making good forward progress.

Commissioner Borden wished everyone a Happy New Year. He said he hoped this year is a better year than this past year, that District Three is going to continue to be out working for the citizens. He stated, "Again, Mr. Jones, the whole Solid Waste Landfill Department, you included in that, does an excellent job. I can tell just in the last year when I came in, we really didn't have a litter crew in District Three. The roads do look a lot better. After we mow, before you would just sling trash everywhere. So, keep up the good work. Us having our own crew, we work with them. They are very good about contacting me about what we need to do in the district. A lot of our big dump sites we've gotten rid of. We're continuing to be proactive on that situation. Other than that, just Happy New Year."

Commissioner Aderholt stated, "I was just thinking back the geneses of the litter program that has gone on since 2012 when we came into office. I remember we went back and just tried to think of anything that would be effective against, not keeping trash up, but keeping it from being thrown out. And I remember coming up with the idea of the litter-cams. And I remember how Mr. Short and our engineers and we just built a great little program. Actually, a lot of people don't know this, but it drew national attention. I was contacted by a mayor in North Carolina and an engineer in some department up in Michigan who wanted to know just how that worked out. I was able to tell them with full honesty, it looks better in my district by about 75 to 80 percent within a year. Of course, it just continues to evolve as we go on. And then we had help from the Sheriff and some more folks. The inmates got out and picked some of that stuff up and just watching all that from 2012 all the way to now. Right now, we've got Mr. Jones back here, so I'm truly appreciative because I know he's done a lot of hard work in my district as well. So, watching it go along, you're right, it has to be a systematic approach. But I've always said, for ten years now, if we don't start with the school children at a very young age and educate them, the problem will never stop. So, it's not only a matter of seeing the trash that's out there, it's the proactive approach and the generational change and teaching children how not to do that and why, that's

number one, illegal, but also, it's really shameful to through stuff out on the sides of the road. I know a lot of people are trying to raise their kids with integrity to not do that. So, I'm just looking forward to where it goes to in the future. I would also like to mention yesterday I was on the way home from church and I got a call from 9-1-1 that said they had a tree down on Summerville Road. So, I sprung into action with my family and decided to drive down and see how big it was. There was a gentleman there that lives on Summerville Road, Mr. Tyler. He got out with me and my son and it was a dead tree and he helped us move that whole dead tree from the road. So, I'm appreciative of people that are willing to get out and help somebody on a Sunday afternoon. So, again I look forward to 2022, Happy New Year and let's go."

Commissioner Burrough asked Wayne Jones to elaborate on some of the programs that he has implemented.

Solid Waste Officer Jones stated, "I don't have a list for everything, but I actually went Friday to Huntsville and got a supply of bags. They told me as long as I kept a number up, and I get all the guys in the district to send me their numbers for a month -- We're a little more organized than we've ever been and hopefully this year will be even more organized. I'm going to do some things different. They have been trying to get into the schools to speak. I have an appointment with Dr. Willingham. He's had some other things come up, but hopefully sometime in January we're going to have those folks come in. They've got three different levels of education they do with the elementary and middle school and the high school, because there's three different levels of people that you're talking to."

Commissioner Aderholt stated, "We started doing this for the Sheriff in 2018 before the pandemic. The pandemic has wiped all that out. We've been trying to get this part of the program going for a while."

Mr. Jones further stated, "This is the Keep Alabama Beautiful -- it's a national organization. I've had calls from California, even, about some of the stuff we've done with the Sheriff's litter program. Like you were talking about awhile ago, we have an email that they can email it in, and it gives us a hit. I get that email and I distribute it out to the different folks. It's just a little more efficient way of handling things. But they're going to do that even if the pandemic continues. They said they would set up outside the schools in the open air to do that program. So, we're working on that. We've been able, I've met with John and Mr. Calloway and we have kind of come together and devised a little plan that is kind of evolving as we continue to be a little more efficient about the way we operate. So, it's a little more cost effective and actually getting a little more done also. I mean, there's a lot of different things that I do, but -- the main thing, I just try to make people happy."

Commissioner Burrough stated that he knew there were several states and organizations that had reached out to Mr. Jones and he had reached out to them.

Mr. Jones said he spoke with the Solid Waste Officer in Cullman and that they actually have a trailer that they use that has outriggers on it and a boom that can reach down and get some of the trash in the ravines that they can't get too, that it's a dangerous situation to try to put an inmate in that, but it still needs to be cleaned up from an environmental standpoint. He said he has started working a little closer with Jason at the Walker County Health Center and that John has him in touch with ADEM on a project they've got going on in Goodsprings right now. It's a major dumpsite where people are coming from outside the county bringing tractor trailer loads in.

Commissioner Burrough stated that they all have those spots where people start hauling old junk cars, old mobile homes – just all kinds of stuff and it's just an eye sore.

Mr. Jones stated that he thinks by being able to issue the citations and the media being able to show what the consequences are has helped. He said he appreciated their help and support.

Commissioner Burrough stated he is also helping him with vandalism of signs and confetti writing on the roads. He thanked him for all he does.

Chairman Miller stated, "We appreciate you gentlemen. And appreciate everybody coming to the meeting. I want to say Happy New Year, of course. We do appreciate the Solid Waste and Mr. Jones and everything that's going on there and to expand just a little bit on the Justice Center. That's moving along. We have some plans and things from the architect and we're basically getting to the point of maybe going to get some of that out for bids and look at it, but it's moving along quite well. The New Year brings a lot of new, I guess, adventures for this Commission in the paving of the roads and the things that we can do and looking for monies to work on these roads with. We know that's on everybody's mind in the county and hopefully we can do some more of that this year and find some additional funding and maybe this year will just be better and better. At this time, I need a motion to adjourn."

**ADJOURN:**

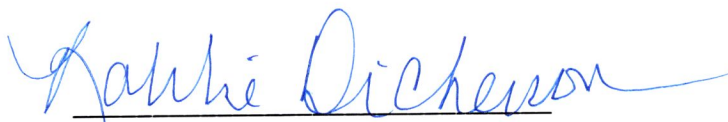
Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis, that this meeting be adjourned to reconvene at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at the call of the Chairman.

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