

The Geneva County Commission met in regular session on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. at the Geneva County Courthouse in Geneva, Alabama.

Commission Chairman Toby Seay called the meeting to order and welcomed guests present. Commissioner Brannon opened the meeting with prayer. Chairman Seay led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no elected officials requesting to make public comment.

There were no citizens requesting to make public comment.

Commission Chairman Seay called the roll, and the following members were present: Commissioners Weston Spivey, Todd Brannon, Bart Wilks, and Wade Fulford. The County Attorney Phil Eldridge; County Engineer, Justin Barfield; Assistant County Engineer, Mike Shirah; Sheriff, Tony Helms; Revenue Commissioner, Mary Ann Ellison; EMA Director, Brian Smith and County Administrator Cindy Williams were also present. The following business was transacted:

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING

#### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve Minutes of May 24, 2021. Commissioner Brannon made a motion to approve the minutes of May 24, 2021. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.
2. Proclamations: Denise Hanks and Kim Morris with DHR were present for Elder Abuse Awareness Month. Ms. Hanks gave a short speech on Adult and Elder Abuse. Commissioner Fulford made a motion to recognize June 2021 as Elder Abuse Awareness Month. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0. Chairman Seay read a proclamation declaring June 2021 as Elder Abuse Awareness Month.
3. Bids: None
4. Board Appointments: None

#### OLD BUSINESS:

1. Board Appointments – None
2. Bids – None

3. Spec Building – Chairman Seay stated the building is nearing completion. The City of Hartford will be working on getting the water and sewage to the building this week. After that work can begin on paving the parking lot. Commissioner Wilks asked about the completion date. Chairman Seay stated the project was on schedule to be completed by the projected date.
4. Courtroom Renovation – Chairman Seay stated that the sound system should be installed this week. Construction company will be going over their punch list and as soon as they are complete the architect will come in and review for their final punch list.

#### REPORTS OF STAFF:

**Sheriff:** Sheriff Helms stated they had a few issues with the jail that the contractor has been made aware of. A sprinkler head was torn down by an inmate. This is the third time this has occurred and makes the second time this inmate had torn down a sprinkler head. The Sheriff is now presenting this information to the courts and charging inmates with destruction of property.

Jail staffing is down by three Correction Officers.

His department is spending a considerable amount of funds on vehicle maintenance. Some of his vehicles have close to 300,000 miles on them. He will need new vehicles in the upcoming budget year.

The jail will be at the one-year anniversary come August 24, 2021, which means that we need to start considering maintenance contracts. During this first year it has been the responsibility of the contractor to handle the maintenance issues with the installers. Sheriff Helms stated that his department is now the lowest paying Law Enforcement agency in the County by \$2.00 per hour. He is fearful that he is going to begin to lose deputies to surrounding cities due to the pay disparity. Chairman Seay stated that the new budget year was approaching, and the Commission would be having work sessions beginning in July to start budget discussions and Sheriff Helms should present his information at that time.

**County Administrator:** Mrs. Williams stated that at the last Commission meeting the Commission had voted to partner with the ACCA in the IAC (Investing in Alabama Counties) program. Chairman Seay had signed the agreement and it has been submitted to the ACCA.

**County Engineer:** Engineer Barfield his department is now down to 26 employees. He has several vacant positions he has been unable to fill. He does have someone that has applied for the EAll position with 28 years of experience with Wiregrass Construction. Since this individual has so many years of experience and credentials, he is asking the Commission to start the employee at step 4 on the pay scale. Chairman Seay stated that due to the reorganization recently done by Engineer Barfield this should not affect the Road & Bridge Departments budget. Commissioner Spivey made a motion to start the

new EAll employee at step 4 on the pay scale. Commissioner Wilks seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

The ATRIP II project is progressing, and they are currently working with a utility contractor on moving the fiber cable.

Paving preparation work on N County Road 49 should be completed soon and then they will be moving to Goose Hollow Road.

Mr. Barfield is working on getting the bushhogging ready for bid. He has been given information that the project could cost around \$100,000.

The pre-construction meeting has been held for HRRR-3120(25) – intersection signage on CR28/CR49 and CR85/CR44 and HRRR-3120(251) – intersection signage, stop bars and rumble strips on CR28/CR49 and CR85/CR44 and HRRR-3120(252) – box culvert guardrail on CR16 and CR17.

The hydraulic review has been completed on the White Oak Road bridge replacement project damaged in Hurricane Sally. We should be receiving money from FEMA in the next few weeks for work completed by the County in the first few weeks after Hurricane Sally at various sites unrelated to the White Oak Road bridge.

His department is currently behind on nine (9) driveway pipe installations.

Mr. Barfield and Assistant Engineer Mike Shirah are working on updating the subdivision regulations for the County.

In a recent bridge inspection, it was discovered that the bridge on Roundabout Road has several cracked beams. In the past they have dealt with a citizen that crosses that bridge with a vehicle too heavy for the bridge. They have lowered the weight limit for this bridge to passenger vehicles only and installed the signage. Repair work will have to be done to this bridge.

During the recent heavy rainfalls, one road on the east end of the County has washed out. That area of the County has had rainfall from 7 – 11” during the past week.

**County Attorney:** Attorney Eldridge stated that at the May 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting the Commission had tasked him with getting information on obtaining a Tobacco Permit for the jail. He has been speaking with Robin McGee with the ABC Licensing and Compliance office in Dothan. Attorney Eldridge gave the Sheriff and Commissioners a Tobacco Permit Checklist with the information and documents circled that the Sheriff needed to complete. Once all the required information is compiled Ms. McGee will set a meeting with himself and the Sheriff. Sheriff Helms stated he would work diligently on completing the documentation.

Mr. Eldridge stated that JMR+H has prepared the documents for change orders 2 & 3 on the Court Room renovation. Change order 2 was for painting all walls and doors in the back, stairwell to the Court Room; adding aluminum handrails to both sides of the stairwell; installing two light fixtures; and installing rubber treading to the stairs and rubber tile on the landings at a cost of \$12,492.55. Change order 3 is to replace two (2) wood doors at the back of the litigation wall and replace the receptacle and switch plates at a cost of \$2,578.40. Mr. Eldridge stated the Commission would need to make a motion to approve the change orders and allow Chairman Seay to sign the change orders.

Commissioner Brannon made a motion to approve change orders 2 and 3 on the Courtroom renovation allow Chairman Seay to sign them. Chairman Fulford seconded the motion. Vote was 4.

**Chairman Seay:** Chairman Seay stated he had nothing to add outside of his comments during other presentations.

**Revenue Commissioner:** Ms. Ellison stated today was the last day to file objections to valuation notices. So far, they are aware of only one issue and are in hopes it can be resolved prior to hearings. The hearing date is scheduled for June 23, 2021. Chairman Seay asked if she knew the projections for revenue from property tax for next year. Mrs. Ellison stated she would not have that information until late July or early August. She cannot complete the projections until she has the Public Utility information from the State..

**EMA Director:** Mr. Smith stated he has completed and submitted all monthly reports and they are now current. There are numerous items that need repair in his department. He stated that so far, he has not found a radio that is operational. Some may just need batteries.

The weather siren in Coffee Springs is inoperable. He has reported this to S & P Communications.

Chairman Seay asked Mr. Smith about the Hazard Mitigation grant and Mr. Smith stated it was in progress. Chairman Seay stated that he has been informed, the \$10,000 CDBG grant that the Commission had originally planned to use for remodeling the upstairs courtroom, cannot be used in that way but it could be used on items for the EMA department.

**Solid Waste:** Not present.

**E-911:** Mr. Jeremy Williams stated that Hartford, Samson, and Slocomb were all on board for the new software program that would link the County and the municipalities. Geneva has not passed it yet and if they do not it would increase the cost discussed at the last Commission meeting. He plans to attend the next Geneva City Council meeting in hopes of providing them additional information so that they will participate in the program.

**Auburn Extension:** Ms. Marks stated that all agents will be out in the county this week at Boys and Girls Club, and other camps. Ms. Marks also asked if the Commission could have the maintenance department cut the grass around the Farm Center. Citizens are coming out to get vegetables from the giving garden and the Farmers Market has started back on Saturdays. She also stated that Commissioner Fulford has agreed to be on the committee for the Farmer's Market. The grand opening and ribbon cutting for the Farmer's Market is scheduled for June 19, 2021.

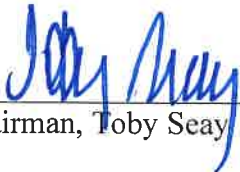
**Commissioner's:** Commissioner Brannon stated there was a \$3,000,000.00 grant for the Wright's Creek waterway and advised Commissioner Spivey he should get with Engineer Barfield to review options available. There was a similar grant last year in his district and they were able to get a lot of work done through the grant. He also stated there was a food distribution in Black recently which resulted in over 500 meals being

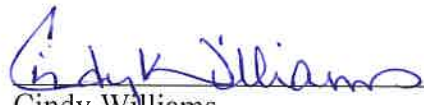
given away to residents. He said that they are trying to set one up next in Hartford and hope to do this throughout the County.


Commissioner Fulford stated he had been asked by the Extension Office about the security at their facility. The employees do not feel safe there at times given the number of citizens in and out of the back of the building and they are not aware anyone is there. Mrs. Williams stated the Commission Office could call and inform the Extension Office any time the back is rented. Chairman Seay also stated we could investigate the effectiveness of the security system and see if there was a need to upgrade the current system.


Commissioner Brannon made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Fulford seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0.

The above constitutes the minutes of the meeting of the Geneva County Commission held on Monday, June 14, 2021.

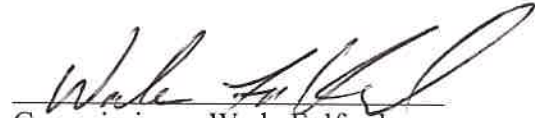
  
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Chairman, Toby Seay

  
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Cindy Williams  
County Administrator

  
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Commissioner Weston Spivey

  
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Commissioner Todd Brannon

  
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Commissioner Bart Wilks

  
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Commissioner Wade Fulford

## *World Elder Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation*

Whereas, Geneva County adults who are elderly or have disabilities are valued members of society; and

Whereas, the number of older citizens is fast growing and the incidence of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults is outpacing the growth of the population; and

Whereas, abuse of persons who are older and have disabilities is a significant and complex social and health problem that impacts cultural, social, economic, and demographic groups; and

Whereas, combating abuse of people who are older and have disabilities will help improve the quality of life for all seniors and adults with disabilities in this county and will allow seniors and adults with disabilities to continue to live as independently as possible and contribute to the life and vibrancy of Geneva County; and

Whereas, Geneva County seniors and adults with disabilities have a right to live free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and to be treated with respect and dignity to enable them to be valued members of this community; and

Whereas, the County of Geneva and the Adult Protective Services program of the Geneva County Department of Human Resources are committed to working closely with community partners to protect and provide for the needs of our citizens who are older and have disabilities; and

Whereas, the protection of Geneva County seniors and adults with disabilities is in the interest of all and further adds to the well-being of Geneva County;

We, The Geneva County Commission, do hereby proclaim the month of June 2021 as Elder Abuse Awareness Month and encourage all our citizens to raise awareness of abuse of elders and adults with disabilities.

Dated in the Geneva County Commission Meeting on this 14th day of June, 2021.

  
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Geneva County Commission