

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR TERM, MARCH 31, 2025

The Lee County Commission convened in regular session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, March 31, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by an invocation by Commissioner Cannon.

The Chairman declared a quorum and officially opened the meeting with the following members recorded as being present: Judge Jere Colley, Chairman, and Commissioners Doug Cannon, Ross Morris and Jeff Drury. Absent were Commissioners Tony Langley and Richard LaGrand.

Prior to Public Comments, Commissioner Drury read the Commission's policy on decorum

Laura Hathcock addressed the Commission expressing concern over a public records request submitted on March 10, 2025. She stated that according to Act 2024-278, an acknowledgement must be received within 10 days of a request. She stated she did not receive an acknowledgement until March 29, 2025, 19 days after the initial request and the letter was dated March 19, with a USPS stamp of March 24. She requested the Commission correct the discrepancies so citizens didn't experience additional delays.

Lance Farrar spoke also regarding issues with a public records request. He stated he submitted a request in August 2023 for 6,818 delinquent names and receive the documentation after 53 weeks. He said he visited the Commission Office on Aug. 19, 2024, to request the Attorney General's Opinion then-Chair Bill English said he needed; the opinion was never requested from the AG. On Aug. 26, 2024., he said he again requested the names of those who had never paid Arrow Disposal Services Inc. fee. He stated it had been 31 weeks, and he had yet to receive an acknowledgement receipt or response to the request. He asked the Commission to correct the situation; in addition, he stated that if he is paying for the records to be created he would like access to them when he seeks them. A copy of the request was also provided to the Commission.

Peter Byrd discussed again his request for the most recent traffic study for Lee Road 106. He stated the primary intent of both the County's subdivision regulations and the County Engineer is to protect the safety of the traveling public. He said the Lee County Access Management Policy stipulates that no one may connect to the county highway system without meeting minimum standards to clam traffic such as turn lanes, etc. He said he provided Commissioners with information claiming standards were changed for certain developers. He stated that in a January 2015 letter, Mr. Hardee informed a developer that the developer's traffic analysis would require turn lane improvements due to the vehicle per day count being 23 over the threshold. He said Mr. Hardee then conducted a second study which showed a county of 94vpd so

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no turn lanes or improvement were required. The most recent study showed a count of 200vpd each way, with Mr. Bryd claiming the first study was fraudulent because the current count is twice the amount of traffic. He stated he has asked for both the most recent traffic study and guidelines of which he still has not received the guidelines. He also provided the Commission with a 2015 letter from ALDOT stating the Engineering Department's delay in obtaining and processing paperwork for installing crossing arms at a railroad intersection endangered the traveling public.

Mr. Tim thanked the Commission for their work regarding the trash situation and providing a place for citizens to take bulk trash after three years. He said he hoped that would Mean a lot of the roadside rash would get picked up.

Judge Colley recognized the elected officials in attendance: Sheriff Jay Jones. News media in attendance: Hannah Goldfinger with the Opelika Observer.

Mid-South RC&D Executive Director Pam Hughes and Communications Specialist Katie Smith announced that the grant cycle for Mid-South RC&D would open April 1. She thanked Commissioners Morris and Cannon for serving on the Mid-South Council. She thanked Commissioner Cannon for serving on the Board and bringing projects to the table to be approved. She stated it was important for the schools, non-profits and other governmental entities to submit projects; flyers with the grant information were provided to the Commission.

Commissioner Drury recognized several student-athletes for their accomplishments during the season. First were the wrestlers from Beulah High School. Recognized were: Jason Hood - 33-13 record with 27 wins coming by pin, finished 4th at Sectionals and went 2-2 at State; and Harry Grant – 33-5, 2nd at Sectionals, 4th at State and the first in Beulah High School wrestler to record 100 career wins. Beulah High School is coached by Will Wilson.

Opelika High School recognized: Tommie Johnson – three-sport athlete in football, wrestling and track, 2-time regular season tournament champion, one-time sectional finalist, three-time State qualifier, scored five touchdowns during the 2024-25 season, and has a 3.4 GPA; Brandon Denson - three-sport athlete in football, wrestling and track, Bobcat Bash Champion, three-time Sectional placer, Sectional Runner-Up and three-time State qualifier; Colt Dickson – two-sport athlete in football and wrestling, 48-14 record, 4th at Sectionals, 3rd at Hornet Slam, qualified for State as a sophomore, 8-1 as a heavyweight and has a 3.8 GPA; Gabrielle Reese- 9th grade record of 15-2, 10th grade record of 34-7, overall record of 49-9, two-time regular season tournament Champion, 3rd place at State as a freshman, 2025 South Sectional Champion, ranked Top-8 in the state as a sophomore; Heidi Peralta – Wrestling: a Sectionals finalist, freestyle state runner up in 2024, AAU State champion in 2023 and Team Alabama member; Cross Country: 8th

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place 5K Montgomery Trail Blazer and a 3.3 GPA; Trell Anderson- 10-time regular season tournament champion, 6-time regular season 2nd place, four-time regular season 3rd place, placed top 4 at every tournament since Sophomore year, 2-time 7A South Super Sectional Champion, one-time South Sectional 3rd place, three-time State qualifier, two-time State placer, 2024 State Runner-up, 2025 State 6th place finisher, Georgia Grappler Most Valuable Wrestler, finished high school career with 141 wins and is committed to Montevallo; Brady Campbell – record of 196-5, four-time Sectional Champion, four-time State finalist, three-time State Champion, voted 2025 7A Most Outstanding Wrestler, National Honor Society, OHS Emissary, 3.8 GPA and is committed to the Citadel for wrestling.

Sheriff Jay Jones introduced Sgt. Valerie Sumner, the recipient of the 2024 James W. Anderson Award. The award is presented annually by the City of Smiths Station in honor of Lee County Deputy James Anderson who was killed in the line of duty on Sept. 24, 2009. Established in 2010, the award is earned by any member of the Lee County Sheriff's Office that has demonstrated unyielding commitment to public safety service. Alongside the Award for Valor, this award is the highest honor a member of the Sheriff's Office can receive. Each recipient wears a ribbon bar bearing the number 4346, Deputy Anderson's call sign number.

EMA Director Rita Smith provided an annual update on EMA operations. She stated that in 2024 the EOC experienced 17 activations compared to 20 in 2023. So far this year the EMA has had: January - 39 calls for service, one pre-planned event and two activations; February – 11 calls for service, two pre-planned events and four activations; March – 45 calls for service, two pre-planned events and three activations. In addition, the agency secured \$440,717 in grant funds including funding from Mid-South for a trailer. She stated almost all the EMA team has received training to Advanced level with the exception of one who is currently intermediate but working toward the Advanced level and then the newest employee. She asked if there was any information Commissioners would like specific to their district such as types of calls received, she would be happy to provide that information. Commissioner Drury asked what constituted a call for service; Ms. Smith stated that it could be requests for drone support, SRO requests, accident barricades, water/snacks for on-scene incidents, etc. Commissioner Cannon requested the information be provided to the Commission monthly as opposed to an annual basis to keep the Commission better informed. Ms. Smith invited the Commissioners to attend an upcoming G402 class for senior officials on May 6th at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. The class will provide an overview of the National Incident Management System, and the role senior officials should have. In addition, she introduced Adam Myers, the Agency's newest employee.

Copies of the items on the Consent Agenda sent to the Commissioners in their packets included: listings of claims to be approved and ratified, procurement card transactions listing and

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a copy of the minutes from March 31, 2025. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to approve the consent agenda items as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Under Old Business, the first item concerned the Solid Waste Bulk Collection Service Change. Commissioner Drury stated that per discussion during the work session, he didn't feel there was a need for a motion or any action to take place on the item. Commissioner Morris reiterated he approved of the idea for a sticker to be used to identify paying customers should a method be figured out to utilize them. County Administrator Holly Leverette was asked to reach out to other counties to find out how appropriate usage is monitored in other areas. The question was brought up as to how the stickers could be utilized, if someone did not remain current with their billing since bills are paid quarterly. Environmental Services Director John McDonald asked a question regarding the staffing of the sites and whether the Commission wanted them manned or periodically checked. Commissioner Drury and Cannon stated initially, they would prefer the sites to be manned. Commissioner Cannon also stated the hours may need to be adjusted based on daylight savings. Mr. McDonald stated that per discussion at a previous meeting the sites were to be open on Saturday nights. Following a question from Commissioner Drury, Ms. Leverette stated the notice being sent out regarding the locations could state hours of the sites would be 7 a.m.-7 p.m. daily. Commissioner Morris also stated that at this time only five sites would be operational. No action was needed on this item.

Under New Business, Commissioner Cannon presented a letter of support for a grant application for the Opelika Historical Preservation Society. If awarded, the grant would support the Society's preservation project of a WWII-era OT700-5000 series building that once served as part of a Prisoner of War (POW) Camp in Opelika, Alabama. Commissioner Cannon made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Drury. The motion passed unanimously.

Judge Colley presented the Annual Levy of Alcoholic Beverages for FY2025-2026 and stated there are no changes in the county fees. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to approve the following Resolution to set the Annual Levy of Alcoholic Beverages for FY2025-2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morris and carried unanimously.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Lee County Commission that the County license levies for the sale of liquor, beer and wine for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024, to be set in the following amounts:

010 Lounge Retail Liquor – Class I	\$150.00
011 Lounge Retail Liquor – Class II (Package)	\$150.00
020 Restaurant Retail Liquor	\$150.00

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031 Club Liquor – Class I	\$150.00
032 Club Liquor – Class II	\$375.00
040 Retail Beer (On or Off Premises)	\$75.00
050 Retail Beer (Off Premises Only)	\$75.00
060 Retail Table Wine (On or Off Premises)	\$75.00
070 Retail Table Wine (Off Premises Only)	\$75.00
080 Liquor Wholesale	\$500.00
090 Wholesale Beer Only	\$275.00
100 Wholesale Table Wine Only – 16.5% or less	\$275.00
110 Wholesale Table Wine & Beer Combined	\$375.00
120 Warehouse License	\$100.00
130 Additional Warehouse – Wine, Beer or Both	\$100.00
140 Special Events Retail	\$75.00
150 Special Retail License – 30 days or less	\$100.00
160 Special Retail License – More than 30 days	\$250.00
170 Retail Common Carrier	\$150.00
200 Manufacturer	\$500.00
210 Importer	\$250.00
220 Brewpub	\$500.00
230 International Motor Speedway	\$3,000.00
250 Wine Festival License	\$50.00
260 Wine Festival Participant License	\$15.00
300 Hospitality Management Program License	\$0.00
310 Food or Beverage Truck License	\$0.00
500 Direct Wine Shipper	\$200.00
510 Wine Fulfillment Center	\$500.00
520 Additional Wine Fulfillment Center	\$100.00
530 Delivery Service License	\$250.00
800 In-State Winery Off-Site Testing Permit	\$0.00

Next, Judge Colley presented a request for a Probate Financial Supervisor. He stated the previously authorized bookkeeper position needed to be changed due to additional responsibilities and an expanded supervisory role. He worked with Ms. Leverette, Ms. Anna-Kate Padgett and Ms. Lisa Ruffin to modify the description and stated the pay grade of the position also changed. Commissioner Cannon made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Drury. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheriff Jay Jones presented Bid #2025-04 for Daniel Defense Rifles. He stated bid

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proposals were submitted to five vendors from the list and posted on the county website. Five bids were received including one generated from the website posting. Those bids were:

Proforce Law Enforcement, Arizona	\$24,827.39
GT Distributors, Inc., Texas	\$25,312.00
Clyde Armory, Inc., Georgia	\$24,184.00
Lawmen Supply Co, New Jersey	\$24,036.00
Botach, Inc., Nevada (8 rifles @ \$1800 ea.)	\$14,400.00 (did not bid on accessories)

Sheriff Jones recommended accepting the bid from Lawman Supply Co., as the lowest responsible bidder for \$24,036. Commissioner Morris made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Cannon. The motion passed unanimously

Sheriff Jones presented an educational reimbursement request from Deputy Hayden Greenlee for three classes, they are: 1) Introduction to Communications, 2) American Homeland Security and 3) Typology of Terrorism. Sheriff Jones stated the three classes align with his currently assigned duties. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to approve the educational reimbursement request as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Jones presented a Special Events Retail license application for Greenawalt Hospitality for a one-day event to be held at Twenty-One Acres on Saturday, April 12. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the following Resolution approving the Special Events Retail license application as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

BE IT RESOLVED the Lee County Commission hereby approves the special events retail license for Greenawalt Hospitality for a one-day event on April 12 at Twenty-One Acres, located at 5505 Lee Road 137, Auburn, Alabama.

Next, Sheriff Jones presented ABC licenses for Delta Express and FoodMart. Sheriff Jones said no objections were received on the issuance of the licenses for Retail Beer (Off Premises Only), Retail Table Wine (Off Premises Only) and Lounge Retail Liquor-Class II (Package). Commissioner Drury made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the following Resolution approving the license transfers. The motion carried unanimously.

BE IT RESOLVED, Lee County Commission hereby approves the license transfer for 050 Retail Beer (Off Premises Only), 070 Retail Table Wine (Off Premises Only) and 011 Lounge Retail Liquor-Class II (Package) to Delta Express and FoodMart located at 9870 Lee Road Suite A, Phenix City, Alabama

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Ms. Leverette presented for approval two Lead Custodian Job Descriptions. She stated the two new custodial positions within the Building Maintenance are budgeted and would provide for additional career advancement within the department. She said the positions would help address attrition and supervisory needs as the number of county facilities has grown. In addition, these positions would be assigned to specific facilities and work with and train custodial employees within those facilities. The positions would be at pay grade 109 with a starting salary of \$39,719.66. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to approve the job description which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leverette stated that with the retirement of the previous IAC representative, there is a need to appoint a new IAC Operations Council representative. The IAC has provided consulting services and allocation assistance for the ARPA grant funds and currently helps with project management and Treasury reporting. She stated the Council typically meets twice a year with an IAC representative at the next meeting scheduled for May 21. Commissioner Morris asked if the other counties representative is typically the Chairman with Ms. Leverette stating it's a mix of county administrators and chairmen. Commissioner Cannon stated the hard work has already been completed; Ms. Leverette agreed, with the exception of the management of the projects and reporting which is a large portion. Given the reporting aspect, Judge Colley asked if it would be more logical for CFO Anna-Kate Padgett to be appointed. Commissioner Cannon said he felt the Chair should be involved with either Ms. Leverette or Ms. Padgett assisting. Commissioner Morris made a motion to name Ms. Padgett the representative along with the Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cannon and passed unanimously.

Ms. Leverette presented a resolution in support of the Certified County Administrator designation. She stated that through the County Government Education Institute (CGEI) a county administrator may receive the CCA designation by the ACCA Board if all requirements for the designation have been met. Those requirements include: three years' experience as a county administrator, completion of education requirements for CCA, completion of additional education requirements, submission of application and resolution from the county administrator current employer. She stated that as of January 4, 2025, she has completed all requirements including three years' experience as administrator... Commissioner Drury made a motion to approve the resolution in support of the CCA designation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cannon and passed unanimously.

CERTIFIED COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Holly Leverette has served as the Lee County Administrator since January 4, 2022 and is currently employed in that position; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her duties as County Administrator, Holly Leverette has worked to improve her knowledge of county government and the duties of the county administrator by participating in

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the educational programs offered through the County Government Education Institute Program as administered by the Association of County Commissions of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Holly Leverette has received the Certificate in County Administration by successfully completing the required coursework for that certification; and

WHEREAS, Holly Leverette has also completed the requirements for the designation of Certified County Administrator by successfully completing the additional coursework for such designation and by serving as county administrator for at least three years; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her diligent efforts in successfully completing these requirements, the Lee County Commission does hereby recommend Holly Leverette for the designation of Certified County Administrator, and requests that her application for such designation, which is submitted with this Resolution, be approved.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION that it does hereby recommend County Administrator Holly Leverette for the designation of Certified County Administrator and requests that her application for such designation be approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the March 31, 2025, meeting of the Lee County Commission, and that a copy be delivered to the Association of County Commissions of Alabama as administrator of the County Government Education Institute.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Lee County Commission has caused this Resolution to be executed in its name and on its behalf by its Chairman on this the 31st day of March, 2025

The next item presented was the travel and training policy updates. Commissioner Drury made a motion to approve the policy with any grammatical errors corrected and adding "or equivalent" to concerns regarding accommodations based on discussions during the work session. Commissioner Morris stated he disagreed with voting on the measure at this time with two commissioners not in attendance and no input from appointing authorities regarding the policy. Ms. Leverette stated she would meet with the individual departments to go over the policy, forms and processes as it is very different from what has been done before, and she wants them to understand the timing involved for submittal to the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Cannon asked if changes could be made to the policy with Ms. Leverette stating it could be amended at a future meeting. In addition, Ms. Leverette said she was aware of several upcoming event registrations that have already been made and those would be noted as such on the Consent Agenda. The motion made by Commissioner Drury was seconded by Commissioner Cannon. The motion passed on a 2-1 vote with Commissioner Morris voting against.

Mr. Hardee presented the final plat approval for Magnolia Estates, Phase I, located off Lee Road 175 in District 5. Included in the packets was a location map and a copy of the plat which consists of 11 lots with no new infrastructure, and five shared driveways. Mr. Hardee said the smallest lot will be two acres; adjacent property owners were notified of the development by letters sent on March 20, 2025, so that they may attend and voice their support, opposition, or obtain more information. Judge Colley questioned if there was anyone in attendance on Magnolia Estates. There were none. Mr. Hardee stated that he had not been able

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to speak with Commissioner LaGrand regarding this subdivision which is in District 5. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Drury, to table the item. The motion to table carried unanimously

Mr. Hardee presented the final plat approval for the Grand Reserve Columbus LLC, located off the dirt portion of Lee Road 340 in District 4. Included in the packets was a location map and a copy of the plat which consists of 3 lots with no new infrastructure. Mr. Hardee said the smallest lot will be three acres; adjacent property owners were notified of the development by letters sent on March 20, 2025, so that they may attend and voice their support, opposition, or obtain more information. Judge Colley questioned if there was anyone in attendance on Truett Subdivision. There were none. Mr. Hardee did state he had spoken to Commissioner Langley, and he was not aware of any concerns. Commissioner Drury made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, for final plat approval. The motion carried unanimously

Mr. Hardee presented a variance request for Rock Falls Subdivision. He stated the development is in District 3 off Lee Road 2204. It is a private subdivision created under previous regulations including those from the City of Smiths Station. He stated at the time, the city's planning jurisdiction extended to that area and the development met the city regulations, was grandfathered in to regulations the county had, was approved and built. The developer wishes to now subdivide some of the larger lots within the development, creating 14 additional lots to the 42 originally done. The additional lots do not go below the allowable size as they will remain above two acres. Mr. Hardee stated in reviewing the variance request, current regulations would require a turn lane whereas previous regulations did not. The recommendation of the Highway Department would be to grant the variance with the stipulation that a turn lane be installed on Lee Road 318 for entrance into the subdivision. Mr. Hardee did state if the Commission did not approve the variance, then the Department did not have the authority to require a turn lane. Should the Commission approve the variance request, the developer would still be required to contact Phenix City as it falls under their planning jurisdiction as well. Commissioner Drury made a motion to approve the variance which was seconded by Commissioner Cannon. The motion passed unanimously.

Pursuant to the county's recently passed dirt road paving policy, Mr. Hardee presented a request for paving the dirt road portion of Lee Road 649 which is in District 1. Included in the packets is the petition which pursuant to policy meets the requirements as well as a copy of the plat that shows the required 60ft right-of-way deeded to the county. Based upon review of the roadway, a cost estimate with two options was included in the packet. Mr. Hardee stressed that it was an estimate, and an actual cost would be presented to the Commission at the end of the project should it be approved. Commissioner Cannon made the motion to approve the project and

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stated this had been a long time coming and was excited to have this project started. Mr. Hardee stated the cost estimates had the Highway Department clearing the right-of-way, placing drainage features and laying the asphalt as well as an estimate for the contractor laying the asphalt at contracted prices and requested clarification for which estimate the approval would be for. Commissioner Cannon amended his motion to clarify the Highway Department would perform all the prep-work with a contractor through the bid process to lay the asphalt. Commissioner Morris seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Environmental Services Director John McDonald said his department is participating in the upcoming Alabama People Against a Littered State (PALS) Spring cleanup. The annual event takes place the entire month of April and the theme is "Don't Drop it on Alabama". Mr. McDonald said he would make sure his department had crews working on litter pick-up throughout the county. He stated in the past multiple Commissioners as well as groups including Beulah Fire Department, Beulah Friends of the Community and Ms. Judy Lockhart and members of the Loachapoka community have participated in the event. Mr. McDonald said any groups or individuals wishing to participate may reach out to his department for further information and to receive free materials and supplies. He stated during last year's event 4 tons of litter were picked up and 1,100 bags collected. They were also able to recycle more than 600 pounds of plastic bottles, and more than 560 pounds of aluminum cans. Commissioner Drury asked if there was a specific kick-off for the event, with Mr. McDonald stating there was not but the various groups participating may set up different work days which his Department would assist with. Information regarding the event is available on the county website and Facebook. No action was needed on this item.

Parks and Rec Manager Ryan Norris presented a request for approval for several capital projects on county parks' properties. One request is assistance for improvements to the Smiths Station Sportsplex. He stated the Recreation Board saw an opportunity to rekindle the relationship following Sportsplex management transition and find out how the Board might provide support. Needed facility improvements include repairs to the walking trail as well as enhancements to the Multipurpose field to address erosion and undulation concerns. The funds for the Smiths Station projects would come from their recreation fund allocation. Similar enhancements are also needed for Beauregard and Beulah multipurpose fields. As such, Mr. Norris requested approval for the multipurpose enhancements to be grouped and bid out and awarded to a single vendor to ensure consistency among the parks. The walking trail renovation for Smiths Station would be bid separately. Mr. Norris did state funding for the Beauregard and Beulah improvements were already budgeted in the Parks Department budget. In addition, the request for batting cages had been removed pending additional guidance concerning insurance coverage and liability. Commissioner Drury asked if the approval was just moving forward with the bid process. Mr. Norris stated it included approval of the projects and authorizing the bid process. Commissioner Drury stated he would like to have a meeting with the Smiths Station mayor to make sure there

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was a clear understanding of the responsibility concerning the Sportsplex. He then made a motion to move forward with the projects utilizing rec funds and budgeted funds. Commissioner Cannon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

At approximately 6:35 p.m., Judge Colley announced the Commission needs to adjourn into Executive Session. Judge Colley said the exception to the Open Meetings Act is based upon the potential sale or purchase of real property. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to adjourn into executive session. Judge Colley stated the session should last approximately 5 minutes and formal action is anticipated at the conclusion.

Upon reconvening after the Executive Session, Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Drury, to authorize Mr. Hardee to negotiate a real estate transaction up to the maximum price discussed in the executive session and authorize Judge Colley to sign any necessary documents for the transaction. The motion carried unanimously

There being no other business, Commissioner Cannon made a motion seconded by Commissioner Morris to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.