

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION**

November 21, 2023
6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews, Greg Gantt, Scott Lightsey, Bobby Irions. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Russell Britt, County Attorney (via telephone); Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Grant called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m. Chairman Grant wished Commissioner Lightsey a “Happy Birthday” and said that everyone should go and support the Harris County High School football team on Friday as they are in the Elite 8 for the first time since 2013/2014.
2. **INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Vice-Chair Andrews gave the invocation. Chairman Grant led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MINUTES** The motion to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2023 Work Session and Regular Session was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Robert Hay - Maple Lakes Subdivision and Code Enforcement.** Robert Hay, President of the Maple Lakes Homeowners Association, stated that he was representing the Maple Lakes residents. He advised that he has presented some alternate designs related to the cover that is located over the mailbox cluster currently. He said that the HOA made the decision in October 2021 to build covers over the two (2) mailbox clusters. He stated that if the covers over the mailboxes are in violation of the ordinance then the mailbox clusters do as well. They (the residents) would like the County ordinance to be updated to include mailbox clusters since they are not addressed in the current codes. They believe that the modified covers do not violate the ordinance as written and that they be allowed to keep their covers which provide tangible benefits to homeowners and postal employees. If it is determined that the covers need to be removed, they insist that the County to move the mailbox clusters from right-of-way and that ordinances are equally and consistently enforced throughout the County. He also expressed concerns about the lack of the establishment of grass in drainage ditches in Maple Lakes by the developer and speeding in their subdivision. Discussion included that the structure over the mailbox cluster is what is at issue; that there is already an agreement that the structures be removed; and that additional language related to mailbox clusters is going to be considered at the December 5, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting.
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Insolvent List of the Tax Commissioner.** The motion to approve the Insolvent List of the Tax Commissioner with an uncollectible total of \$13,876.22 was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.
6. **COUNTY MANAGER**
 - A. **Project Updates.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, advised that this is the first Program of Work for this fiscal year and reviewed various projects as follows:
 - (1) **SPLOST Continuation.** The intergovernmental agreement will be considered by the Board this evening. If agreement is approved, then signatures will be requested from the cities. If the agreement is approved by all of the entities, then the Board can approve a resolution calling for a referendum for an election on March 12, 2024.
 - (2) **Dehumidification System at Community Center.** This project is expected to be completed in the next two to three weeks.
 - (3) **New EMA/VFD Facility.** This project is almost finished and hope to be operational on December 10th. A ribbon cutting is expected to be held in late December. There will be a fire truck at the facility on day one.

- (4) New Citizen Request Management System. SeeClickFix is begun with Public Works and now includes Water Works. Additional departments will continue to be added to the system for use by the citizens.
- (5) New Public Works Facility. This project is out on bid. The bid opening will be on December 1, 2023 with Board consideration on December 5, 2023.
- (6) RFP for Vendor to Provide P25 Standard 911 Radio System. An RFP is being prepared and should go out in January. Discussion included that the consultant preparing the RFP has projected some possible cost estimates; that the project is conceptual; and that the project and costs for same will be clearer after responses to the RFP are received.
- (7) Upgrade the U.S. 27 Water Line. Lane clearing and right-of-way clearing has begun for the widening of U.S. 27. Our project has also begun.

Additional discussion was held including that roads will be discussed at the Planning Session on November 28, 2023; that the Man O'War Trail signs to be placed on the trestle are still awaiting the permit from GDOT but that the permit should be received any day now; and that a high school student has talked to the Harris County Chamber of Commerce about a Page One project to place historical markers funded by a run to raise funds.

7. **COUNTY ATTORNEY.**

- A. **SPLOST 2025 Intergovernmental Agreement.** County Attorney Russell Britt introduced the item related to the SPLOST 2025 Intergovernmental Agreement. There was a discussion about some of the projects included and which types of expenditures can be made related to economic development like installation of water and sewer and the installation of roads. Discussion also included some conversation about the radios for public safety and the volunteer fire departments. The motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Use and Distribution of Proceeds from the 2025 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for Capital Outlay Projects was made by Vice-Chair Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Irions, and passed with four in favor (Andrews, Irions, Gantt, Lightsey) and one opposed (Grant).
- B. **Engagement with Outside Counsel to Pursue PFAS Claims on a Contingency Fee Basis.** County Attorney Russell Britt stated that Harris County has been considering engaging outside counsel to pursue PFAS claims on a contingency fee basis. The motion to approve the engagement with outside counsel to pursue PFAS claims on a contingency fee basis and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to sign any necessary documents was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

8. **ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business to discuss, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Gantt, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews and Commissioner Irions, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Rob Grant, Chairman

Attest:

Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk