

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
Commission Chamber, Room 223, Harris County Courthouse
Tuesday, September 20, 2022
6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Andrew Zuerner, Rob Grant, Becky Langston, Susan Andrews. Commissioners Absent: Bobby Irions. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Russell Britt, County Attorney; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk; Clint Chastain, Chief Financial Officer; Brian Williams, Community Development Director.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Zuerner called the Regular Session to order.
2. **INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Commissioner Andrews gave the invocation. Chairman Zuerner led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2022 Called Work Session and the September 6, 2022 Regular Session was made by Chairman Zuerner, seconded by Commissioner Andrews and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Blake Alford - Emergency services provided to West Point.** Mr. Blake Alford stated that he would be brief and provided the Board of Commissioners with a map showing the city limits of West Point and a Harris County map portion. He advised that he plans on sending an e-mail out related to emergency services provided to West Point.
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **First Reading: Alcohol Application of Brynn Smith for Restaurant at Eighty Five, 6052 GA Hwy 85, Ellerslie.** Chairman Zuerner read the specifics of the application and said that the Sheriff's Office recommended approval, the Health Department recommended approval pending issuance of a food permit, and Community Development Department recommended disapproval. Brynn Smith, applicant, appeared before the Board and advised them that she was just trying to re-open the business. There being no comments from the Board, Chairman Zuerner stated that the second reading and action are scheduled to take place during the October 4, 2022 meeting.
 - B. **Airport CIP Five-Year Plan.** Chairman Zuerner asked Phil Eberly, airport consultant with Lead Edge, to review and explain Five-Year Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) for the Harris County Airport. Mr. Eberly said that the plan must be submitted to Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on an annual basis, by November 30th of each year to remain eligible for funding; that it includes proposed Airport projects for the next five years (Fiscal Years 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028); and that the plan can be changed at any time should the Board desire to make changes. Mr. Eberly provided the Board with a brief review of the recently completed airport projects such as the apron rejuvenation project and upcoming projects including runway lighting, airfield signage, wind cone rehabilitation, and T-hangar design. The motion to approve the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) was made by Vice-Chairman Grant, seconded by Chairman Zuerner, and passed unanimously.
 - C. **TUSA: 911 Radio System Supplemental Report.** Rebecca Norwood, Senior Consultant/Engineer, and Dean Hart, Chief Executive Officer, from Tusa Consulting Services, were in attendance to address the Board. Ms. Norwood gave a presentation that provided information to the Board about recommendations included in the report. She advised that they performed site visits to obtain a baseline. She stated that they found that the monopole at Pine Mountain has a lean to it and that can affect coverage; that there are no UPS or backup battery power and that can cause big holes in the system when commercial power out; that there are signs of water intrusion at the Waverly Hall site; that there should be standard operating procedures for the sites; that they spoke to a lot of the end-users of the system and their feedback was unanimous; that the current system is owned by Diverse Power and is designed to provide coverage for a utility system and not typically designed for people that need to go into a building; that dispatch could reach the users but users in same location can't talk back; that users have instances of channels being busy and unable to use until the channel is free; and that radio quality on portable radios is not

ideal. She advised that they continue to stand by the recommendations made in 2017 and that they don't believe that status quo can be sustained safely. Ms. Norwood advised that there are two (2) options: upgrade the Tetra system or implement a new Project 25 radio system. Tusa cannot recommend investing in a system that is not owned by the County. Mr. Dean Hart advised that the RFP process is approximately a 6-month process which would cost approximately \$45,000.00 and that for them to manage the project from start to finish (about 2-1/2 years) would be about \$250,000.00. Discussions included whether we would have good radio coverage based upon our topography; property needed for potential sites and that adjustments in locations can be flexible; and that there would be a mixture of new and existing sites. Commissioner Langston stated that the fire chiefs have complained about radios for last twelve (12) years; that debt would need to be issued for a new system; and that she knows that it is needed but that she has a problem with saddling taxpayers with debt. Commissioner Andrews stated that if we are going to invest large sums of money into anything that she would prefer to invest in public safety and that she would like to go through the RFP process and see what the actual costs would be. Vice-Chairman Grant advised that he knows that we need this but would like to also hear what Commissioner Irions has to say.

Sheriff Mike Jolley addressed the Board and provided a breakdown of calls from January 2021 to present. Sheriff Jolley stated that he is one of the users; that he has heard the same speech over the last thirty (30) years; that the Sheriff's office is the largest user of the 911 system; that there are some holes in the system; that there is a need for additional towers; that with a collaborative effort with the current system might be able to fix it; that he would like the Board to speak to the end users again prior to making such a large expenditure; that they have gone through several radio systems over the years; and that Two-Way should be above to fix the issues that we have.

County Manager Randy Dowling stated that it is difficult to ask a site owner to maintain their own sites and have any leverage; that it is difficult to improve something that you don't own; and that he highly recommends that we go through the RFP process and migrate to a P-25 system.

Vice-Chairman Grant requested that this item be tabled until the October 4, 2022 Regular meeting.

- D. **Solid Waste Transfer Station Fee Increase.** The motion to approve that the County's gate rate be increased from \$45.60 per ton to \$65.00 per ton as reflected in the proposed fee schedule effective November 1, 2022 was made by Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Chairman Zuerner, and passed unanimously.
- F. **Financial Statement - June 2022.** Chief Financial Officer Clint Chastain addressed the Board related to the June 2022 Financial Statement and the Final Clean-up Budget Amendment #7 for FY 2021-2022 which is the next item. The motion to accept the Financial Statement for June 2022 was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Vice-Chairman Grant and passed unanimously.
- G. **FY 2021-2022 Budget Amendment #7 Final for Audit Clean-up.** The motion to approve FY 2021-2022 Budget Amendment #7 for Audit Clean-up was made by Vice-Chairman Grant, seconded by Chairman Zuerner and passed unanimously.
- H. **Bid Award - NWHBP 35 Acre Site Improvements (Parcel A).** Craig Greenhaw, Chairman of the Development Authority, addressed the Board and provided information related to the project and recommended that they also approve a contingency amount. J. Scott Harris of Harris Gray, LLC was also available to answer questions.

The motion to award the bid to Evergreen Siteworks, LLC in the amount of \$2,175,009.75 with funding sources being \$164,891.00 from the City of West Point, \$1,785,000.00 from the approved Economic Development Project Fund budget, and \$225,118.75 for SPLOST-2019 (economic development) and to approve a contingency amount of \$217,500.00 from undesignated federal ARP funds was made by Vice-Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Langston and passed unanimously.

I. **Bid Award - Playground Equipment - Moultrie Park and Ellerslie Park.**

Ashley Marston, Director of Recreation, and Mike Fuson, Assistant Director of Recreation, appeared before the Board and Mr. Fuson made a presentation related to the proposed playground equipment to be purchased and installed at Ellerslie Park and Moultrie Park. The motion to award the bid to Safe Play Solutions for two playgrounds - one at Ellerslie Park (\$183,973.00), one at Moultrie Park (\$62,082.00), shipping (\$14,741.00), and installation (\$65,000.00) - for a total project cost of \$325,976.00 made by Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Chairman Zuerner, and passed unanimously.

6. **COUNTY MANAGER**

A. **Project Updates.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, reviewed various projects, as follows:

- (1) UDC/Land Use Codes. This will be considered by Planning Commission on October 19, 2022 and the Board on November 1, 2022.
- (2) New EMS/VFD Facility at NWHBP. Permits are in order and construction expected to start soon with completion in December 2023.
- (3) Radar Traffic Signs. The signs have been received and will be installed in Coca Lake this week.
- (4) New Public Works Facility. We are still looking for appropriate land for this project.
- (5) New Playgrounds. Bid awarded this evening for new playgrounds at Ellerslie Park and Moultrie Park. Community Center playground on hold until next year.
- (6) Replace Aged Dehumidification System at Community Center. The bid opening is Thursday. This project will be considered by the Board on October 4, 2022.
- (7) Man O'War Railroad Recreation Trail, Phase V (aka Rails to Trails). Project will be complete by late October. A ribbon cutting will be set for mid-October.
- (8) Man O'War Railroad Recreation Trail, Phase VI. This project should be bid out in Fall of this year and completed in approximately one year from now.
- (9) New Fire Training Facility. This project will be bid out in the next two weeks.
- (10) Improvements at Northwest Harris Business Park. Bid was awarded this evening.
- (11) Replace the Generator at 911 Center. Generator has been ordered and delivery is expected in May of 2023.
- (12) Update the 2017 Tusa Evaluation Study. Tusa made a presentation to the Board this evening and it will be on the agenda for the October 4, 2022 Regular meeting.
- (13) Rejuvenate Airport's Apron/Taxiways. The project has been completed.
- (14) Rehabilitate Airport's Runaway Lighting, Airfield Signage, and Wind Cone. Bid specs are being prepared.
- (15) Replace the AWOS System. Bid specs are being prepared and will be bid out.
- (16) Design 20 Addition T-Hangers. This project is in the process of being bid out.
- (17) New Solid Waste Facility. Project is being construction now and should be complete in early 2023.
- (18) New Water Works Administrative Office. This project is in process and is expected to be completed in early 2023.

- (19) Hadley Road Water Line Project Phase II. This project is out on bid and the bid opening is October 6, 2022. It will be considered by the Board on October 18th.
- (20) Upgrade U.S. 27 Water Line. This project is being bid out now and Board consideration in November and project should begin in October of 2023 after delivery of materials.
- (21) Courthouse Renovations, Phase I. This project is now expected to start in early January 2023. This project should be complete in late Summer 2023.

B. **New Public Works Facility Location**. Commissioner Langston advised that she has gone over to the Hamilton Business Park and would like to revisit that location for a new Public Works Facility. She advised that there is a burn pit that has been used by Public Works for a long time. The motion to approve building the new Public Works Facility in the Hamilton Business Park was made by Vice-Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Langston and passed unanimously.

7. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

A. **Agreement between Harris County and the Loudermilk Family Christian Foundation Regarding an Observation Tower at Ellerslie Park**. County Attorney Russell Britt provided the Board with information related to the proposed observation tower and the funding for same. The motion to approve the Agreement between Harris County and the Loudermilk Family Christian Foundation Regarding an Observation Tower at Ellerslie Park was made by Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Chairman Zuerner and passed unanimously.

B. **LOST Update**. County Attorney Russell Britt stated that he has been in communication with Hamilton City Attorney and confirmed that all of the municipalities are on the same page and have voted to approve the execution of the distribution certificate except for Waverly Hall. Waverly Hall will also be voting to approve same. Mr. Britt stated that we would coordinating the gathering of the signatures on same.

C. **Request for Executive Session**. Chairman Zuerner requested an Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of real estate and personnel.

- 8. **RECESS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**. Chairman Zuerner made the motion to go into Executive Session for real estate and personnel at 8:11 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Langston and passed unanimously.
- 9. **RESUME REGULAR SESSION**. The motion to go back into Regular Session was made at 8:42 p.m. by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Chairman Zuerner, and passed unanimously.
- 10. **ADJOURNMENT**. There being no further business to discuss, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Chairman Zuerner, and passed unanimously.

Andrew Zuerner, Chairman

Attest:

Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk