

## **MINUTES, LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, APRIL 19, 2021 WORK SESSION**

The Limestone County Commission reconvened the meeting from April 5, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. today at the Clinton Street Courthouse Annex, 100 South Clinton Street, Athens, Alabama.

Present: Daryl Sammet, Danny Barksdale, Jason Black, and LaDon Townsend. Absent: None. Collin Daly, Chairman presided.

Items were discussed for the April 19, 2021 commission meeting agenda.

Sam and Eva Anderson and Tommy Anderson addressed the Commission about a noise problem coming from 17480 Sudbury Drive. They reported that the address was being used as a church and party venue and they were using a very large subwoofer speaker. The noise issue has become such a problem that Sam Anderson stated that his wife, Eva Anderson, "had created a petition and had about 13 households to sign."

Mr. Thomas Kingery reported that they live at 24589 Slate Road in Elkmont, and they were there to comment on the Southern Shade Acres subdivision. Mr. Kingery stated, "There are two concerns that I have. When they redid the survey, they only surveyed about halfway down the property. It looks like the lines are contradicting some old fence work that has been there for about 30 years, and that's on my side. My other concern is they have the high spot of the properties that are surrounded, so there is going to be a runoff. My concern is the runoff from that property as they build up higher to shed water from that property in the homes that are there and that will be coming down on my property." Mr. Kingery reported that they had tried to contact Mr. Chambers and had just not been able to get that scheduled but would try to work with Mr. Chambers regarding the issue.

Jonathan Yerdon, I.T. Director, informed the Commission regarding the budget revision. Mr. Yerdon stated that in 2020, the Athens-Limestone GIS Consortium contracted with EagleView for an aerial imagery project. One option on that contract was oblique imagery, which could be purchased for an additional \$192,000.00, but the option was not exercised. The photography is taken from the air. Ortho imagery is taken straight down, and oblique imagery is captured from an angle. Oblique imagery allows you to see all four sides of a house. Mr. Yerdon stated that Brian Patterson uses the oblique imagery all day, every day, but he didn't know that fact until after agreeing to do the \$228,000.00 project of just the ortho photography. Mr. Yerdon stated, "I went back to the company [EagleView] and they more or less cut us a deal because it was supposed to cost us \$64,000.00 a year. He [the vendor] came back and said that they would do two years for \$95,000.00 and split the cost into two interest-free annual payments." Mr. Yerdon reported that he presented the oblique imagery project to the Athens-Limestone GIS Consortium and there was a very "tepid response" from the consortium. When the project was put to a vote by the GIS Consortium members that were present, Micah Cochran from the City of Athens was not in agreement, and due to the consortium rules, no GIS Consortium money may be spent without a unanimous vote. Mr. Yerdon also reported that he had contacted James Rich, and he also was opposed to spending any funds on the oblique imagery. Commissioner Jason Black suggested that Ronnie Marks, Mayor of

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the City of Athens, be contacted being that the City of Athens requests that we contribute funds often and gave the example of their request to supply additional funds to the library. Mr. Yerdon also informed the Commission that the City of Athens Utilities Electric Department accessed the service 1700 times in the past year (February 2020 through February 2021), so he sent an e-mail to the Electric Department manager asking if there was any interest in contributing to the project. Mr. Yerdon stated that he had not received a reply, and it had been over a week since the e-mail had been sent. Mr. Yerdon stated that if the City decided not to go forward with helping fund the service, they would no longer have access. It was also noted that the Revenue Office collects taxes for the City of Athens.

After the Engineer's Report, Commissioner Sammet asked County Engineer Marc Massey about the issue that Mr. Kingery reported to the Commission, and Mr. Massey stated it is two lots and appears it creates one flag lot back to a house or residential property, 0.72 acres. Then the other is not being divided any further to create any additional lots. There is a possibility of one more residence, but as far as drainage, we looked how it affects the right-a-way and they are taking that into account. They are not dividing it to the point where we would have to talk about retentions ponds, etc. One lot goes back to an existing property because it already utility easements and utilities to it and the other lot is just the remaining acreage. Both lots meet our subdivision regulations, and they have given us right-a-way and easement to go ahead and meet our current standards."

Chairman Collin Daly noted that the Fair Housing Proclamation was due to the grant that Michelle Williamson has been preparing and that grant will provide broadband internet out in the rural parts of the County.

Chairman Danny Barksdale stated, "I was recently made aware that Breland Homes, one of the largest home developers in Limestone County, developed Clift Farms in Madison County. They are currently charging a 3% development fee to recover their costs of infrastructure paid for by Breland and the development of the project. Both development fees and impact fees are for infrastructure improvements and are essentially the same thing. I am pleased to see that Breland recognizes the importance of people utilizing a service should pay for it. I continue to believe that Limestone County would benefit from impact fees. Subdivisions developed by companies like Breland create tremendous costs for county government such as roads, traffic controls, schools and other public requirements. If developers recognize the need for impact fees, there should be a message there for local governments."

Commissioner Jason Black gave a 2021 County Legislative Report which consists of the work that is being done by the ACCA for all 67 counties during the Legislative Regular Session. Commissioner Black stated, "The Governor's enactment of law allowing for safer places to be established statewide was made into law on April 7<sup>th</sup>. This new law allows county emergency management teams to work with local businesses and organizations to form safer places during severe weather. My dad would get really upset whenever we had a tornado watch and everybody would run to the hospital. A hospital is

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made mostly of glass, and the emergency room is the last place that you want a large congregation of people. These safer places are temporary coverage during severe weather and EMA has started establishing those places. The second thing is a law streamlining nomination process for County Boards of Equalization. This is one of those things that is not widely discussed, but the new law streamlines the nomination process and the State can ensure these boards are adequately staffed so that these boards can handle the tax appeal cases. Also, a law expanding location options for county property taxes will be effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. This new law will update procedures for county property tax sales by allowing tax sales to be conducted anywhere on or within the premises of the County Courthouse or Courthouse Annex and not just in front of the Courthouse door.

Chairman Collin Daly thanked Commissioner Black for serving on the Legislative Committee.

Recessed: Until 10:00 a.m.