

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MINUTES
February 15th, 2018
1:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. on February 15th, 2018. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Heiney, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Zellner and County Clerk Davidson.

Agenda Discussion

- 1) Reviewed the following minutes.
 - Workshop Meeting-January 11th, 2018
 - Regular Business Meeting-January 15th, 2018
 - Planning Session-January 26th, 2018
- 2) Reviewed a Black History Month Proclamation declaring the 2018 theme to be “African Americans in Times of War”.
- 3) Reviewed a Resolution for the ACCG Lease Purchase Agreement-Motor Grader.
- 4) Reviewed a Board Appointment for the Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS) appointing Olivia Banks to fill the unexpired term of Patsy Mann.
- 5) Reviewed two surplus vehicles for the Sheriff’s Office.
 1. 2000 Ford Van-Gold VIN 8896
 2. 2005 Chevrolet Impala-Silver 7889
- 6) Reviewed Resolution 2018-04. This is for a Master Lease with United Bank and covers ten vehicles for a time frame of three years. The payment will be \$10,000.00 per year. The lease is open ended.
- 7) Reviewed Resolution 2018-05 Budget Amendment for 2017 which enables the County to have a balanced budget.
- 8) Reviewed a contract for the Provision of Indigent Defense for the Juvenile Dependency Actions in the Juvenile Court of Lamar for 2017-18 amending the contract which dissolves Bettis & Howard P.C. so that the law firm of Nedra K. Howard P.C. intends to continue to service the contract and assumes all rights and responsibilities of the law firm of Bettis & Howard, P.C.
- 9) Discussed Sunday alcohol sales and putting a referendum on the ballot. County Administrator Zellner stated that there was a petition with over 300 signatures. Commissioner Horton stated that he had heard that there are a lot of citizens against the Sunday alcohol sales. Commissioner Traylor stated that he had received emails against it as well. Chairman Glass stated that it is too close to the May primary to put it on that ballot and that November is the first reasonable ballot. Chairman Glass stated that they need to leave it on the agenda to alert the citizens about this. Chairman Glass said they can talk about it and then table it at the meeting. There is more input that is needed, and they also need to speak to the County Attorney regarding the deadline. Commissioner Horton said that they need to give the public the opportunity to make the decision. Chairman Glass stated that the board doesn’t have the right to approve Sunday alcohol sales and that all the board can do is put it on the ballot.

Chairman Glass stated that he will introduce this at the Regular Business meeting and then they can table the vote.

- 10) The board discussed the International Property Code Ordinance and County Administrator Zellner stated that County Attorney Mayfield is working on it. Chairman Glass stated that there are restrictions to the code and the only thing that changes are the technical codes. Chairman Glass stated that if the board adopts the International Property Code it gives the Code Enforcement Officer more power. The County Attorney is working on an Ordinance for Lamar County. Vice-Chairman Heiney said he would like to take pieces out of the International Property Code and apply it to what we already have. He said that this could give authority for complaints but what about the "Right of Entry". Vice-Chairman Heiney said he thought that the International Property Code is heavy handed and that this is a lot like New York and Lamar County is a rural county. County Administrator Zellner said that this protects property like with the Nipper Case. The board discussed issues such as codes for weather stripping, trash and un-mowed lawns that are all up to the judgement of the Code Enforcement Officer and the fact that currently he has nothing allowing him to enforce the code. Commissioner Horton said that they need to look at this and use whatever is necessary to help them but that they don't need to be too "Governmental" and they need to take the time to go through pieces of it. Commissioner Traylor said they need to go further and get Wimpy Vaughan to make recommendations to the board. Chairman Glass requested that it be taken from the agenda until a later date.
- 11) The board discussed the Animal Control Code and Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that there had been no changes, this is the perception by most people, and they feel that what the County currently has is adequate. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that the rescue people, pet owners and dog breeders all weighed in on this and what is in place now they feel is okay. The only issue he had was with the restrictions on picking up stray animals. Commissioner Thrash stated that if a stray animal reported is not on your property then the animal control officer can't go on someone else's property. Commissioner Traylor stated that he had a vicious dog issue with citizen and that it was resolved but that the citizen was not happy. County Administrator Zellner stated that the Animal Control Ordinance presented was restrictive, but it gives the Sheriff more power. The board decided that as far as the Animal Control Code is concerned, the recommendation is to not do anything. Chairman Glass requested that it be left on the agenda and in the Regular Business meeting the board would take no action.

Stifel Presentation

Trey Monroe with Stifel, a full-service brokerage and investment banking firm, addressed the board regarding the financing for Lamar County's facility needs. Mr. Monroe stated that the big issue is how do they pay for it. Mr. Monroe said that he looked at the last couple of financial years and the budget for 2018 and he had enough information to tell the board if this was feasible. Mr. Monroe said that from his perspective, the most critical factor is with the Local Government credit rating, which you have to have for long term financing. The credit rate determines the rate you pay whether you are building a new jail, new building or a courthouse. The board reviewed a credit profile summary which includes Adequate Economy, Strong Financial Operations and Reserves, Strong Liquidity, and Minimal General Fund Debt Burden. Mr. Monroe stated for Lamar County the tax base is stable and there is a significant taxpayer concentration. Lamar County has a structurally balanced budget and stable budgetary

flexibility with an available general fund balance at over 16 percent expenses. Lamar County stacks up well and the tax base is stable. Based on his initial study Lamar County has a high A rating and the rates run from Triple A to Triple B. The total governmental cash is at \$1.7 million or 16 percent expenses. Lamar County's capital projects are supported by Special Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenue with minimal general fund debt burden. The unemployment rates in Lamar County decreased to 6.5 percent in 2016, the lowest level since 2012 when the rate was over 12 percent. The estimated median family income for the County in 2016 was \$30,651.00 and equates to 72.7 percent of the State level and 62.2 percent of the nation level. The population of the County grew approximately 51 percent during the 35-year period from 1980 to 2016. The estimated population of the County as of 2016 was 18,469 and the top 10 taxpayers make up about 44 percent of total assessed value. These are Piedmont Green Power, Jordan Forest Products, Continental Tire Company, Southern Rivers Energy, Norfolk Southern Corp., Grain Craft, Georgia Power Company, Ingles Market Inc., Ranew's Truck and Equipment and SLR Properties. The largest employer is Gordon State College and the largest employers in the County include tire manufacturing, lumber and trucking. The ten largest employers are Gordon State College, Lamar County School District, Continental Tire, Ingles Grocery, Jordan Forest Products, Lamar County, Ranew's Enterprises, B&G Equipment, Southern Rivers and Enercon Power. Lamar County has a very good solid upward trend in growth from a credit standpoint which makes long term financing possible at an inexpensive rate. Mr. Monroe stated that there are two options to consider. In this case, 30-year bonds. Mr. Monroe said that the County can issue revenue bonds through the Public Facilities Authority that was created last year. Mr. Monroe explained that the County would enter into an Intergovernmental Contract with that Authority, and the Authority would then issue the Bonds and delivery the proceeds from the bonds to the County and then the County would build the project. The County would then make payments to the Authority to service the debt. The other option would be to have a referendum that is put out to the voters on one of the upcoming elections. Commissioner Thrash asked if Stiffel had every worked with an Authority and Mr. Monroe replied that it is used all over the State and that they probably do from 35 to 50 transactions a year in Georgia and probably 50 to 75 percent use the Authority structure. Commissioner Thrash inquired about the interest rate and the difference they have seen. Mr. Monroe stated that with a County that is rated where he believes that Lamar would be rated, the County is looking at a difference between the Authority and a voter referendum route of maybe 5 to 10 basis points, which means .05 to .1 percent. If the rate is 3 percent with a voted general obligation bond it might be 3.05 or 3.1 and there really is no difference. Commissioner Thrash stated that with a 30-million-dollar project this can add up. Mr. Monroe said that on the top end with 10 basis points on a 10-million-dollar project it would be \$10,000.00 for 30 years. Mr. Monroe stated that some voted referendum counties are sometimes conscious of the fact that if you hold an election and it does not pass you have a one-year moratorium where you can't use the Authority. If you were going to do some type of lease purchase through ACCG there is a 4-year waiting period. On a project this size, the average debt life is 20 years. If the project generates revenue, it will capitalize. If it doesn't capitalize interest or defer principle on a 10-million-dollar facility it will cost \$573,00.00 a year. On a 15-million-dollar facility the average cost is \$850,000 per year. Mr. Monroe said he studied the 2016 audit and the 2017 unaudited numbers for 2017 and the budget for 2018. For the 2016 unaudited budget, it was a good year the County collected about 99 percent of the revenue that was budgeted. The County spent about 95 percent of the budget and you ended up with a \$450,000.00 surplus. Mr. Monroe

stated that there was a fair amount of capital outlay in 2016. Mr. Monroe said that generally all the capital outlay that you fund from the General Fund, on a year to year basis, is going to be roads, bridges, and Public Works type of work. If building a facility in the near future is something that the board wants, there is nothing from preventing from re-organizing and shifting a little bit of Capital Outlay expense to the SPLOST Fund and making room in the General Fund budget to service the debt on a new facility. At this point, the debt service is gone where you shifted that Capital Outlay. Mr. Monroe said to get a better sense of the trend, he did the same type of analysis for 2017, at least what is on paper, and realizes that the audit for 2017 has to be completed, but it looks a lot like 2016. Mr. Monroe stated that it appears that the County collected 99 percent of the revenue and spent about 95 percent of the budget which would suggest that there is going to be another \$450,000.00 surplus. In 2017, there was nearly as much Capital Outlay allocated as in 2016 to the General Fund. but they did the same analysis and had that Capital Outlay and debt service of \$200,000.00 been paid from the SPLOST fund and eliminated this would have left the County with around \$750,000.00 which would have comfortably funded a 10-million-dollar project. Based on the budget for 2018, the numbers are similar. Mr. Monroe said there is an anomaly with the SPLOST money being transferred in and used to pay the debt service and there are projects designated for the excess SPLOST money. Mr. Monroe stated if the trends hold, where you collect pretty close to what you think from a revenue perspective, which is about 9.6 million, the County should be looking at another healthy surplus in 2018. Mr. Monroe said that budgets are living documents and they tend to change but the potential is there where you feel comfortable looking at a 10-million-dollar facility. Mr. Monroe broke down how much, in terms of a jail, the County is spending on maintenance and utilities at that facility and found out that the number was \$100,000.00 to \$135,000.00 a year and that was just for the jail. On the Courthouse, you are not spending that much but it is probably another \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00. If you look at the overall footprint on the building, you are probably in the neighborhood of ¼ million to ¾ of a million on maintenance and utilities. Mr. Monroe stated that he had done some energy audit efficiencies for some counties and the most recent one he did was for Glynn County. They were looking at 80 buildings with water, sewer, natural gas and electricity. They were able to reduce their cost in most of the buildings by 30 to 40 percent. They were able to obtain new windows and a central system that controls and manages heating and air. They were able to get things as simple as a new toilet that saves a half gallon of water rather than a gallon of water when flushed. County Administrator Zellner stated that Lamar County went through an Energy Audit with Mallory and Evans and they found out that it would cost 3 million dollars just to bring it up to code. Mr. Monroe stated that if you went with this type of company, that saves you money, you might be able to save 20 to 30 percent in terms of what it is costing the County. Mr. Monroe stated that with Lamar County and with Stiffel the projected cost is \$573,000 a year on a 10-million-dollar project and the borrowing cost would be between 3.45 to 4.00 percent for a 30-year fixed rate financing. Mr. Monroe stated that his analysis shows that there could be three federal fund rate hikes in the year 2018. Mr. Monroe showed the board a Tax-Exempt Bond Index on a 30-year rate and said that the good news is that the long-term rate is not moving up nearly as fast as the short-term rate. Mr. Monroe said that there hasn't been a lot of supply of municipal bonds. Mr. Monroe stated that his goal was to look at what is possible under the current budget and what is feasible without increasing the millage to fund something and it looks like from the data that was presented that a 10 million project is

comfortable. For a 15 million project, adjustments would have to be made but it is not out of the realm of possibility.

Commissioner Traylor asked Mr. Monroe a question. He said, "When you look at people buying a house and they have so much credit card debt and the credit card debt out ways the 17 percent they are paying versus buying a car or a house at 3.5 percent. How can you factor that in versus interest that you pay on a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) and money going out versus the County's ability to go in on another building?"

Mr. Monroe continued by saying that the TAN is really a cash flow measurement tool. Most of the revenues come in between November and February. That splits your fiscal year. On a calendar year basis, you are getting the bulk of your revenue in a very short period of time and that money has to support your entire General Fund until the next tax year. Since you have a pretty hefty fund balance, at the end of your audit year, you are not having to draw on that TAN until a good way through your fiscal year. From a cost perspective, having that cash flow tool it is probably very inexpensive. If you add the cost of a new building, we would set that up around the time that you are flushed with cash. As you continue to have surpluses, the need to draw on the TAN is going to be less and less.

Chairman Glass stated that he thought that this was good news and he thought that there was no way the County could afford a new jail. Chairman Glass stated that he spoke to Sheriff White about a referendum and getting a bond to build the new jail and asked him if he would support it. Chairman Glass stated that Sheriff White said he would.

Vice-Chairman Heiney inquired about would they would do with the old jail and Chairman Glass said they could tear it down, but he hadn't thought that far ahead. Vice-Chairman Heiney inquired about the cost to shut the jail down. Chairman Glass and members of the board stated that they had not discussed this but they all acknowledged that there would be some cost to this.

Commissioner Horton stated that he thought that there was discussion about the Animal Shelter going in the old jail and County Administrator Zellner said that he thought that the new parking lot would go there.

Mr. Monroe said that the current jail cost about a million dollars to operate. This includes salaries, insurance, medical, meals and all the other stuff. If there are efficiencies to be gained, if you get to the actual drawing stage, and you have 15 people and you only need 10 people then that is cost effective.

Chairman Glass admitted that he thought that this was going to be a waste of time and you would have to raise the millage rate a good bit. Commissioner Thrash said that the numbers are very impressive. Chairman Glass attributed the work to the staff. Chairman Glass said that nothing could be done right away but that they didn't need to sit around and let this go. Chairman Glass stated that they need to work on building their set up questions and try to get back with Stiffel in a couple of weeks. Chairman Glass stated that 10 to 15 million is the gross estimate for a new Jail and that the Courthouse is their second priority. The Administration

Building is inefficient to operate. County Administrator Zellner stated that the Administration Building is sinking and explained about various issues with the Administration building. Chairman Glass stated that one of things to think about long term is if they commit to this what impact does it have on the other buildings and in thirty years what is the next priority. Chairman Glass stated that they need to look at 20-year plans on building and how does the County get there. County Administrator Zellner stated that the goal is to bring all the offices into one building and to have for the customers a one stop shop where you don't have to go all over the County if you need something.

Mr. Monroe concluded by saying this is the 30 ft. view and a lot has to happen. If this is something that the board is going to put towards a referendum the decision needs to be made in the summer time, if you are putting it on the referendum in November. It takes a long time for this to come together and the markets and rates change. Thinking in terms of numbers this big, for every .25 percent it adds or subtracts \$25,000.00. So, to Commissioner Traylor's point about how does it impact the TAN, he would say that if you know the facility is needed and you believe the cost to do it two years from now is going to be a lot more than it is today, you could have a 10 million TAN for the cost that you would pay to see a 25-point basis shift and interest rates for a long term fixed financing.

Legislative Report from Commissioner Thrash

Commissioner Thrash reported that the biggest issue is the Tax Commissioner updates. This is part of the DRIVES initiative and it is very clear that this legislation is going to pass. It has bipartisan support. ACCG President Allen Poole and Legislative Director Client Mueller met with Governor Deal last week. They are not going to extend any funds for this and it is going to be mandated, implemented and it is going to be left on the counties to pay for it.

Chairman Glass stated that with this new system it will cover tags, titles, and the title ad valorem tax (TAVT). Ninety seven percent of the title fee goes to the State, three percent is kept locally for helping with the cost of collecting it, ninety five percent of the tag fee goes to the State, five percent is kept locally, half of the TAVT goes to the State and the other half is shared amongst the locals. The School Board gets half of that half, twenty five percent and twenty five percent and another 25 percent gets spread between the County and the Cities. Then the County gets another 20 percent. Commissioner Thrash pointed out that this is probably going to be reduced as the years go on. Chairman Glass said for the 25 percent of the total revenue that is collected with this system the County is having to fund it all. Chairman Glass went on to say that the Administration Department is in the process of getting an equipment estimate from Blane Cauthen and there is also a new internet service requirement. A specific internet band width is required which means optic fiber has to be laid at the Tax Commissioners Office. The good news is that Spectrum is going to service this area. The cost is about \$16,000.00 to run the fiber. This is not going to be cheap and it is supposed to happen in September of this year. It is not in the 2018 budget and the legislators or the Governor is not listening to the concerns. Commissioner Horton said that this is even more of a reason for everyone to be under one building one day. Commissioner Horton stated that they made need to think about moving the Tax Commissioners office. Commissioner Traylor asked if they could get service for them somewhere else in the County. Commissioner Traylor suggested the

old Ingles building. Chairman Glass pointed out that Sheriff White had to get a special line laid out there to service the Sheriff's Office. County Administrator Zellner mentioned the Upson Health Facility and inquired about what internet service they are using. Commissioner Traylor stated that the school system has internet service in that same area and that is why he mentioned the old Ingles building. He heard that Ingles had been donating property in other areas for grant projects and other things. County Administrator Zellner stated that this is another reason for consolidating all of the offices. County Administrator Zellner stated that parking is an issue at the old Ingles building. Chairman Glass stated that he emailed the Governor and the Legislators and the only response he received was from Representative Johnny Caldwell and he said he would do what he could. The rest of the Legislators didn't reply. Chairman Glass inquired about movement on the TAVT distribution formulas. Commissioner Thrash said that nothing is going to happen with this until the State gets a new Governor. Commissioner Thrash stated that it is on an escalating scale and the dollar amounts will climb because the State wants the revenue. Commissioner Thrash stated that the evaluation on the timber land is not going to happen and they will look at it again in about 2020 but for now it is off the table. Commissioner Thrash said that this is a good thing because this was going to be an expenditure for the County. Commissioner Thrash reported that there will be an increase in 911 fees in 2018. The increase will be from fifty cents to a dollar seventy-five. Chairman Glass stated that this will not cover the County's cost. Chairman Glass said that he hoped there would be some equipment and technology updates. Commissioner Thrash encouraged the board to go and sit with the 911 operators. Commissioner Thrash reported that Sheriff White has re-done his staffing because at one time one employee was answering the 911 calls, domestic calls and the Sheriff's Office calls. This was a one man show and, in a County our size, one person can't handle that. County Administrator Zellner stated that he wished the Commissioners would take the 911 Center over. Commissioner Thrash stated that this could be done if they can get this bundled and have one size fits all, but she hasn't looked at the numbers specifically and she hopes that the numbers in 2018 will come closer to covering the 911 cost. County Administrator Zellner said that the Georgia County Managers Association GCMA has a newsletter and an article on a company about surveying 911 fees in counties in Georgia which led him to make a phone call regarding this. This pertains to the 911 fees not going to the County that you live in and this company does a survey to find out how much money the County is losing. After their audit is complete, they get them to reimburse the County and the Cities. County Administrator Zellner stated that he wants them to do an audit for Lamar County. Commissioner Thrash stated that several of her Washington trips payed off because the President of the United States has earmarked 80 million dollars for rural broadband for rural counties. She said that she talked to Congressman Drew Ferguson making sure that Lamar County is going to get some of that money. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that he heard that 16 percent of rural communities are without adequate internet. Chairman Glass stated that if you service one household for that census block you get credit for that census. Especially in rural areas since the blocks are very large. One area on the Census block may be serviced, and the other 98 percent of the households may not have any service at all. The whole Census block is considered serviced. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that the Federal Government was going to setup a funding mechanism for companies like AT&T and others where they can get Grants to set the infrastructure up. Commissioner Thrash stated that this is where the holdup has been because they didn't want to lay the fiber optic in rural areas. This is what the Trump Administration is looking at and helping the vendors to lay the fiber optic in rural areas.

Chairman Glass stated that Capital Days is February 28th and March 7th at the Capital and you don't have to wait until this day to talk to the Legislators. You can call, text or email them.

Agenda Discussion

Chairman Glass inquired about a variance request in the Aldora Village and County Administrator Zellner stated that it was denied by the Planning Commission. This had to do with houses to be given away for \$2,000.00 but the drawback is that you have to pay to have them moved.

County Administrator reported that Building and Zoning Director Gunter is seeking individuals who are interested in being on the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Only three people had volunteered, and 8 people are needed from each district. Chairman Glass stated that input and buy-in was needed from the Community.

Public Comments

Karl Heidbrink of 588 Hwy 36 West address the board and said that he is fascinated by Commissioner Horton's comment that the old jail would make a fascinating Animal Shelter. Karl Heidrick said that as a County you need to look at the risk ahead of you and if this Animal Shelter gets built and then they say the County agreed to build it now you have to pay for the maintenance and the upkeep. The number is bigger than for building a new jail. Mr. Heidbrink wanted to know if there was any way for the County to cover that liability. He requested that an Ordinance or something be put into place saying that they wouldn't pay anymore for this. Chairman Glass stated that a budget process is in place every year and this would be a part of the budget. Mr. Heidbrink said that the people may say you paid for the Animal Shelter and now you have to pay to keep it running. Chairman Glass stated to Mr. Heidbrink that this is money that will not be spent right now. This would be a new line item for the budget and new items fall back on the Tax Payer as a millage rate increase and any money spent for the Animal Shelter would have to be carved out of a millage rate increase. Mr. Heidbrink stated that you have salaries to think about and its big bucks. Mr. Heidbrink said he didn't have a recommendation just too many questions and not enough answers. Chairman Glass said that the operational cost has been one of his concerns from the very beginning and it worries him a lot.

Julia Heidbrink addressed the board and said that if "Joe Blow" had a stray dog in his yard that is bothering his pets and they call Animal Control, by the time Animal Control gets to that house the dog has gone on to another yard. This now means that Animal Control can't pick up the dog because he is no longer in that yard and is on private property somewhere else. County Administrator Zellner stated that this was one of the contentions with the Animal Control draft saying that Animal Control can't come on someone else's property. Mrs. Heidbrink said that rather than having an Animal Control Officer with more power than the Sheriff has, to just go anywhere, would it not be possible or feasible for the Animal Control Officer to just go next door and knock on the door and tell that person that there has been a

complaint on the dog and say I can't pick him up because I need your permission and he is in your yard and if he is your dog can you please pick him up. He could ask for permission to pick up the dog and take him to the Animal Shelter. Then he isn't going onto someone's property and picking up a dog without permission. Chairman Glass responded that this is possible, but it will take more time to work this out because the dog may even go over to the next yard. Mrs. Heidbrink said that her dogs are in a fence and contained and she has an electric wire on top of the fence where they can't get out. Mrs. Heidbrink said that the public needs to learn that if they are going to open the door and let their dog out that they need to either have it on a leash or have a fence of some kind. Mrs. Heidbrink said that maybe it's an educational kind of thing and she would be glad to help folks because she has had animals all of her life. Mrs. Heidbrink said that she knows that sometimes dogs will pack up and do damage as a pack when they would never do anything when they are in their own yard playing with kids. They are perfectly gentle. Mrs. Heidbrink said that the Animal Control Officer could spend a few minutes to try and get that dog and take him in.

Commissioner Traylor pointed out that the County had 10 animal bites last month which was the highest ever and 2 tested positive for rabies in Lamar County. The Board of Health voted to put this news in the paper. These cases were in the High Falls area of Liberty Trace and two were stray dogs that were picked up and ended up biting the person that picked them up and kept them. Chairman Glass explained that a dog that bites someone is a dangerous/vicious animal and will be picked up for safety purposes. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that the biggest worry is the rabies and that means we have a growing problem with wild life first with either racoons, skunks, fox or coyotes. Mrs. Heidbrink said that dogs can get in a scuffle with another dog that is not vaccinated, and that is a problem.

Ashley Giles of 495 Abbott Road addressed the board and said that people need to stop picking up stray animals. Commissioner Traylor stated that he received a call asking if they could shoot an animal. Mrs. Heidbrink said that she thought that this was not illegal. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that if it is on your property it is not. Commissioner Horton stated that this rule is already in place. Mrs. Heidbrink said that this is in the Ordinance that is in place now for Lamar County. County Administrator Zellner stated that we don't pick up strays unless it is on that person's property that is making the complaint.

Mrs. Heidbrink asked if dogs that are tied up on the side of the road could be picked up by Animal Control. County Administrator Zellner said because we own the right of way they can be picked up. Commissioner Thrash said but if they are injured Animal Control will not pick them up. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that the way the Animal Control can be fortified now is by adopting some parts of the Georgia Code. Vice-Chairman Heiney suggested that they go through it and pick pieces out of the Georgia Code that are satisfactory to the residents of Lamar County. County Administrator Zellner said that they enforce the State Code now. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that he was under the impression that you could enforce it but if it is adopted as a Local Ordinance then that has more teeth for the Animal Control Officer than the State Ordinance. Commissioner Thrash said that the State Ordinance takes precedence over the Local Ordinance. County Administrator Zellner agreed but said that the State Ordinance is really broad, and it needs to be fine tweaked in local areas for our jurisdiction. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that this will give the Animal Control Officer more leeway and more enforcement

powers. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that a citizens committee needs to be formed to review the State code. Mrs. Heidbrink said that she would be glad to be on this committee. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that those as a rescuer, a breeder, a pet owner may have different ideas. Mrs. Heidbrink said the Animal Control Officer needs to be able to pick up a stray dog then give that person or the owner a certain length of time to go in there and get their animal and if they don't they forfeit the animal. Ms. Giles stated that they need to add non-animal owners to this committee. Mrs. Heidbrink said that Fred Morris's focus is only on the Animal Shelter and he is not worried about what is going on now. Mrs. Heidbrink said that Mr. Morris just wants to save all the animals. Mrs. Heidbrink said that if you try to save all the animals it cost a lot of money. Mrs. Heidbrink said that she spends about \$400.00 a month on her animals feeding them. Chairman Glass said that a new committee needs to be formed with a new task to specifically look at pieces of the State Code and what needs to be folded into the County Code. County Administrator Zellner stated that the State Code looks at the protection with definitions and license for kennels. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that the State Code also relates to other conditions for the dog, such as food, shelter and safety. Commissioner Horton stated that the County needs to put something in place so that the County is not responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Animal Shelter.

Round Table

Commissioner Traylor said that on Tuesday, February 27th at 1:30 p.m. there will be a ground breaking for the new school in front of the Lamar County High School. The board should receive an email about this soon. They are inviting all the previous School Board members as well as previous Superintendents. The Department of Health is working really hard to get ready to go for an accreditation in August. The Lamar County Health Fair is February 22nd from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Lamar County College and Career Academy. Public Works has been taking down the trees at the site of the future Health Department Building and County Health Nurse Manager Sherry Farr is very excited about this. Commissioner Traylor said that Mrs. Farr requested that everyone know, including the contractors, that if they are coming on the site of the Health Department, that they are in a no-smoke zone. Chairman Glass said that a ground-breaking ceremony needs to be planned. County Administrator Zellner stated that he spoke with village photography about a sign for the future home of the Lamar County Health Department. County Administrator Zellner stated that he is going to meet with people at the Flour Mill concerning the cross drains on Industrial Road. Commissioner Traylor thanked Chairman Glass and Commissioner Thrash for attending the Lamar County Choosing Healthy Activities & Promoting Safety (C.H.A.M.P.S.) graduation. Commissioner Traylor said that he met with Steven Jones last week, who represents the Guthrie family that is located on Hwy 36 where the old fair ground is located besides T.J. Outfitters, and said that they are looking at sub dividing the lot because they need car access from Midway Road. Commissioner Traylor stated that the property is zoned M2 commercial. Chairman Glass asked if they need M2 zoning when it's just cars coming in and out. Commissioner Traylor said that the speculation is that if they sell it, to whoever they decide to that they still give them truck access from Hwy 36. Basically, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) will not give them access from Hwy 36. Commissioner Traylor said that Dollar General is looking to go on Hwy 36 and there are about three different properties that will be affected. This property is currently M2 zoning and they want to split it and leave it M2. Chairman Glass said that if they leave it as M2 zoning

and then you say that it is car only access that is hard to enforce, especially further down the road. Ten years from now who is going to remember. County Administrator Zellner stated that he didn't think that they wanted to go to M2 zoning. Chairman Glass stated that if it is retail it will have to be re-zoned. Commissioner Traylor stated that right now they want access to it to make it more attractive and they can't sell it because there is no access to it. There is an entrance to it now, but it is gated off.

Commissioner Horton stated that he had been invited to a Community Forum, Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at the E.P Roberts center.

Chairman Glass stated that they had discussed a blighted property Ordinance at one time and wanted to know if they needed to bring this to the table. The legislator had proposed a few years ago, putting a tax penalty on blighted property. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that he was against this at one time but now he may be for it because at some point it becomes ridiculous. Some places are collapsing. Chairman Glass said that this can be Code Enforcement type issues and those can be fined \$50.00 to \$100.00 per day for non-compliance. Chairman Glass stated that the issue with the Nipper property was that the title was screwed up and it would have taken forever to do anything. Chairman Glass said they had to go through the judge to try to access the title. Chairman Glass stated that he wasn't saying that it needed to be brought up, but they talked about this before and agreed that it be tabled again for a while.

Chairman Glass inquired about the road striping priorities list from each board member and County Administrator Zellner stated that he has a road striping priority list from each board member.

Chairman Glass stated that at the last meeting they had a request to maintain voice recordings of the meetings and currently once we transcribed the meeting from the recording and approve the minutes they can be recorded over needed. Chairman Glass stated that storage space is needed on the Secure Digital (SD) card. The recommendation was that the County maintain recordings forever. Chairman Glass stated that there is no legal requirement for this. He said that they could keep them if they wanted too but they not required too. Commissioner Thrash said that this is additional expense for the County and that once the recording is transcribed directly from the recording the minutes are approved. Commissioner Thrash stated that she doesn't see the need for the extra expense for having a climate control room to store the recordings. Commissioner Thrash said her answer is no, the recordings should not be kept forever. Commissioner Thrash stated that all of the Board of Commissioners review the minutes before they are approved. Chairman Glass asked if there was a desire to add this to the agenda and the board agreed that there was not.

Chairman Glass requested that they go into executive session for a legal issue. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to adjourn the workshop to go into executive session at 3:02 p.m. Vice-Chairman Heiney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The board came out of executive session at 3:16 p.m. and reconvened the workshop meeting.

Chairman Glass reported that the I-75 Central Georgia Coalition met last week. The Coalition is setup as a 501C-6 and that is for a nonprofit government organized type entity. The bylaws

stated that by default the Chief Elected Official of each County and the Mayor of each County seat along the corridor is a member of the board. To participate you have to pay \$500.00. For a business you have to pay \$2,000.00. Chairman Glass said that the idea is to promote economic development and transportation along the corridor as a region and together they have a better voice for Lamar County rather than individually going up there and talking to the Georgia Department of Transportation or the Economic Development folks. Once you get to a point where anything is in motion, it gets turned back over to the locals to handle. So, with an economic development project, and they get attracted from the South side of Atlanta, and they end up in Lamar County, then they have the option to take the lead on it. If they end up in Monroe County, then their Industrial Development Authority (IDA) person will take the lead on it. Chairman Glass said that the Coalition is not interested in developing anything, they are just trying to put a presence together and get some leverage from each other. We don't have a lot of parks or recreational areas, but there are a lot of lakes up and down the roads, a lot of parks, golf courses and streams and it is up to the board to put a package together and say don't look at just Lamar County but look at this region. If they don't come to Lamar County, there is still the potential for new jobs and hiring folks out of Lamar County. We need to commit to \$500.00 to do this. Commissioner Thrash stated that if they have the option to withdraw then it is worth the investment. Chairman Glass said that as he gets emails on this subject he will pass them on to the board.

Commissioner Horton stated that there are plans to build a Highway from LaGrange because of the Kia plant. Chairman Glass reported that there is a probability of having truck only lanes from I-16 to I-75 to I-285.

Commissioner Horton made a motion to adjourn the workshop at 3:25 p.m. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Bennie Horton, Vice-Chairman

Robert Heiney, Commissioner

Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk