

August 7, 2023

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 7th day of August 2023, 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, and Jim Borden.

County Employee Dave Sexton gave the invocation and Commissioner Davis led the pledge of allegiance.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATION:

Proclamation was read by Chairman Miller whereby the Walker County Commission Recognized and Honored our Armed Forces Veterans who have sacrificed and, in many instances, paid the ultimate price for Our Freedom. The Walker County Commission gave Special Honor and Recognition to Clarence S. Mason who served in the Air Army Corps overseas as a Staff Sergeant and Aircraft Mechanic during World War II earning numerous medals and awards, both with his unit and individually, during his service for Our Nation. (The Commission and audience gave a large round of applause for Mr. Mason, although he was not in attendance.)

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to Approve the Agenda, to Approve the Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2023, to approve the New Vendor List and Claims Against the County for July 2023.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

County Engineer Glenn Peek stated that they have finished up some of their paving jobs, that they have some in progress and that they have some to start soon. He stated that they have another bid opening on the 16th of this month for some projects. He gave an update on Brown's and Smith Chapel Bridges.

OLD BUSINESS:

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Central Station and Monitoring Agreement.

After explanation by Chairman Miller, County Attorney Richard Fikes stated that he has read the Agreement and he has no issues with the same, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the Central Station and Monitoring Agreement

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of WCEIDA Bond Issue.

After presentation by Attorney Frank Long, with the Balsch and Bingham Law Firm in Birmingham, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Approve the WCEIDA Bond Issue.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of NW Bama Builders Morgue quote.

After explanation by Chairman Miller, input by Commissioner Burrough and County Attorney Richard Fikes and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the NW Bama Builders Morgue quote.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of FY2024 Rebuild Alabama Plan.

After explanation by County Engineer Glenn Peek, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Borden to Approve FY2024 Rebuild Alabama Plan.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Discussion and Approval-Bid 789-2023 Motor Grader purchase.

After explanation and recommendation by County Engineer Glenn Peek, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Davis to award Bid 789-2023 Motor Grader purchase to Warrior Tractor who was the low bidder.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval-Bid 790-2023 Compactor purchase.

After explanation and recommendation by County Engineer Glenn Peek and input by Commissioner Davis, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to award Bid 790-2023 Compactor purchase to Warrior Tractor who was the low bidder.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Borden, to open for discussion for Discussion and Approval-Contract for Courthouse Doors Renovation.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and input from Commissioners Davis and Burrough and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Approve the Contract for Courthouse Doors Renovation.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open for discussion for Discussion and Approval-Sheriff & Walker County Board of Education SRO Contract.

After explanation by Sheriff Nick Smith and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the Sheriff and Walker County Board of Education Contract.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of AI Dept Youth Service Contract.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson and Attorney Richard Fikes stating that he has not had a chance to review the contract and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Border to table the AI Dept Youth Service Contract to give Mr. Fikes a chance to look it over and to be put on the next agenda.

With no further discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: 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 Discussion and Approval-EW Sewer Board Appointment-Phillip Ballenger.

After County Administrator made known that they have a letter in front of them and that Phillip Ballenger will replace Robert Buzbee, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Approve the Appointment of Phillip Ballenger to the EW Sewer Board.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approve-Participation in Coalition for Truck load limits.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, input by Chairman Miller, Commissioner Borden, County Attorney Richard Fikes and County Engineer Glenn Peek and much discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve for the Chairman to sign the letter to disallow an increase in the truck load limits.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval-Post and Hire James (Mike) Alexander as Driver Operator.

After explanation by Director John Dunagan, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve to Post and Hire James (Mike) Alexander as Driver Operator.

After a brief discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye.

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden that the meeting be adjourned to executive session and to reconvene.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

(Commission retired to executive session)

(Commission reconvened)

Chairman Miller called the Commission back to order and motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Reconvene the Commission Meeting.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried and the Commission reconvened.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Burrough asked to go first because he has something to bring up, but County Attorney Richard Fikes recommended that they work together (himself, Chairman Miller, and Commissioner Burrough) to adopt a policy and procedural manual for the Animal Shelter, which would address social media issues, dealing with the public and things of that nature.

Chairman Miller stated, "We hear a recommendation from our counsel to set up a committee, myself, Mr. Burrough, and Mr. Fikes to work toward getting a policy and procedural manual and work with the Animal Shelter. Do I have a motion?"

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to adopt Mr. Fikes suggestion.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

(A brief discussion was held between them as to when they will meet.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to amend the agenda to add item 12 - Discussion of a Storm Shelter for the Barney Community.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

After explanation by Commissioner Borden and input by Chairman Miller, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Davis to initiate the preparation startup of the Barney site storm shelter with the County Attorney handling all the legalities and funding to be paid from Courthouse Security funds.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Commissioner Burrough stated, "I thank each of y'all for attending here today. It's always good to have a room full of people and we try to do our best to make the best decisions for Walker County. There are a lot of ongoing things that we're having to deal with. You know, I'm certainly thankful for all of our employees and people that work for the county. I think we try to do the best job we possibly can with what resources we do have. I guess it's sort of a sad day today, my wife's a teacher and it's basically their last day, I guess, to not to be accountable. But I want to wish everybody a happy new school year that's fixing to start back. You know, we talked about the resource officer today. I know that's just a big thing for our schools to be able to have that in there. And I'm thankful that we can fund it and do it. You know, I wish everybody would have a good school year. Also, the storms have been sort of bothering us here in the last two or three weeks, these big windstorms knocking trees down. It's put a slow down on some of the maintenance items that we've got going on, but our crews are out working each and every day. Glenn had mentioned paving projects. Each of us have paving projects that are in motion. A lot of it is waiting on contractors and storms with them and them having to, you know, relocate their equipment and all that kind of stuff. I believe my next one is Self Road. It should be the very next one to get new surface put on it. But I want to thank each of you for coming."

Commissioner Davis stated, "Again, thank everybody for coming. I'm going to try to be shorter than Jeff for once, in how many years, Jeff, six, seven, eight, I've lost count. Remember our school and children and teachers. My youngest started her eleventh grade, the first day of school today. So, remember them in your prayers that they all

have a safe best year ever. Like I told her this morning, I hope she has her best year ever. And SRO's are exactly what we need to help keep them safe and I'm glad we've got that agreement in place. I want to thank the Superintendent of the Board of Education for that. And the last thing I want to mention is the Curry Storm Shelter is complete. There's a ribbon cutting today at 6:00 p.m. I know Senator Reed will be there with some other folks there, so everybody is welcome to come to that ribbon cutting. And Jim, hopefully, by this time next year we will have another ribbon cutting in the Barney Community. These storm shelters are vital. I want to thank the community members and the fire departments that operate and man those storm shelters. It's a task, but they're there to serve the community and we always thank them for their service."

Commissioner Borden thanked everyone for being here today. He stated, "As the previous two commissioners said pray for our schools, our children out here. We are in a different time in this country. All you have to do is look at the news. Our resource officers are a vital part of the school's safety. Parents, people in the community, I encourage you to take an active part in your local school. I just want to thank Dave, he's already gone, for giving our opening prayer. Dave is a county employee. A very, very outstanding young man. Dave goes above and beyond in his job. I also want to thank – earlier we had a presentation to our Air Force Vet there, World War II. Thanks to all of Vets. They all need commendations and public approval and appreciation. Very few families in Walker County – We'll stick with just Walker County, we all have a granddaddy or great granddaddy, uncles, cousins that served in the Second World War, all of our wars. They are why we are here today being able to do what we're doing as a group of people, making government work and the people have a voice in how that government is carried out and worked. Also, on some of the storms yesterday evening, I can't say this enough, our county employees, again, they step up when they're called in after hours. Yesterday was Sunday, right around church time, I inconvenience my employees when I called. They're just like I am, they're in the middle of dinner, they're at something going on with the family, they show up to remove the trees out of the roads, to keep our roads safe, open it up for our everyday life. My hats off to them. Also, all of our county employees, our public service workers, our law enforcement, EMA, all of those people or EMS I should say, all are to be commended."

Commissioner Burrough stated, "I didn't mention our volunteer firemen, they do an outstanding job."

Commissioner Borden continued, "Yes, that's another thing, I met with some – well, two different departments yesterday. These guys actually, unless you happen to drive up on the scene, they are unsung heroes. They go, a lot of times, at their personal expense, because most of them will drive their personal vehicles to the scene to cut trees out of the roads and whatever. They are to be commended. Other than that, that's all I have as far as on those topics. Again, I just thank everyone for being here."

Again, some of the paving projects, we'll get into those in the coming weeks, but again, just thank everyone for being here today."

Chairman Miller stated, "I, too, would like to say thank you for everyone attending. The county employees, the general public, there's a lot of people it takes to make this county move forward. And that's what we have done in the almost three years that we've been here. We've pushed this county along to the point that it's doing a lot better financially. It's doing a lot better road projects and bridges, the Smith Chapel and the Brown's Bridge that we've got going, the road pavings that these gentlemen have done. You know, they had a small amount of money to work with, but we've gotten them several, several million dollars to work on these road projects. But keep in mind, that money also goes to the maintaining of the grass cutting, the spraying, cutting the limbs back, working storms. So, not every dollar puts down a piece of pavement. But every dollar goes toward working those road districts and they do a good job there. The old Alabama Power Building, the Old G May & Sons Building, we continue to work on those, the courthouse doors renovations, bathrooms, the Justice Center renovations that Phase I is near completion. You know, all of these things that this Commission has worked hard to accomplish and maintain. And we've spent a lot of money and that's what it takes here. You know, unlike a business, you try to hang onto some of that money, here we try to use every bit of the money that you can to make those projects move. Buying this equipment, you know, the equipment as Mr. Davis said is getting somewhat old in the county and so we're beginning to change out some of that equipment and make that equipment more readily available to these road crews that these guys keep out there to keep working. You know, if they don't have equipment they can't get anything accomplished. But everyday there is something else that we work on, whether it's in the form of grants and we have several of those working now. We have several out there that we've already received. We just applied for another grant CAWACO and hopefully that will come through. If not, we'll continue to apply. You know, and as we continue to move this county forward, we desire and ask for your prayers for this Commission. Ladies and gentlemen, we appreciate each and every one of you. With that, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn."

Commissioner Burrough stated, "I'd like to say one more thing. Terry Burgett, the Mayor of Nauvoo is here today, and he has an event tomorrow night. Would you like to announce what it is?"

Mayor Burgett stated, "The Sheriff's Department in Nauvoo is having a back-to-school bash from 5:00 to 7:00 at the Nauvoo Community Center. They're going to have a water slide, they're going to have hotdogs and I think they've got some school supplies to give out to the children."

Commissioner Burrough stated, "That will be a grand event to attend."

Chairman Miller stated, "Any other announcements. All right. If not, we'd entertain a motion to adjourn.:"

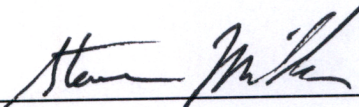
ADJOURN:

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

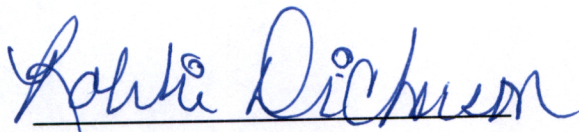
With no discussion, the vote taken resulted as follows: District One: Aye; District Two: Aye; District Three: Aye.

With no opposition the Chairman declared the motion carried.

Read and Approved:



Chairman



Attest