

**MINUTES, LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, JULY 19, 2021
WORK SESSION**

The Limestone County Commission reconvened the meeting today from July 6, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at the Clinton Street Courthouse Annex, 100 South Clinton Street, Athens, Alabama.

Present: Danny Barksdale, Jason Black and LaDon Townsend. Absent: Daryl Sammet. Collin Daly, Chairman, presided.

Tere Richardson with Athens Main Street addressed the Commission to request their appropriation in the amount of \$10,000 for the FY21-22 budget. Ms. Richardson expressed her passion for the community and her appreciation for the Commission's past support. Ms. Richardson stated, "During the latter part of 2020 and to date in 2021, we efforted not only carrying on with our normal mission critical activities but also coming up with new solutions and pivots to our downtown to stay afloat, all of which I am extremely proud." Ms. Richardson expanded on the new additions, improvements, events and growth to the downtown area. Chairman Daly stated, "I just want to thank you for all that you do. I know downtown business owners really appreciate and a lot of them wouldn't have made it through the COVID crisis if it had not been for your leadership on helping them with their curbside pickup and things. I also want to thank you for enclosing your budget and your last few years of statements. That means a lot to us because we want to know where and how your money is being spent."

Chairman Daly reported that Chris Becker with the Extension Office was unable to attend to request their appropriation for FY21-22 budget, but the Chairman noted that they had recently redone the kitchen through a grant in order to allow educational cooking classes for students and had done an excellent job with that project.

Leigh Patterson with Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful addressed the Commission to request their appropriation in the amount of \$25,000 for the FY21-22 budget. Ms. Patterson stated, "I would like to thank you for your support for over the last year. I've enjoyed working with you all on different projects, and I appreciate everything that you've done whether through volunteering at events, supporting our clean-up efforts by providing trailers, disposal of the litter and debris through appropriations and the many other things that you have done to help our organization. Because of our partnership, KALB continues to be able to accomplish many good things for Limestone County." Ms. Patterson further reported that the funding will be used to help cover expenses for the proper disposal of household and yard chemicals, pesticides, tube lighting and more in other to keep out of landfills and waterways. Ms. Patterson also stated, "As our area continues to grow in an unprecedented rate, the KALB organization works to provide services that are beneficial to our residents along with programs that help Limestone County work toward litter free communities, and these services will in tun attract more economic growth increase and property values which promote better quality of life. The KALB organization is blessed with a very active and stable volunteer commission and staff and has a very frugal financial history." Chairman Daly stated, "I've worked both hazard house and waste pickups along with volunteers as well as the big day out in District 4, and I thank you for all that you do for the County."

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Becky Bentley with the Child Advocacy Center addressed the Commission to request their appropriation in the amount of \$24,000 for the FY21-22 budget. Ms. Bentley stated, "We, as CAC, have grown this past year. We've seen a 35% increase in the children and families, and this was during the COVID period. The increase of a \$1,000 a quarter will cover the cost, roughly, of seeing one and a half children from the time they come in our door through the whole process to the time they graduate from counseling. At that time, they will have roughly between 75 to 100 face to face hours with our staff." Ms. Bentley further stated, "Community abuse is something no one wants to talk about, especially child sexual abuse. With my remaining minute or so is to challenge you in getting more involved in protecting children and taking a stand against child abuse. Remember 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused by the time they are 19. How many kids are on your child's or grandchild's ball team or classroom at school? How many came over for their last birthday party? How many children are in the Sunday school class that you teach? Does that give the 1 in 10 more perspective? The 1 in 7 who have experienced abuse or neglect this past year?" Ms. Bentley encouraged the Commission to tour their building and attend a free training program. Ms. Bentley also stated, "Use your platform here to help protect our children in Limestone County. Something that I've learned as I've worked at the CAC is that I truly believe it is our moral responsibility to protect our children, so I hope you take that challenge with me, and we appreciate what you've done for us and hopefully what you will continue to do." Chairman Daly informed the Commission that Ms. Bentley takes the money that we appropriate to CAC and rolls it over to make more money."

Sam and Eva Anderson addressed the Commission regarding the base and noise issue located at 17480 Sudbury Drive. Mr. Anderson said that they have tried getting in touch with the Sheriff's Department Deputies and getting neighbors involved. Mr. Anderson stated, "The noise is getting worse," and Mrs. Anderson stated, "It not just getting worse but there is no schedule for these people." Mrs. Anderson reported that the times are very inconsistent and not on a normal schedule. Mrs. Anderson also commented that she and other neighbors have had to make accommodations in their own homes or stay in a hotel in order to escape the noise. Chairman Daly said that he would try to find out something from the Sheriff's Office, and Commissioner Townsend stated, "I have talked to the Sheriff's Office several times, and they say they go out and the music is never on or they tell them to turn it down."

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

Engineer's Report:

Chairman Daly requested that the parking lot at EMA also be added to the Paving Schedule.

Chairman Daly thanked everyone for their attendance and for bringing in the appropriations and those appropriations would be taken into consideration.

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Recessed: until 10:00 a.m.