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MOBILE COUNTY COMMISSION

The Mobile County Commission met in regular session in the Government Plaza Auditorium, in the City of Mobile, Alabama, on Thursday, July 31, 2014, at 6:00 P. M. The following members of the Commission were present: Connie Hudson, President, Merceria Ludgood and Jerry L. Carl, Members. Also present were John F. Pafenbach, County Administrator/Clerk of the Commission, Jay Ross, County Attorney, and Joe W. Ruffer, County Engineer. President Hudson chaired the meeting.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Chaplain Ron Pierce, Mobile County Sheriff's Office.

HOLD PUBLIC MEETING/COUNTY EMPLOYEES/
DISCUSS LOCAL GOVERNMENT HEALTH
INSURANCE PLAN (LGHIP)

The following is a synopsis of the comments made:

Donna Jones, General Services Director, said the County did extensive research in reviewing different plans and options for health care benefits. She said the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) was the best one at that time. Ms. Jones said in comparing the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program to the new Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) some benefits were better, and some remained the same. She said active full-time employees' premiums for single coverage decreased from ninety-five dollars (\$95.00) per month to eighty-six dollars (\$86.00) per month; family coverage decreased from two hundred fifty-seven dollars (\$257.00) per month to two hundred eighteen dollars (\$218.00) per month; retirees' premiums for single coverage increased from two hundred eighty-four dollars (\$284.00) per month to two hundred eighty-six dollars (\$286.00) per month; and retirees' family coverage decreased from seven hundred seventy-one dollars (\$771.00) per month to seven hundred fifty-one dollars (\$751.00) per month. Ms. Jones said many employees reported that the two hundred dollars (\$200.00) Major Medical calendar year deductible was a serious challenge for them. She said the deductible was required only once per calendar year and could be met through the purchases of name brand prescription drugs and medical services. Ms. Jones said when employees met the Major Medical deductible in a calendar year; they would file a claim in the same calendar year for an 80 percent reimbursement. She said under the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) employees pay full cost upfront and then file a claim for reimbursement. Ms. Jones said if employees could change from a name brand

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prescription drug to a generic prescription drug it would save them a lot of money. She said it was a ten dollar (\$10.00) co-pay under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program for generic prescription drugs. Ms. Jones said it was only a five dollar (\$5.00) co-pay for generic prescription drugs under the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP). She said employees must pay full cost up-front for prescription maintenance drugs. Ms. Jones said employees who have met the two hundred dollars (\$200.00) Major Medical calendar year deductible could purchase a 30-day supply of their prescription maintenance drugs and then, file a claim for the 80 percent reimbursement. She said employees could purchase a 60-day supply of generic prescription maintenance drugs, if available, for a five dollar (\$5.00) co-pay, and would not have to file a claim for reimbursement. Ms. Jones said the County was looking at different ways to offset employees' up-front cost for name brand prescription drugs, but the best way so far was to switch to generic prescription drugs. She said employees should seek advice from their physicians and pharmacists about less expensive comparable prescription drugs or prescription drugs discount cards that would decrease their up-front cost. Ms. Jones said information on web sites for Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs would be provided to employees and Lorraine Martin at Area Agency on Aging has offered her assistance to help employees with the eligibility requirements. She said specialty prescription drugs were very expensive and could cost employees in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) per month. Ms. Jones said BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama has a Major Medical Assignment Program that decreases the up-front cost to 20 percent for employees who meet its specific criteria. She said some prescription drugs required participation in the Step Therapy Program before approval of a more expensive prescription drug. Ms. Jones said employees who were preapproved under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program should contact BlueCross BlueShield Alabama about transferring it to the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP). She said prescription drugs that were considered by BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama as potentially high risk for misuse or overuse required preauthorization. Ms. Jones said employees who filled their prescription within the last sixty (60) days and meet BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama clinical criteria could transfer it to the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP). She said Durable Medical Equipment and Diabetes Testing supplies were not covered, and employees' prescription for insulin, was a separate co-pay. Ms. Jones said to file a claim for 80 percent reimbursement, employees must have met the two hundred dollars (\$200.00) Major Medical calendar year deductible. She said CAT scans required preauthorization from BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama and they have only been approved in life or death situations. Ms. Jones said employees who were preapproved under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program could request their preapproved status to be transferred to the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP). She said the fastest way to get a claim reimbursed for prescription drugs was to process it online. Ms. Jones

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said employees could have their reimbursements directly deposited into their bank accounts. She said if there were no problems, employees would receive their reimbursement within two (2) weeks. Ms. Jones said there have been incidents of a pharmacist who did not enter the correct information and an employee who did not complete the online process. She said employees should not wait for months to pass before they inquire about their reimbursements. Ms. Jones said if employees have a problem in resolving a reimbursement issue, they should call Human Resources (HR) to help them resolve it. She said employees could have their reimbursement mailed to them by submitting a claim online or by fax or by mailing the claim directly to BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama. Ms. Jones said employees must pay a three dollar (\$3.00) co-pay for each lab test. She said from one (1) vial of blood multiple tests could be done in a physician's office or in an emergency room at the hospital, and she said it would cost employees three (\$3.00) per test. Ms. Jones said employees should explain to their physicians that they have a co-pay for each lab test done, so they needed to know how many tests would be done. She said if the facility where employees have their x-ray was in the same location as the physician's billing location, employees would pay a thirty-five dollar (\$35.00) co-pay. Ms. Jones said if the x-ray facility and the physician's billing address have separate locations, employees would pay a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) co-pay. She said some employees who participate in the Wellness Program visited a physician for their annual checkup, but their physician charged them for a mammogram. Ms. Jones said that happens when the physician files a claim with a diagnosis; she said the health insurance views it differently and employees become responsible for the bill. Ms. Jones said employees' co-pay for visiting a primary physician or a specialist should not exceed thirty-five dollars (\$35.00). She said under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program the co-pay was thirty dollars (\$30.00) for a primary physician and forty-five dollars (\$45.00) for a specialist.

Ms. Jones said now it was the same co-pay for both, and if employees were seen by a nurse practitioner or a physician assistant, the co-pay was only twenty dollars (\$20.00). She said it was a two hundred dollar (\$200.00) co-pay to stay in a hospital for one (1) day, and after that, it was a fifty dollar (\$50.00) co-pay per day up to five (5) days. Ms. Jones said if the hospital stay was extended to six (6) days, employees did not pay a co-pay for the sixth (6th) day. She said maximum co-pay for a hospital stay was four hundred dollars (\$400.00). Ms. Jones said if employees visited the emergency room for an illness, they would pay a two hundred dollar (\$200.00) facility co-pay and a \$35.00 physician co-pay. She said if employees visited the emergency room for an accidental injury, there was no facility co-pay for services provided within seventy-two (72) hours of the accident. Ms. Jones said employees pay the annual out-of-pocket maximum expense within a calendar year, for an individual coverage it was six thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$6,250.00); and for family coverage twelve thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,500.00). She said

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employees did not have to pay the out-of-pocket maximum expense before they could use their coverage. Ms. Jones said co-pays and deductibles were added together to reach the out-of-pocket maximum expense. She said employees would have 100 percent coverage for the remainder of that calendar year and their reimbursements for prescription drugs would be 80 percent. Ms. Jones said each year the annual out-of-pocket maximum expense starts over. She said the out-of-pocket maximum expense for family coverage was a combination of the whole family, not family members individually. Ms. Jones said the two hundred dollars (\$200.00) Major Medical calendar year deductible was paid out-of-pocket before the health insurance would pay anything. She said employees did not have to change their primary care physician or specialist; it was the same network that was under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program. She said a medical condition that required eye exams was the only coverage for vision. Ms. Jones said routine eye exams were not covered by BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama under the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP), but employees could receive a routine eye exam for a forty dollar (\$40.00) fee if employees used a State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB) network provider. She said the dental calendar year deduction was twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per family member and a maximum of three (3) per family. Ms. Jones said diagnostic and preventive dental services coverage was 100 percent and it allowed two (2) routine dental check-ups per year and did not require the twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) dental calendar year deductible as long as employees used a BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama preferred provider. She said fillings, oral surgery, periodontics, endodontic, prosthodontics services were covered at 50 percent and employees were required to pay the twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) dental calendar year deductible. Ms. Jones said orthodontic services were covered 50 percent after the twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) dental calendar year deductible was paid and it covered dependent children under the age of nineteen (19). She said the dental annual maximum benefit was one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00). Ms. Jones said the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) required employees to provide documentation for proof of their dependents' eligibility within a specified time, if the proof requested was not submitted within the specified time period, employees would be charged from the date the health insurance should have been effective to the date it became effective. She said the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) only covered early retirees. Ms. Jones said when retirees became eligible for medicare they no longer could participate in the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP) and neither could their dependents. She said retirees' dependents could only remain on the plan as long as the retiree was eligible to participate in the plan. Ms. Jones said it was not the fault of the insurance plan if a pharmacist does not file a claim correctly or if a hospital does not confirm employees' benefits before providing a service to them. Ms. Jones said if an employee was going to have a hospital procedure, the employee needs to confirm coverage before the procedure is

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performed. She said if employees do not provide their physicians, hospitals or pharmacists with their new insurance information they would not be able to file it correctly. Ms. Jones said employees receive medical bills because their physicians do not have their new insurance information or they may have filed it wrong or there was a deductible that has not been met. She said employees would have to take charge and ask more questions. Ms. Jones said if employees were having a difficult time in resolving a claim, they could call Human Resources (HR) and they would work with them to resolve it.

Richard Cayton, Lieutenant, Sheriff's Department, addressed the Commission and said he has been an employee of Mobile County for thirty-three (33) years. He said Mobile County was a great place to work; it took care of its employees. Lieutenant Cayton said in 2013 employees were told the County's health insurance would change, but none of them expected the cost to be so expensive. He said some employees were challenged with a choice to pay their household bills or prescription drugs, and most of them chose household bills over their health. Lieutenant Cayton said employees received a pay raise in 2007 and had to absorb the cost of living increases throughout the years with the same salary. He said the cost of the employees' new health insurance equals to a deep pay-cut. Lieutenant Cayton said the Commission offered employees a five hundred dollar (\$500.00) bonus and an increase in subsistence pay. He said that offer did not touch the cost of living increase or the cost of the new health insurance plan. Lieutenant Cayton said the Commission should revert back to the County's old insurance program and give employees a pay raise. He said there were many other areas to cut in the County's budget instead of balancing it on the backs of County employees. Lieutenant Cayton named fifteen (15) cities and towns throughout Mobile County which he provided to the Commissioners as models. He said Mobile County has the worse health insurance for its employees and retirees. Lieutenant Cayton said if the County were on equal footing with those municipalities and counties, more employees could retire, and the County could hire new employees at lower salaries. He said employees could not afford to retire and pay the expensive cost of their health insurance. Lieutenant Cayton said under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program, employees could receive a 3-month supply of generic prescription drugs for about fifty dollars (\$50.00) or less. He said under the new Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP), employees receive

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only a one-month supply of generic prescription drugs and pay 20 percent each time. He said some employees were paying one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) more per year under the new health insurance plan. Lieutenant Cayton said employees are a reflection of the County Commission and unhealthy employees cannot work.

Paul Burch, Lieutenant, Sheriff's Department, addressed the Commission and said some employees' salaries do not equal the amount of their prescription drug cost. He said his employees shared a collection to help their fellow employee purchase medication. Lieutenant Burch said the Sheriff's Department was routinely losing well-trained deputies at an alarming rate. He said thousands of dollars have been invested in those deputies who have recently left because they did not see any benefits in the health insurance. Lieutenant Burch said eight (8) deputies had recently moved on to other municipalities and counties which leave thirteen (13) job openings; and job openings were becoming more and more difficult to fill. He said it is unsafe for the deputies and the citizens of Mobile County for the Sheriff's Department to operate with an inadequate personnel to police the streets. Lieutenant Burch said in the past month, he attempted to hire six (6) deputies. He said four (4) of the candidates turned down the job to go with other agencies, they said as a Mobile County Deputy Sheriff they would not be able to support their families. He said Deputy Sheriffs put their lives on the line every day dedicating themselves to the citizens of Mobile County and in addition to their job, they must work numerous side jobs just to make ends meet. Lieutenant Burch said it was not only physically taxing on employees, but it was also taxing on their families. He said retirees have faithfully served this community for most of their adult life and now are facing the reality of seeking employment because their retirement pay only covers their health insurance premiums and prescription costs. Lieutenant Burch said Mobile County's reward for years of service was to live in near poverty after retirement because of the ridiculous cost of health insurance. He said the current cost of health insurance was almost half of a retiree's pay; he said they have to take on a full-time job just to pay the insurance premiums and medication. Lieutenant Burch said it was truly sad and unacceptable. He said he prayed daily for his fellow employees who suffer from severe financial difficulties because of the new health insurance plan and their diminishing pay. Lieutenant Burch said he could not stress strong enough how the new health insurance is a bad plan. He said employees have gone almost seven (7) years without a pay increase, but their health insurance contributions and the cost of living have continued to rise. Lieutenant Burch said it has been historical that any pay increase to employees was an offset for increased health insurance contributions. He said he had been in law enforcement for over twenty-five (25) years, and he was well

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aware that local city and county governments could find the money for what they wanted. Lieutenant Burch said he hoped the Commissioners would find it in their hearts to take care of their employees. He said they were not only employees, but constituents.

President Hudson said she wanted to assure employees that they were still looking for a way to address the prescription drug cost. She said they had not said "too bad, it's the employees' problem." President Hudson said right now they have a couple of ideas in progress and were waiting for a response on some legal matters.

Pat Pyle, Retiree, Sheriff's Department, addressed the Commission and said he retired in 2001. He said under former Commissioners, employees gave up raises to keep health insurance at a low cost, but this year his health insurance has surpassed his mortgage, he said something went wrong somewhere down the line. Mr. Pyle said in the 80s, the County passed a one cent sales tax to create a Countywide paramedic service, to expand and improve the Sheriff's Department and to upgrade employees' salaries and benefits. He said the first year of the one cent sales tax the County collected forty-two million dollars (\$42,000,000.00) that was misused by the former Commissioners. Mr. Pyle said they were suppose to build a four-story annex addition to the annex which is now Government Plaza, but instead they built an eighty million dollars (\$80,000,000.00) building that currently has an atrium filled with scaffolding. He said the Commissioners could fix the problem by reviewing the budget for the mistakes the former Commissioners made and correct it. Mr. Pyle said his work at the Sheriff's Department caused him to miss his two (2) daughters' birthday celebrations, their school events and sicknesses because he was out at a crime scene. Mr. Pyle said that alone was worth something in his retirement. He said when employees health insurance surpasses their mortgage something is wrong. Mr. Pyle said he remembered when former Mobile County Sheriff Tom Purvis and he visited the Alabama House of Representatives to get a bill out of committee and he was told by the late Alabama Democratic Senator Michael Anthony Figures, that the road to hell was paved with good intentions. He said the Commission needed to act. Mr. Pyle said he uses almost half of his retirement pay for the new health insurance plan, and that was not good, but it was good he had another job.

Mr. Pyle said the Commissioners could fix the problem; no one else could do it. He said the Commissioners were forcing employees to work until they die on the job.

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Phillip Mayo, Sergeant, Sheriff's Department, addressed the Commission and asked them if they were dedicated to County employees? He said employees provide services to taxpayers and always come to work even in inclement weather. Sergeant Mayo said employees were professionals and the Commission should treat them like professionals. He said for the Commissioners to give money to parks and organizations before satisfying the needs of its employees was an atrocity. Sergeant Mayo said it appeared that the Commissioners have become detached from their employees. He said the Commissioners should look at their employees' commitment to the County compared to their commitment to employees. Sergeant Mayo said he served on the Mobile County Employees Insurance Committee which provided an ongoing review of both health insurance benefits and financial alternatives for employees. He said the committee was dissolved when its members began understanding intergovernmental relationships and infrastructure leaving employees without a voice. Sergeant Mayo said it seemed the target of the cuts was for the Commissioners to produce pet projects and giveaways at employees' expense. He said employees' health insurance has become polluted with the promises of coupons and other discount items to help employees pay for it. Sergeant Mayo said employees should not have to worry about figuring out how they would pay for medication. He said if they continue down this path the next step will be to introduce government assistance to supplement employees' income. Sergeant Mayo said employees were committed to the cause of working for the County and the Commissioners should be committed to the cause of taking care of employees. He said employees were not asking the Commissioners to give them their wants, but to take care of their needs.

Leslie Fisher, Mobile County Garage, Camp 4, addressed the Commission and said he has diabetes. He said in selecting the health insurance plan the Commissioners did not take into consideration employees who suffer from the diabetes disease. Mr. Fisher said he took multiple name brand prescription drugs, and he has done everything he could to get generic prescription drugs. He said he had three (3) prescription drugs that he had to purchase every month and the cost exceeds his monthly pay. Mr. Fisher said he cannot afford the out-of-pocket up-front expense and then wait for the reimbursement. He said he had gone two (2) months without two (2) of his medications. Mr. Fisher said not taking medication could cause a massive heart attack or loss of his sight. He said employees should not have to get on the phone, beg and plead for coupons to save money on the cost of medication. Mr. Fisher said employees work every single day to pay for health care insurance and he asked what does it cover? He said for employees who have the diabetes disease, it covers nothing.

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Mr. Fisher said the Commission has chosen whether or not employees could continue to live and how long by choosing the new health insurance plan. He said when he dies from lack of medication, his blood was on the Commissioners' hands.

Marilyn Wood, Revenue Commissioner, addressed the Commission and said December, 2013, a group meeting on the Local Government Health Insurance Program (LGHIP) was held at the License Commissioner's Office. She said employees were told they no longer needed to purchase the Southland Benefit Solutions supplemental policy because the new insurance plan covered the vision benefits. Revenue Commissioner Wood said she learned that the Local Government Health Insurance Program (LGHIP) did not offer benefits for routine vision care, but offered a Vision Care Discount Network. She said employees' vision insurance was covered under the State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB) Discount Program and not under BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama. Revenue Commissioner Wood said the Southland Benefit Solutions supplemental policy for vision benefits covered vision examinations, frames for prescription glasses, prescription lenses and prescription contact lens, but the new insurance plan did not cover it. She said the State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB) Discount Program required employees to use their network providers. Revenue Commissioner Wood said her ophthalmologist was not listed in their Vision Care Discount Network, but she had him under Southland Benefit Solutions. She said employees were told that Southland Vision Benefits would not benefit them and they would pay more premiums for nothing because vision care was covered under BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama. Revenue Commissioner Wood said which was not true, and she along with other employees cancelled Southland Benefit Solutions supplemental policy. She said employees also were not told the coverage for mental health services required employees to use State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB) network providers. Revenue Commissioner Wood said the majority of her employees were in entry level or clerical positions and could not afford the cost. She said if employees use the network under the new health insurance plan for mental health services they would have to start over and it was very harsh to require employees to retell their stories to a new psychologist or psychiatrist. Revenue Commissioner Wood said there are a lot of problems with the new health insurance plan.

President Hudson asked how was the vision coverage misunderstanding handled?

Ms. Jones said employees were told the Southland Benefit Solutions supplemental policy for vision coverage did not benefit employees who have single coverage because their premiums would exceed the benefits. She said the premium was twenty dollars (\$20.00) per month and employees would still pay an additional forty-five dollars (\$45.00)

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for the eye examination, so only a small amount would apply toward the prescription glasses or prescription contact lens.

Revenue Commissioner Wood said the Southland Benefit Solutions covered one (1) eye examination for forty dollars (\$40.00), one (1) new prescription or a replacement prescription for lenses per year up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) for single vision and seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for bifocals. She said one (1) new prescription or a replacement prescription for contact lens per year was up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for prescription contact lens, a set of frames for prescription glasses was up to sixty dollars (\$60.00). Revenue Commissioner Wood said the policy would pay for prescription glasses or prescription contact lens, but not both. She said Southland Benefit Solutions was not a network plan therefore members were able to utilize any eye care professional and receive the same level of benefits.

Ms. Jones said the Southland Benefit Solutions would only pay one hundred dollars (\$100.00) toward prescription glasses. She said her bifocals exceeded the cost of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

Tanya Campbell, Representative, State Employees Insurance Board, said under Southland Benefit Solutions individual policy, it would cost employees two hundred forty dollars (\$240.00) per year to get the coverage and the maximum benefit employees would receive was two hundred twenty-five dollars (\$225.00). She said employees that have an individual policy would pay fifteen dollars (\$15.00) more per year and get less benefits.

Revenue Commissioner Wood said under Southland Benefit Solutions she was able to continue with her same ophthalmologist who she has had for years.

Ms. Campbell said under Southland Benefit Solutions employees could use any ophthalmologist and file a claim to receive reimbursement. She said the state plan does not have network providers.

Revenue Commissioner Wood said the Southland Benefit Solutions covered benefits that employees do not receive under the State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB) Plan.

Ms. Campbell said employees were not told to not join because they would have the same benefits, but employees were told if they were an individual they would pay more in premiums than they would receive in benefits. She said there was no need to join it if employees had an individual policy, but if the policy was for two (2) or more people they should get it.

Revenue Commissioner Wood said it was with the family coverage her employees were having trouble.

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Ms. Campbell said now that employees know what plan benefits them the most, they could enroll in November with a January 1st effective date.

Revenue Commissioner Wood said employees did not initially apply for the Southland Benefit Solutions because of what they were told.

Ms. Campbell said in her opinion employees were not given misinformation because the presentation was consistent for every agency and department. She said other departments have not had those kind of concerns. Ms. Campbell said if any employee has any questions concerning the Vision Care Discount Network and Southland Benefit Solutions, they were welcome to call her office.

Sam Cochran, Mobile County Sheriff, addressed the Commission and said they have worked on employees' health insurance for several years. He said the great recession was over and surrounding cities were flourishing. Sheriff Cochran said local government needs to think out-of-the-box on its priorities concerning employees. He said employees' health insurance for single coverage has increased from fifty-four dollars (\$54.00) per month; family coverage was two hundred fifty-seven dollars (\$257.00) for three months which now has decreased to two hundred eighteen dollars (\$218.00). Sheriff Cochran said the County saved a considerable amount of money when employees' health insurance was changed from BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama to the Local Government Health Insurance Plan (LGHIP). He said some of the Commissioners should draw that money to pay for employees' health insurance deductibles. Sheriff Cochran said Mayor J. Albert McDonald in the City of Citronelle, Alabama, increased their deductible and saved so much money that Mayor McDonald proposed to pay employees health insurance deductibles. He said employees have sacrificed for several years and they no longer could do it. Sheriff Cochran said the Commission's action needs to show good faith toward employees. He said BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama drove a hard bargain, to save ten dollars (\$10.00) per month employees had only sixty (60) days to enroll in the new health insurance plan. Sheriff Cochran said Ms. Campbell did tell employees that the new insurance plan would affect their prescriptions, but this was the first time he had seen the small pamphlet handed out today providing detailed information on the new health insurance benefits which came out after enrollment deadline. He said a lot of frustration with the new health insurance arose from the way it came out which caused many of the problems. Sheriff Cochran said he wished the Commission's action would immediately help employees.

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Keith Hart, IT Department, addressed the Commission and said two (2) female employees on the eight (8th) floor told him their health insurance horror story. He said one (1) of them was lucky enough to have a doctor provide her with samples because she could not afford her prescription drugs. Mr. Hart said the other female employee decided to not take her medications. He said the new employees' health insurance was good for those who were healthy, but for those who were unhealthy they might die. Mr. Hart said employees complained also about the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program, but the new health insurance was worse. He said around year 2001 or 2002, he thought he was about to have a heart attack, but he visited some good doctors and has been doing fine. Mr. Hart said his doctor, Dr. Mary Honkanen, told him last year the way the health insurance was going, the doctors were going to kill a lot of patients, he said Dr. Honkanen made that statement when his health insurance coverage was under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program. Mr. Hart said employees need to do what beggars do during the Christmas Season, stand on street corners with a bucket and beg for money.

Catina Rudolph, James T. Strickland Youth Center, addressed the Commission and said she has been employed at the James T. Strickland Youth Center for seventeen (17) years. She said she has a son who suffers from severe chronic asthma symptoms. Ms. Rudolph said under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program she did not have to come out-of-pocket with up-front cost and in doing so the Commission was forcing employees to make dire need choices. She said under the County's old self-funded Health and Dental Plan Program, she would purchase a 90-day supply of Victoza shots for thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) and under the new health insurance plan it cost her one thousand two hundred and eight dollars (\$1,208.00) per month. Ms. Rudolph said the diabetes disease was worse than the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus because diabetes affected the organs causing loss of sight and hearing. She said it was a honor and a privilege to work for Mobile County and when employees did not get a pay raise, they had health insurance. Ms. Rudolph said the new health insurance plan forces her to choose monthly between her and her son's medical needs. She said her son's asthmatic medication was needed to protect him from an asthma attack, mold and mildew while attending Mobile County Public Schools. Ms. Rudolph said she participated in the prescription drugs discount card program, she did the Step Therapy process, she said she went from Walgreens Pharmacy to an independent pharmacy. Ms. Rudolph said some of her co-workers were suffering from cancer and were in need of knee surgery. She said employees at the James T. Strickland Youth Center protect the community from juveniles, but if employees lack their medication they would become sick and not able to work. Ms. Rudolph said employees were not asking for something they did not deserve; they are asking

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for what they have earned. She asked the Commissioners to please reconsider this new health insurance. Ms. Rudolph said she considers her father who has diabetes as her poster child; she said she did not want her children to see her sick in that way. Ms. Rudolph said she was trying, but the new plan was killing her softly, killing her son softly. She said employees at the James T. Strickland Youth Center were dedicated workers and loved their job. Ms. Rudolph said please research a little a deeper for a new health insurance plan that is affordable for all employees.

President Hudson gave thanks to County employees for sharing their concerns on the new health insurance plan. She said the Commission has heard them, their voices were loud and clear. President Hudson said the Commissioners' care and they are trying. She said they were in the process of working on the County's budget. President Hudson said everyone has a hard job and it was not easy to make decisions that affect people's lives. She said the Commissioners appreciate all County employees' work and care about them as people and as employees.

(End of synopsis)

AGENDA #2

ADJOURN

Commissioner Carl moved, seconded by Commissioner Ludgood, that the Board approve request for a motion to adjourn until August 11, 2014.

Motion carried unanimously.

Connie Hudson, President

Merceria Ludgood, Member

Jerry L. Carl, Member

ATTEST:

John Pafenbach, County Administrator