

**September 18, 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 18<sup>th</sup> day of September 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, Jim Borden and Steven Aderholt.

Mr. Joe Fowler gave the invocation and Mr. David Knight led the pledge of allegiance.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATION:**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve the Agenda, the Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2023, the new vendor list and the claims against the County for August, 2023.

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 that she would skip as they have a lot of other business to discuss.

County Engineer Glenn Peek stated that he would like to report that Brown's Bridge is officially open and that Smith Chapel Bridge is still held up due to not being able to get the bearing pads put on the abutments and the piers, but that the current ship date is October 9<sup>th</sup>. He stated that they are getting some paving done and lining up some other roads to be paved.

Commissioner Burrough stated that maybe a standing ovation was in order.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Holiday Commission Meeting Schedule (All non-essential departments).

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve the Holiday Commission Meeting Schedule and Employee Holiday Schedule (All non-essential departments).

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 Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval Bid #787 County Line Road and #789 Fire Tower Road.

After explanation by Commissioner Aderholt that this was a followup from a couple of weeks ago, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve Bids #787 County Line Road and #789 Fire Tower Road.

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.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of the FY 2024 Budget with 2% COLA.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson that this was a followup from the work session and the things discussed during it, adding that they have a small packet to go with what they have already received as she pointed out the changes, and after a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve the FY 2024 Budget with 2% COLA, excluding the Chairman and Commissioners, and to change the 031 from \$20,000 to \$25,000 to Northwest Mental Health.

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 Discussion and Approval of the Law Enforcement Clothing Allowance.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Approve the Law Enforcement Clothing Allowance.

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 Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Discussion and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with the District Attorney.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the District Attorney.

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 Discussion and Approval of the ALDOT Runway Grant.

After explanation by Ms. Timberland from ALDOT, input from Chairman Miller and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to approve the ALDOT Runway Grant.

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 Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to open discussion of Discussion and Approval-Johnson Control Estimate-Jail Refrigeration.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and input by Sheriff Nick Smith, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the Johnson Control Estimate-Jail Refrigeration.

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 Discussion and Approval-County Engineer and Assistant Engineer pay scale.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve the County Engineer and Assistant Engineer Pay Scale.

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 Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden, to open discussion to Request to post to hire a Full-time Common Laborer in Road and Bridge.

After explanation by County Engineer Glenn Peek, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to Approve to post to hire a Full-time Common Laborer in Road and Bridge.

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 Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion of Request to Hire a Full-time Driver/Operator for Solid Waste and to hire Casey Tidwell.

After explanation by Solid Waste Director John Dunagan, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve to post for a Full-time Driver/Operator for Solid Waste and to hire Casey Tidwell.

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 Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to open discussion for Discussion and Approval of Hope for Women Christmas tree placement.

After explanation by Chairman Miller and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve the Hope for Women Christmas tree placement.

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 Borden and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to open discussion for Discussion and Approval of Resolution Pertaining to Transfer of \$1.2 Million for roads, \$175,000 for Walker County Community Action Agency, \$200,000 Fire Association.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, input by Deidre Tatum, input from Representative Meeks of the Fire Association, input from each Commissioner and much discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the Resolutions Pertaining to the Transfer

of \$1.2 Million for roads, \$175,000 to Walker County Community Actions Agency, \$200,000 to the Fire Association.

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 Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open Discussion and Approval-Fairgrounds and Cattlemen's Association Lease Agreement.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, input by County Attorney Eddie Jackson and a brief discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Aderholt to approve the Cattlemen's Association Lease Agreement.

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 Burrough and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion of Discussion and Approval-WACF Grant Proposal.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson and Chairman Miller, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to Approve the WACF Grant Proposal.

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 Davis and seconded by Commissioner Borden to open discussion for Discussion and Approval-New HVAC unit for Probate Building.

After explanation by Probate Judge Lee Tucker and input by Chairman Miller, motion was made by Commissioner Borden and seconded by Commissioner Burrough to approve the New HVAC unit for Probate Building.

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.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Borden made a motion to add item 14 to the Agenda, Resolution to Allocate Revenue Replacement Fund for Government Services. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis.

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

With no opposition, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

After explanation by County Administrator Robbie Dickerson, motion was made by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Borden to approve the Resolution to Allocate Revenue Replacement Fund for Government Services.

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.

Commissioner Davis thanked everyone for their attendance. He said he wished they had a crowd like this every first and third Monday of the month. He welcomed them back and said it was good to see new faces in their meeting this morning. He stated, "I always say most of the time in the County Commission Meeting that we work for the people and that we take that serious. We covet your prayers in the decisions that we have to make from time to time for the betterment of the County. So, please continue to pray for us. Like Mr. Burrough said to the Fire Departments, thank you for what you do. It doesn't go unnoticed, we appreciate it. I know we've been out there hand to hand with you cutting trees and we know that y'all are the first response to an accident. I was in a car accident when I was in college and the first person on the scene was a volunteer fire department. And I won't ever forget that. The first one there. Like most of the time in counties y'all are the first ones there. So, thank you for what you do. Not only with fires, but also with EMS calls and emergency calls that you respond to. Thank you for that." He stated he hoped people continue to pay their fire dues. He said there was a lot of paving and lot of things going on in District One as far as road paving, that he has two major paving projects that are about to begin, along with other roads that are about to get paved also. He asked that people focus on the positive not on the negative, that it's a great place to live and a lot of positive things going on in the County. He stated, "Remember to pray for us." He thanked everyone again for coming and asked that they come back.

Commissioner Burrough stated, "Also, I would like to thank each person here today. It's always great, like I said to share – to have a meeting with a room full of people and we certainly appreciate your interest in our county government. Also, too, I think publicly I would like to thank Robbie for all the hard work she done." He said that there's a lot that goes into it and that they appreciate all the hard work. He recognized and thanked Buddy, a fireman and friend. He stated that they are going to be working

on the Coroner's Building, which is another positive that's going on for the county using Grant Money. He said they have road projects going on that they try to post daily. He gave an update on the road projects. He said Glenn has hit the ground running and he appreciates him.

Commissioner Borden stated, "Everything that Commissioner One and Commissioner Two said. It's hard to keep adding to his as you get further down the line, but anyway. I thank Mr. Cagle for coming, again, keep that in the public eye. Mrs. Tatum, we would like to thank you. It's good to see you here today. You do a fantastic job with the Community Action Agency down there. Our firefighters, again, we thank y'all. A lot of people in the county appreciate what you do. You may not get those accolades often enough, but you are noticed out there. Again, as Jeff just said, at night with the trees down after storms come through, people do not realize how much the fire departments do to keep the roads open and try to keep them safe. Also, the Cattlemen's deal out at the Fairgrounds, I think is going to be good for the county. I think it will begin to attract some other venues and the work that they're going to be putting into that area to keep it usable and get it out of a vacant state -- It was beginning over years without anybody using the facility, it was going to continue to downgrade. It will also take relief off District One because they generally were helping with the grass mowing out there, so this will be good for them." He thanked Mr. Fowler for coming in this morning and giving the opening prayer. He commended Robbie on the job she does on the budgets. He stated, "Again, I just thank everyone for being here. And I like to think that brighter and better things are coming for Walker County. Thank y'all."

Commissioner Aderholt stated, "Again as Mr. Borden said, it's hard to resay everything they did up here." He thanked the firemen for everything they do for the county, that people don't realize how important it is with storms and things happening, that they're always the first on the scene and cut the trees out of the road. That they've certainly been a major help to District Four and their budget, that sometimes they have to send the whole crew out and sometimes the firemen are already on the spot getting it done before they get there and they're thankful for that. He stated, "I'm thankful for everybody that is here today. When I first came into office, you know, money for road paving was difficult. It was hard to come by. We just didn't have as much because we were on a long decline, coal tax going down until it finally, just pretty much just ran out. And coal tax was pretty much what paved all of our county roads for a long time. So, it took a lot of years of saving money to be able to actually get back into any kind of formable road paving work. I believe this past term, and I don't think a lot of people have seen it quite as much as we have, but there has probably been more road paving going this past term than in any time since I've been in office." He gave an update on the roads they are working on in District Four. He stated if they had the money they would pave every road in Walker County today. He thanked everybody again and asked that they keep them in their prayers.

Commissioner Burrough stated that he saw Kay hiding back there and that he just wanted to thank her for her hard work. He said, "I mean, she has a thankless job out at our animal shelter and she is needing the support of everybody and you know, I just want to thank her for the work that she does. I know in this budget that we've got some ideas for the animal shelter and we're continuing to work on that. And, there again, I saw her hiding back there, so I just wanted to tell her thank you."

Chairman Miller stated: "We appreciate everybody showing up today. And again, it is great to see a big crowd. We appreciate that very much. I know each and every one of you are concerned about our county. We certainly have been. And we're still looking for many, many funds, but I'm just thankful to say that this additional 1.2 Million which is \$300,000 here for each district will help them as Mr. Aderholt said about continuing to pave roads. It doesn't pave a lot of mileage, but it does pave what it paves. So, we certainly enjoy being able to move those funds those directions. The Coroner's Office as Mr. Burrough said, we're working on getting that finished up on some grants. At the courthouse we're working on the doors and stuff. I've talked to Lamar's Glass. He's got those ordered and coming. And, you know, those things we're continuing to work on. We appreciate Mr. Cagle being here and his group, Mrs. Tatum, the Fire Association, Mr. Knight, Mrs. Kara, we appreciate y'all, EMA – Ms. Regina, 911 - Mr. Tim Thomas, the Sheriff, we appreciate you being here, Danny from our Auburn Extension Office, we appreciate him being here, Mr. Tucker, Mr. Davis. And I see the Judge came in back here. I'd like to say we appreciate you being here, sir. Mr. Fowler for our prayer this morning, Ms. Kay again as Jeff said, Mr. Peek, Mayor from Nauvoo is here. All of you reporters we appreciate y'all and appreciate everybody. And this is probably one of the budgets that was worked on with several different changes and I think Ms. Robbie got nearly to the point she was ready to throw something at me, but we managed to get through it and she does a good job, okay. So, it's growing, it's getting better in Walker County. We want to continue that. These roads are a real big goal. And if I missed anyone at all, I appreciate every one of you. The Fire Association, I know we've been discussing this and talking about this. We've had some plans over the years that we've looked at several times. And so, these things are things that we're going to grow on.

Circuit Judge Greg Williams stated, "I know that oftentimes that officials get all the criticism, but I just wanted to come in and I could have texted you, but I thought it was just too important. I just came in to thank you for appropriating money to clean the courthouse. It may be a small thing to some people, but it's been a pet peeve of mine for ten years. We've got a beautiful courthouse. To pressure wash it, I think is going to make it even better, so I just wanted to thank you. That's it."

Chairman Miller stated, "Thank you, sir. With that, I will entertain a motion to



adjourn.


**ADJOURN:**

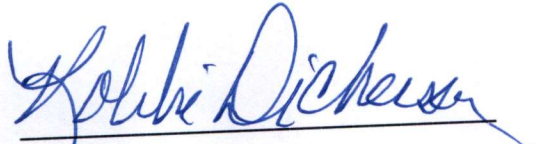
Motion was made by Commissioner Aderholt and seconded by Commissioner Borden that this meeting be adjourned to reconvene at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at the call of the Chairman.

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:

  
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Chairman

  
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Attest