

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Work Session Minutes
May 5th, 2017
9:00 A.M

I. Call to Order

Chairman Charles Glass called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Present for the meeting was Vice-Chairman Horton, Commissioner Heiney, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Zellner, and County Clerk Davidson. County Attorney Mayfield was absent for the meeting.

II. Strategic Plan and Progress to Date

County Administrator Zellner presented to the board the 2017 Lamar County Strategic Plan. The plan is based on a period of 3 to 10 years. The presentation consisted of the following.

1. Direction

- Reduce dependence on TAN
- Comprehensive Plan
- Development Standards
- Animal Control
- Public Facilities
- SPLOST Projects
- Recreation Facilities and Programs
- Attracting Industry
- Fire and Ambulance

2. Narrowed Down

- Achieve Financial Stability
- Create “Good” Live/Work Community
- Lower the Cost of Government
- New Facilities

3. Financial Stability

- Time Frame – 5 to 7 years
- Who – Commissioners/Administrator
- Resources
 1. Finance Director
 2. Tax Commissioner
 3. Tax Assessor
 4. Consultant
 5. It Director

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed handling revenue and expenses with the goal being to keep expenditures down and revenues up. Chairman Glass noted that there are external forces such as the reduction in Title Ad Valorem Taxes (TAVT), Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) and Special Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) that contribute to loss of revenues. Chairman Glass also said that revenue forecasts are based on history and there is a need for better information from the State level. There was discussion on identification of revenues that aren't being tapped into such as Right-Of Way, Utility and Permit fees. County Administrator Zellner stated that he is working on a Fee System Ordinance that should be ready mid-summer time.

4. **TAN**

- How are we going to reduce the dependency or do away with it
- Building a Fund Balance for Unforeseen Expenses
- Doing all of this without increasing and possibly reducing Taxes

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed the water system improvement project swap with the City of Barnesville and Lamar County regarding monies owed from SPLOST. Chairman Glass said that there could \$500,000.00 that is owed to the City of Barnesville that could go towards to the Library Building. Chairman Glass stated that he would get with former Chairman Matthews to discuss this issue.

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed acquiring equipment through lease payments and the fact that this is not debt but rather an expense that increases the budget. County Administrator Zellner said that lease payments for two fire trucks, a chip spreader and a roller had been paid off but that there are new lease payments going towards the Public Works facility, a motorgrader and the purchase of a dump truck, that is in process. County Administrator Zellner said, "While lease purchases are good, the impact of the budget is getting smaller and there is a need for contingency funds for unexpected purchases."

5. **Create "Good" Live/Work Community**

- Time Frame – 5 to 7 years
- Who
 1. Elected Officials
 2. Appointed Officials
 3. Public Safety Employees – Fire Chief
- Resources – Comprehensive Plan

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed the resources involved with a Comprehensive Plan and a Land Use Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the basic foundation for local planning and is intended to provide a balanced guide for the development and the controlled growth of the county through the year 2029. The board discussed the fact that Lamar County is a Bed and Breakfast community and that job growth is scarce. The board discussed the fact that the needs of retired citizens are

different as opposed to the millennial aged groups living in Lamar County. Currently those that live in Lamar County work in either the education, medical or government field. Chairman Glass pointed out that those citizens who were raised in Lamar County have the same thought process and tend to not work for a Bio-Tech or Software company unless they commute. The board discussed their duty as an elected body to identify the needs of the citizens and the opportunities associated with changing the culture of the community.

6. **Lower Cost of Government – Per Capita Create Measurement Tool**

- Time Frame – 2 years
- Who
 1. Administrator
 2. Sheriff
 3. IT Director
 4. Constitutional Officers
- Resources
 1. Carl Vinson Institute of Government
 2. Existing Service Delivery Agreement

III. Public Facilities

- Identify Building Needs
- Determine if Repair old Buildings or Build new
- Do we continue to be spread out or do we consolidate?
- Off Site Record Storage

County Administrator Zellner announced that HB 559 passed the house and the senate for the purpose of creating the Lamar County Public Facilities Authority.

1. **Energy Audit Upgrade**

1. Base Project: \$848,000 Administration Bldg.

- Administration Bldg.
- Service Center
- Accountability Court

2. Sheriff/Detention Center: \$463,637

3. Courthouse: \$1,356,280

4. Security/All Bldgs.: \$133,691

5. Internet/LAN/Fiber: \$295,936

Total: \$3,097,972

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed the pros and cons of building a new building or repairing the existing offices based on the results from the Energy Audit Study. The Lamar County Courthouse was built in 1931 and County Administrator Zellner shared pictures of rotted windows, painted and locked windows, so that they don't fall out of the building, faulty wiring, leaks in the roof line, cracked concrete from settling and water drainage issues.

2. **New Facility**

1. Facility Design

- Courthouse/Administration
- Jail
- 911 Center/EMA

2. Facility Finance

- Facility Authority
- Public/Private-P3 – Stifle Merchant Capital
- General Obligation Bond

County Administrator Zellner presented the above aspects for building a new facility.

The architectural team from Goodwyn Cawood and Mills met with the Department Heads and Constitutional Officers and interviews were conducted to determine current requirements and future needs. A questionnaire was issued prior to the interviews to establish the employee needs. Questions regarding the number of private offices, size of offices, lobby and visitor needs, conference and meeting room requirements, storage and filing space, work room access with special equipment such as copiers, fax machines and breakrooms were included on the survey. The information collected will be utilized to prepare overall programming documents to summarize findings and make recommendations for facility requirements. County Administrator Zellner explained that the location of the building will be next to the Sheriff's Office and the current Arena. The Arena will be moved out on Grove Street behind the Public Works facility once the last activity at the arena is finished, which should be after September of 2017. The new Animal Shelter will be built next to the new facility and the walking trails that was part of the Agricultural Authority (which has been disbanded) will remain untouched. Chairman Glass stated that the Sheriff is not interested in getting the inmates involved in maintaining the Animal Shelter because it is too far from the current jail. There was also discussion from the board about using the old jail as the Animal Shelter once a new jail is built.

3. **Comprehensive Plan**

- Review and make more restrictive
- Review and make less restrictive
- Make Lamar County more attractive for Industry and Higher Income Residents to improve our Tax Base
- Entertainment – Quality of Life
- Reduce the chance of getting what other counties won't allow
- What can we do to keep our Children in Lamar County

4. **Benefits of Planning & Quality Growth**

- Comp Planning is an important Management tool for promoting a strong, healthy community
- Can be used to promote orderly and rational development so that the county remains physically attractive while preserving important natural or historic resources
- Helps the county invest its money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, water & sewer, schools, parks and green space, and other facilities needed to sustain the high quality of life

County Administrator Zellner said that it will cost 10 to 20 million dollars to build a new facility and the longer you wait the more money it will cost. County Administrator Zellner went on to say that the flipside to building a new facility is the issue with what to do with the Courthouse. He said that you could give it to the City of Barnesville to use as City Hall or renovate the building as a Welcome Center for the Barnesville Lamar County Chamber of Commerce. You could also give it to the Old Jail Museum.

Commissioner Heiney stated that the board needs to consider the economic condition of the United States because it is not good and we are due for another recession. The Lamar County School Board went up 2 mills for debt service and there was no Public Hearing held. Commissioner Heiney said that it is easier to justify a park rather than new county offices but based on the energy cost study it was determined that we need a new facility. The issue is whether or not to upgrade the existing courthouse and how much more efficient can you be. You could also sell the Administration Building and pay off the debt. Vice-Chairman Horton said that they should consider the energy audit study and the savings cost verses building a new facility. County Administrator Zellner stated that the next step for the board is to understand the options and to proceed with a plan. County Administrator Zellner explained that there were tradeoffs with the information that they had received from the energy audit study. Chairman Glass stated that there are 15 different air conditioning systems on the courthouse and that 3 to 4 units have had to be replaced or repaired in recent years and that there are also different brands with no centralized control system.

5. **What can happen if we don't plan?**

- Sprawling development
- Incompatible land use adjacent to each other
- No sense of "place"
- Deteriorating quality of life
- Disconnecting development
- Government "chasing" development with infrastructure
- Traffic congestion
- Damage to environmental and natural resources

The most critical thing that happens if you don't plan is that you and your citizens have little say in how the county grows, changes and develops

6. **Trends & Research**

- New research out of the University of Georgia: consistently following a county long-range plan leads to an expected 17% increase in employment over 5 years.
- Look at the Comprehensive Plan
- Budget through the Comprehensive Plan
- Create from what we want to “look” like

IV. Plans for Industrial Road Upgrade

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed the issues with Industrial Road. Currently, trucks are using Fellowship Road and the trucks have to swing wide to get onto Industrial Road. Trucks are backed up on both sides of the road waiting to go into Jordan Lumber. Once the trucks are loaded, they pull off onto the sides of the road to cover their loads before delivery. This process is tearing up Industrial Road. The cost estimate to repair Industrial Road and the monies received from the 2017 and 2018 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) are listed below. The board plans to meet with the Georgia Department of Transportation on May 17th, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. in Atlanta.

1. Industrial Rd Cost Estimate

• Cost Estimate	\$1,669,859.30
• 2017 LMIG	\$ 368,317.41
• 2018 LMIG	\$ 375,000.00 EST.
• 2011 SPLOST	\$ 426,542.00
Balance Needed	\$ 500,000.00

County Administrator Zellner and the board discussed the feasibility of constructing a new route and the cost associated with moving the right of way and the issues with power lines. The board discussed the possibility of purchasing land on Old Milner Road belonging to Dee Kitchings and property on Grove Street belonging to the Edwards family estate. Chairman Glass stated that Jordon Lumber could save money if they came down Cannafax Road to Hwy 18 but some changes would be necessary to move the road. There is a power line that would have to be moved. County Administrator Zellner said that the board has to commit two years of LMIG money for improvements to be made to Industrial Road. The board also discussed using triple treat as a stop gap measurement for other road projects that are going to have to wait because of having to use the LMIG money for the Industrial Road project. Industrial Road has increased issues because all of the industries, Solid Waste, the Flour Mill, Jordan Lumber, Intercon and Rayonier, have heavy truck traffic on the road. County Administrator Zellner stated that you have to have progressive planning because of what can happen if you don't plan 10 years down the road. The board continued discussion regarding closing Fellowship Road because of the heavy truck traffic and creating a new road. In conclusion, the board

agreed that several factors would have to be considered including acquiring property from several land owners, moving a grave yard, and moving power lines.

Chairman Glass announced that students can do an apprenticeship with Jordon Lumber who is partnering with Gordon College, Southern Crescent and the College and Career Academy.

Commissioner Heiney made a motion to recess the meeting for lunch at approximately 12:00 p.m. and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reconvened the meeting around 1:00 and proceeded with the work session.

V. Road Paving Plans

1. Road Priority

- New Road Standards
- New Road Paving List
- LMIG Projects
- Surface Treatment List

2. Road Planning

- Acquire the proper amount of Right of Way
- Paving length – Complete road or portion
- Putting down the proper base
- Removal & replacing fencing
- Understanding & working with Utilities on Right of Way

County Administrator Zellner and Public Works Rigdon, who joined the meeting, both stated that they can't get donated right of way unless everyone on the road signs a list. They also have to have the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) survey the road and then acquire a deed from everyone on the road. The deed would then need to be signed over to the county so that it can be recorded. He stated that there has been issues with the City of Barnesville repairing water mains on county right of way. County Administrator Zellner stated that having a Right of Way Ordinance will address this issue because a right of way permit will have to be obtained before doing any work on the county right of way. Public Works Director Rigdon reported that two 12 inch pipes needs to be installed on County Kitchen Road. Public Works Director Rigdon addressed the board and informed that Jones Road needs work. It's a dirt road that needs lots of preparation time and money. Public Works Director Rigdon said that they can put a base down and pave it next spring with our internal equipment but there are issues with the

right of way. The road is very narrow and if there is a mail box on the road the equipment can't get down the road. County Administrator Zellner stated that there is 262.4 miles of paved roads and 51.3 miles of dirt road. There is a total of 313.7 county road miles. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that Harmony Hill Ranch road was messed up during the tornado in 2011 and there have been issues since the Rain Storm of 2015. The trucks on Harmony Hill that are cutting trees have done a lot of damage to the road. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that he has received reports of issues with Hideaway Road needing to be paved and stated that this road has never been paved and in his 10 years he has never had a request to pave this road. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that the paving process must be defined and agreed upon and that you can't scrape the road if it is dusty or wet. County Administrator Zellner stated that if they pave a road and there is a fence that is on the right of way that has to be removed in order to pave the road, the county must replace the fence at the counties expense once the road is paved. County Administrator Zellner said that there are other procedures to consider when paving a road such as the impact of utilities and who pays for the expense.

The board discussed the cost of paving, resurfacing, and striping roads. Some roads require triple treat while other roads require a deep reclamation. The board heard comments regarding Ingram and Old Milner Road. These roads are narrow and they both need to be resurfaced. The board decided that these road issues will be resolved on a case by case situation.

Public Works Director Rigdon shared with the board other areas of importance. He said that the Public Works crew will begin cutting grass on Monday. He also stated that there are some bridges in Lamar County that need to be fixed. One bridge is the bridge on Old Zebulon Road and under the bridge it needs scouring. Erosion is contributing to the bridge scour. The Rip Rap work that needs to be done is under the bridge and this can't be done without the GDOT. The bridge on Ethridge Mill Road needs to be completely replaced. There are 2 or 4 concrete cups that are completely gone. At some point, the bridge could soon drop down at least 2 inches. The bridge could possibly be shut down if it is not repaired. There is also two 10 ft. pipes that need to be replaced on Crawford Road on the part of the road that is dirt. There are two 10 ft. pipes on McKenzie Road and two 10 ft. pipes on County Kitchen Road that need to be replaced. County Administrator Zellner stated that \$20,000.00 is slated from SPLOST for culvert replacement but that the LMIG money goes toward re-surfacing roads.

3. Paving List –Not in any particular order

- Dean Rd
- Hideaway Rd
- Ingram Rd
- Crawford Rd
- Bottoms Rd – Redo

- Harmony Hill Ranch Rd – Redo

4. **Resurfacing List**

- Industrial Rd – Major Work
- Holly Springs – Plow in Base
- McCollum Rd- Abbott Rd to County Kitchen Rd
- Jackson Hwy – City limits to by-pass
- Howard Rd
- Crawford Rd – Farm Rd to North Ridge Rd

Public Works Director Rigdon stated that he has lost several skilled employees to companies such as C.W. Matthews that pay higher wages.

Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 p.m. and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Van Baker, Vice-Chairman

Bennie Horton, Commissioner

Robert Heiney, Commissioner

Nancy M. Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk