

LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, APRIL 14, 2023
WORK SESSION MINUTES

The Limestone County Commission reconvened the meeting from April 3, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. today at the Clinton Street Courthouse Annex, 100 South Clinton Street, Athens, Alabama.

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

Mr. Scott Craig addressed the Commission regarding the Smith Serenity Farm Subdivision property line.

Brother Mitch McCormick and Brother Tony Wales expressed concerns to the Commission pertaining to the Limestone County wet/dry referendum.

Ms. Hellen Thompson thanked all the Commissioners for what they do. She also stated that she attended the presentation regarding broadband internet. She urged the County to put together a team to help get all Limestone County internet service.

Judge Charles Woodroof addressed the Commission regarding staffing in the Limestone County Probate Office.

Items were discussed for today's commission meeting.

Commissioner Sammet stated that this referendum is giving the citizen in the County the ability to decide if they do or do not want Limestone County to become a wet County. Commissioner Sammet said this County already has two recreational districts, and that they are already working around whether it's wet or dry. He said that he has been approached by business owners that have service stations, and that they have already set up for the County to be wet, and that it is not fair for the business owners in the County not to be competitive in that way. Commissioner Sammet said that it would not generate any revenue, and that it holds back a lot of opportunities for the County. He also stated that this County has been wet for as long as he can remember, even when it wasn't legal to sell alcohol it was sold.

Commissioner Barksdale stated that if he thought this referendum would increase the consumption of alcohol that he would be against it. He said that no one in Limestone County is over two or three miles from buying alcohol, no matter where you live, and that the Government is creating a monopoly for the entertainment districts to sell alcohol in a dry county, and he agrees with Commissioner Sammet that it is not fair to other business owners.

Commissioner Gatlin asked who created the entertainment districts, and what is the State Legislature's position on the wet/dry vote in Limestone County. Commissioner Gatlin said that no one from the State Legislature has reached out to him about the County becoming wet.

Commissioner Townsend stated that he agrees with Commissioner Gatlin that he has not had any calls from any of the State Legislature representatives. Commissioner Townsend said that Limestone County becoming wet will change his District. He also stated that his biggest thing is changing Limestone County for what benefit.

Commissioner Sammet stated that hopefully Limestone County becoming a wet County would increase gas revenue, and grocery revenue which goes back into our schools. He also said that this is just an opportunity to give the citizens a vote.

Commissioner Townsend stated that the last time the vote for the County becoming wet or dry was on the ballot it was done by signatures, and this time were time no signatures.

Commissioner Gatlin said that he agrees with Commissioner Townsend that there needs to be enough signatures for the wet/dry vote to be put on the ballot. He said that the citizens are not getting the opportunity to say if they want to be able to vote on the matter.

Chairman Daly said that he was not going to discuss the matter of the County becoming wet or staying dry, so he does not try to persuade any of the Commissioners to vote yes or no. He stated that if it comes to a vote then he will address his thought. Chairman Daly stated that we will leave the referendum on the agenda for it to be voted on.

Chairman Daly stated that we have had several people borrowing new garbage cans. He said that each garbage can has a serial number on the can, and that each can is registered to a specific address. He said that this resolution gives the County the authority to address these issues, and either press criminal charges for citizens that are borrowing other cans or start charging them for the use of an additional can.

Engineer Massey said that those cans are property of the Limestone County Commission, and when people take them from their designated location, then it is theft of County property, and it can be punishable as a criminal offence. Engineer Massey said that we need to decide whether to take criminal action if someone steals a garbage can, or if that is going to be action for us to begin charging the address where the stolen can is found for the use of that can.

Chairman Daly said that this resolution gives the County the authority to either criminally charge someone for stealing garbage cans or to charge that address for the use of the stolen can. Chairman also stated that this is something that we can work case per case, and he wants the ability to work both ways.

Commissioner Barksdale stated that the County needs to prosecute for gross intentional theft of garbage cans.

Chairman Daly stated that the resolution regarding the Solid Waste Department Uniforms is so that the County can deem that Solid Waste is necessary to have uniforms.

Commissioner Sammet asked Engineer Massey if we would be using the same company for the Solid Waste Department uniforms.

Engineer Massey stated that if we lease the uniforms that we would have to use the same company that all the Districts use. He said he has considered options to where the County does not lease uniforms, that we purchase due to there being issues with the service from the uniform company.

Commissioner Gatlin stated that if the County modifies the uniform policy, that he wants the district's policy modified as well.

Engineer Massey and the County Administrator stated that there will be a bidding process for the uniforms, and that Solid Waste department was not in the original uniform bid. Engineer Massey said that the next cycle as a Commission they could decide to bid leasing again with the Solid Waste Department included or do a different process if it is purchasing uniforms. The County Administrator added that the County Attorney would have to look over all the uniform bidding to make sure we follow current standards.

Engineer Massey said that the agreement between the Solid Waste Disposal Authority of Athens, and Limestone County, Limestone County Alabama, and the City of Athens is just how the County is to pay for half of the construction. He said that County elected to pay as the construction is done, and the City of Athens will be financing their half of the agreement.

There was discussion regarding the memorandum of Understanding between the Limestone County Commission and the Limestone County Board of Education with respect to the road construction benefitting Elkmont Elementary School.

The County Administrator added that the budget revision listed is a dump trailer for District 3 litter patrol.

Recessed at 9:59 a.m.