

**MINUTES, LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, JUNE 2, 2020  
WORK SESSION**

The Limestone County Commission reconvened the meeting from May 18, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. today at the Clinton Street Courthouse Annex, 100 South Clinton Street, Athens, Alabama.

Present: Daryl Sammet, Steve Turner, Jason Black, and Ben Harrison. Absent: None. Collin Daly, Chairman presided.

Dr. Robert Pitman along with Priscilla Blenkinsopp came before the Commission to discuss the operating budget for the Athens-Limestone County Animal Shelter. Dr. Pitman said, "I hope some good will come out of this." To summarize what the intakes are for January through March 2019 the shelter took in 1338 animals and January through March 2020 the shelter took in 1286 animals. He said when he last talked to other shelters in December, the bottom line was that Limestone County was paying about \$138 an animal. Decatur Animal Services including Morgan County Animal Shelter have a combined budget of \$985,000. Huntsville has a budget of \$1.3 million and they took in 5,400 animals and their average cost was \$240 per animal. He said, "I went to the City back in February and explained it to them and they passed it unanimously to provide \$142,884 a year, that averages out to \$196 per animal. The average cost for Florence and Decatur/Morgan County is \$198 per animal. The cost would need to increase \$154,064 for Limestone County to reach \$196 per animal. He explained that the shelter is organized as a 501c3 non-profit. He said the shelter is losing something like \$25,000 a month. Commissioner Harrison said, I'm sorry, I have a hard time accepting that. I think what we need and if the other commissioners are willing, is do an audit of the facility." Dr Pitman stated it's a public facility and the commission can audit it anytime they want to. He further said, each county is required to provide an animal shelter or contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of a shelter. All cities over 5,000 people population in that county must contribute or maintain their own shelter. It's left up to the shelter director and the personnel to decide on treatments, but if somebody brings in an animal that's injured, we try to repair it to the point where the owner can reclaim the animal, if they want to. If the injury is too bad, such as a broken back, the animal is put to sleep. Commissioner Harrison asked, "They have the opportunity to reclaim the animal and pay the animal shelter for the charges?" Dr. Pitman said, "I think that at times they do, sometimes they don't. Regardless, we don't want the animal. It's either giving it back to them or putting it to sleep and then there's a lot of adverse publicity comes with putting down somebody's pet." "I want you to keep in mind that if you decide not to do this somebody's going to have to incur this expense because even with the increase that I've asked for we're still over a \$100,000 less than these other facilities." Commissioner Harrison questioned why seven days, as required by the state, wasn't long enough for owners to reclaim. Dr. Pitman said if the commission wanted to go back to euthanizing after seven day, they could do that, but would be deferring the complaints to the commission. Priscilla Blenkinsopp thanked the community for helping with the shelter; making donations on surgeries. Ms. Blenkinsopp said they have shelters nationwide that they are also able to transport animals to be adopted. She specifically talked about a transport that left this morning transporting animals to New York.

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Added to the agenda, an Amended Resolution and Amended and Restated Agreement for Greenbrier Parkway Phase IV to update drawings of properties.

Removed from the agenda, Bowman Acres Phase 2 Subdivision in District 2.

Items were discussed for the June 2, 2020 commission meeting agenda.

Recessed at 9:52 a.m.