



## **JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes / September 15, 2010 / Chamber Board Room**

**Attendance:** Trent Ashby, Susie Cardwell, David Collier, Mark Dunn, Dawn Glover, Trey Henderson, Kelly Holcomb, Jerry Huffman, Roy Knight, Chris Moss, Paul Parker, Larry Phillips, Joe Rich, Wes Suiter, Jim Watkins, Van Watson, and Jim Wehmeier.

Chairman Ashby called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. and thanked all attendees for their time and attendance.

### **APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES:**

The minutes from the August 3, 2010 meeting were approved.

Chairman Ashby asked for an update on how the Elected Officials Reception and Staff Tour worked out from Jim Wehmeier and Jerry Huffman

### **STAFF TOUR AND ELECTED OFFICIALS RECEPTION:**

Jim Wehmeier reported that the staff tour was successful with a lot of good feedback at the wrap-up. The turnout was large with the focus being on education. Jim recommended that the events be held every other year instead of every year and hold it in the years that the state legislature is in session.

Jerry Huffman reported attendance of about 90 at the Reception at Crown Colony and was very successful. Jerry recommended that the Reception continue on an annual basis.

A sub committee will meet to determine the frequency of the two events.

### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

Chairman Ashby turned the group's attention to the any additional local priorities for both state and federal legislation and requests.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT PRIORITIES:**

Lufkin ISD Superintendent Roy Knight presented the distribution of school funding as a major concern in the upcoming year. The state representatives are already on board on this issue. Lufkin is currently receiving about \$5,000 per child—the second lowest in the state. This value per child was set in 2005-2006 and has been basically locked in since then. The state average is \$5,600 per child.

As it currently stands, all school districts will have to make cuts and Lufkin is looking at making cuts in their pre-K school programs. Headway needs to be made with the Speaker.

### **CITY PRIORITIES:**

City Manager Paul Parker reported the following concerns and projects.

- The City is in the process of finishing the budget. The tax rate was lowered by 2 cents and they were able to retire some debt.
- The City is getting ready for bond rating and the companies' representatives that were in town to do this process were very impressed with Lufkin as they toured.
- The major project on the horizon is the work in Highway 59 North at the Nacogdoches interchange. Work will start on this project in 2012, but the City has already begun moving utilities, and other work that must be completed in advance of the project.

### **COUNTY PRIORITIES:**

Judge Wes Suiter shared the following items as priorities on the County's agenda.

- The Evacuation Center and Civic Center addition.
- Unfunded Mandates

- Redistricting
- Hotel Occupancy Tax. Funding must be provided to maintain Cassels-Boykin and must be addressed in the next legislative session. He is hoping for a 2 cent tax increase.
- Cassels-Boykin Status. Reservations of the facility are picking up and the camp sites need to be reserved due to high demand and bookings. A meeting is being held on the third phase of Cassels-Boykin and \$500,000 has been appropriated by Gohmert. The environmental is being worked on currently and is due by December.

**ANGELINA COLLEGE:**

Dr. Larry Phillips reported the following 2 priorities for community colleges.

- Budget. Angelina College is funded at \$1,600/student and will probably be reduced to \$1,300/student this year. Universities get about 50% more per course.
- Text books. There are 6 to 8 bills regarding text books. That is another unfunded mandate.)

**WATER PRIORITY:**

Kelly Holcomb reported that there is currently no movement at this time on the Clan Water Act issue.

**VISION 2020 UPDATE/DISCUSSION:**

STATE APPOINTMENTS UPDATE:

Chris Moss reported the following regarding State appointments:

- The position on the State Veterinary Board did not work out for us.
- The Finance Committee position is still in the works.
- There are also two positions vacated for the SFA Regents.

Also, the Teacher Retirement System will meet here at the Lufkin High School Auditorium.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman, Trent Ashby recommended that the Joint Legislative Committee now put together a list of the legislative issues for Angelina County for our next meeting. He recommended inviting our state representatives to attend the next meeting to hear discussion on those topics.

With no other new business the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 7th at 7:30 a.m. in the Chamber Board Room. Confirmation of this date will be coming soon.