

**Lamar County Board of Commissioners
Regular Business Meeting
February 20th, 2018**

Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Zellner, County Clerk Davidson and County Attorney Mayfield. Vice-Chairman Heiney was absent from the meeting.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Glass called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

Everyone said the pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Horton gave the invocation.

III. Agenda Approval

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve the agenda and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Minutes Approval

Commissioner Horton made a motion to approve the following two sets of minutes and Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- i. Workshop Meeting-January 11th, 2018
- ii. Regular Business Meeting-January 15th, 2018
- iii. Planning Session-January 26th, 2018

V. Proclamation

Commissioner Traylor presented a Black History Proclamation to the local National Association of Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) proclaiming that the 2018 theme be "African Americans in Times of War".

Mussolini Settles a concerned citizen and a father of two addressed the board. He stated that he works for the Georgia Department of Corrections and sees a lot young people of all race, gender, and color. His desire is to implement a Community Center for young people where they can have a mentorship and expand their minds. If they invest in them and they will invest in Lamar County. Mr. Settles told the Board of Commissioners that if they could do that it would be amazing.

Chairman Glass responded to Mr. Settles and told him that Lamar County is due to update the Lamar County Comprehensive Plan and said that this was a good idea. Chairman Glass said that they could put this in the plan. Chairman Glass said that they are currently looking for citizens to join the committee and suggested that Mr. Settles be a part of this committee. Chairman Glass said that he would contact Mr. Settles once they hold the meetings. Chairman Glass noted that Ms. Ashley Giles was in attendance and had also volunteered to be on the Comprehensive Plan committee.

VI. Board Appointment

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to appoint Olivia Banks to fill the unexpired term of Patsy Mann until July 19th, 2019. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Surplus Sheriff's Office Vehicles

Commissioner Horton made a motion to surplus the following vehicles. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1. 2000 Ford Van-Gold VIN 8896
2. 2005 Chevrolet Impala-Silver 7889

VIII. Resolution 2018-04 Master Lease Agreement

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-04 and a Master Lease Agreement for the purpose of purchasing 10 vehicles. This Master Lease is 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. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Resolution 2018-05 Budget Amendment for 2017

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-05 Budget Amendment for 2017. The total revenue and expenditure budget amendment is \$6,955.95 which is reimbursement for vehicle damage. The budget amendments to balance the budget equals \$265,337.31 and is attached to the minutes. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Bettis & Howard Contract

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve 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. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Sunday Alcohol Sales Referendum

Chairman Glass explained that the law requires the Board of Commissioners to put a question on the ballot so that the citizens can vote for or against Sunday alcohol sales. There have been some petitions for the sale of Sunday alcohol and there has also been some feedback against the sale of Sunday alcohol. Realistically, if the board is thinking about putting it on the ballot, the primary is coming up in May. If they put it on the ballot before the May election, it would be a hardship on the Elections Board therefore the November ballot would be more realistic, if the board is going to consider this. Chairman Glass stated his recommendation is to table this but if the board is going to decide to put it on the November ballot they need to decide this by August and they need to continue to look at both sides. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to table the Sunday alcohol sales referendum and stated that the petitions floating around have not been reviewed to see if they are Lamar County residents and they need to verify the addresses. They have not had an opportunity to hear from people that are opposed to the Sunday sale of alcohol. Commissioner Thrash stated that maybe they shouldn't put a date on it yet. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. Chairman Glass pointed out that the petition is not necessary and said that the board has the authority to approve it or vote it down when putting it on the ballot. Commissioner Thrash stated that they have this authority, but they also have the responsibility to listen to the citizens. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Animal Control Code

Chairman Glass stated that there was a committee setup to review the Animal Control Ordinance. The recommendation from the committee was to not change anything. They do have some concerns from the Code Enforcement and Animal Control and there might be some things in the State code that they might want to incorporate as to make it easier for them to do their job. They need to make it more reasonable to look after animals and citizen safety. One of the things that Chairman Glass recommended was that they ask the committee go back and look at the State codes and compare them to the Lamar County code and see if there is anything to pull down from the State code and list it in the Lamar County code. Commissioner Thrash stated that in the workshop it was suggested that a new Animal Control committee be formed. Chairman Glass stated that it was his understanding that there are those that want to do that. Chairman Glass informed the citizens that Vice-Chairman Heiney agreed

to be the representative on this committee but that he is out of town for a month. Chairman Glass stated that he would speak to him about forming a new committee.

XIII. Legislative Issues

Commissioner Thrash stated that there are couple of things that are coming up that are of concern. Commissioner Thrash thanked all those that have helped and been so involved, when they get notices, about reaching out. The wireless industry public right of way preemption legislation was reintroduced. There seems to be a lot of legislation that is getting leadership backing. In other words, it's the Governor's Bill or the Lieutenant Governor's Bill. It seems like if the Senators and the Representatives can't carry the bill then at the next legislative session the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor pick it up and it seems to have more teeth and more push. Commissioner Thrash say she doesn't like that. This bill authorizes a wireless support structure to come in to County to erect 50 ft. high antennas for cellphone towers. Commissioner Thrash said that she doesn't think that this will go anywhere but they have gotten a lot of feedback from the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) and what it does is it takes away the County's ability to have control of the Right of Ways and the board needs to have a say so. Commissioner Thrash said that she doesn't think it is going anywhere but they are watching it really close. The other thing that is a concern to the County is the DRIVES bill for the Tax Commissioner. The counties are going to have to fork out the money to change out the equipment in the Tax Commissioners' office and they have to go with one particular provider. It is basically another unfunded mandate sent down from the State. If the County has to do this, it is really going to be a hardship on the County. The County already has enough problems at the Tax Commissioners office with the internet service. If the County ends up having to have a certain amount of internet speed, those are things that haven't been budgeted for in the year 2018. We don't know where we are going to get the money from. ACCG had a meeting with the Governor and some of the leadership, week before last, and the Governor adamantly said that there will be no State funding for this. This is something that the board has really been watching carefully. Commissioner Thrash also spoke about the Constitutional Officers. The lobbyist are all asking for a five percent increase in their pay. If we, the Board of Commissioners, want to give ourselves a raise or implement a raise we have to go through the legislative process to do this. We have to advertise it to let everyone know what we are doing. This particular bill states that they don't have to do that. It will also make it retroactive if it passes. The Constitutional Officers around the State say they haven't asked for this and no one seems to claim responsibility for this however, it looks like it is going to get some support and it may move forward. Commissioner Thrash reported that when they went from the birthday tax to the Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT) it was supposed to bring more revenue to the counties but when the State saw how much revenue was being made they started messing with the numbers. ACCG has asked the Governor to look at this and they have requested that they have them put the money back into the counties. It looks like it is not getting a lot of support, but the County really needs that revenue. What we are seeing from the Capital

is more and more unfunded mandates and things are being pushed down on the counties. The counties can't absorb this, and the only choice Lamar County has is to go up on the millage rate. It is very important that you speak to your legislators because the Board can only do so much. Commissioner Thrash requested that everyone watch the bills on the internet and contact their legislators to help them with these things because the County can't take on these kinds of expenses.

Chairman Glass stated that if anyone wanted to contact the legislators then he would be glad to find the contact information. If you want more details on any of these issues on how we responded or how we stand on this Chairman Glass said he would be glad to show them his email and said that he is sure the other board members would share their points too. Chairman Glass said that they could piggy back on those and add their own points. Chairman Glass said that they could contact the board on any of these issues and they could give them more information. Any feedback that they can give to the legislators will be appreciated. The contact information is listed on the Lamar County website.

XIV. Administrators Report

County Administrator Zellner announced that Building and Zoning Director Gunter is getting the volunteers together for the Lamar County Comprehensive Plan. There are eight volunteers that are needed and he recently received one new member. He has four members and four more members are needed. Chairman Glass stated that Mr. Settles makes five. County Administrator Zellner said he spoke with Mr. Lance Renfro with Two Rivers who is replacing Forest Hill as the director. He spoke to him about the striping. They have a truck being serviced and it should be ready later on this week. Two Rivers has a contract with Spalding County, who is planning on striping about 400 miles. Once they finish, it will take a couple of months, then they can then start on Lamar County. Two Rivers says they are in the need of three machine operators. County Administrator Zellner stated that if we have someone with our crew then Two Rivers will train them and let us do it. This is a two to three-day training session. They need one for a driver, one to do the painting and one for traffic control. County Administrator Zellner said that they are supposed to be sending him the contract to look over to set that up.

County Zellner reported that the Public Works Department had a piece of equipment where they completely replaced all the tracks, the rollers and the hubs. This took a couple of weeks to complete. They did the undercarriage and the rollers. Yancey Inc. quoted \$20,000 to do this work but the Public Works Department was able to do it for \$10,000.00 including the parts. County Administrator Zellner stated that the guys at the Public Works Department did a great job.

County Administrator Zellner reported that the cash flow is dead on the projection. This is for one month but Financial Director Townsend is doing an excellent job on forecasting our revenues. County Administrator Zellner reported that for the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)III \$93,664.00 was collected and paid to the Town of Aldora and for the City of Milner, of their \$374,656.00 projected amount, they have been paid \$307,788.00 and \$66,867.00 is still owed, which will be paid with the new collections. County Administrator Zellner said that once we finish paying the City of Milner we will start collecting the County's portion for the County projects.

XV. Public Comments

Ashley Giles of 495 Abbott Road addressed the board regarding the Sunday alcohol sales. Ms. Giles stated that she was for it but that she has changed her mind. Ms. Giles said that it is about taking care of our own and her concerns are with the food industry that can come in and they can't compete with something like an Applebee's. She said she spoke to local food owners and they told her they couldn't survive. Ms Giles stated that if you bring it to the vote the millennials would rather pay someone to assemble their cheap furniture than turn a screwdriver. They vote for the short term and not the long term. Ms. Giles gave the board some information regarding child abuse and neglect. She said that Lamar County ranks 154 out of 159 counties. Lamar County is five away from being the worst. Lamar County is below the Georgia State average in child abuse. When you talk about putting this to a vote, try to see where their priorities are and see if they are really looking long term.

Julia Heidbrink of 588 Hwy 36 West addressed the board and said that she appreciated the fact that the board had tabled the Sunday alcohol sales referendum and she really appreciated what Commissioner Thrash had to say because there are so many people in the County that would prefer not to have to deal with Sunday alcohol sales. Ms. Heidbrink said that if you are going to have a nice dinner or a nice occasion where you are going to have wine or beer it is easy enough to get it through the week. Mrs. Heidbrink remembered Griffin, Georgia years ago when Sunday alcohol sales first started. When she moved to Griffin in 1980 they had a little Belk shopping center and it nothing like it is now and downtown Griffin died. Everything shut down. The only local restaurant that was able to stay open was J Henry's but said that she hasn't been there in twenty years. Mrs. Heidbrink stated that Lamar County doesn't need big box stores such as Walmart and chain restaurants. Mrs. Heidbrink said that we have a little bitty town and we have Pastime Grill and she would hate to lose Barnesville, like what other areas have become. Instead of two little shopping centers and one traffic signal like Griffin used to be, you have more traffic signals where it is always backed up. Mrs. Heidbrink said that it's terrible to drive through there. Mrs. Heidbrink asked the board to consider that Barnesville is a different kind of town and that is why she moved here in 1994. Mrs. Heidbrink said that she loves the idea of having this little bitty town and if she wants to

go to Walmart she will go to Thomaston, Griffin or Forsyth Georgia. Mrs. Heidbrink said that we don't need all of that. We need Barnesville to be the special little town that is has always been. We need to think about this and putting marijuana on the ballot. All of the "potheads" would go vote and then we would have legalized marijuana. This is what will happen if you put this referendum on the ballot. There are a lot of people that don't think pass tomorrow. They spend their money on lottery tickets and buying and selling food stamps, which is a pretty big business. Mrs. Heidbrink concluded by saying that we don't need Sunday alcohol sales.

Brenda Ross of 386 Ingram Road thanked the board for tabling the Sunday alcohol sales. She is a component of not having Sunday alcohol sales. Mrs. Ross said that Barnesville is a community where a lot of people do go to Church. Mrs. Ross said that they do need to have a reverence for Sunday. She said that there are other days through the week that you can buy alcohol. Mrs. Ross said that she particularly doesn't do it and it has become a drug of choice for a lot of people. It is a cheap drug of choice. You have other days of the week to get it and she would prefer the reverence of the Sunday to not have Sunday alcohol sales.

XVI. Round Table

Commissioner Horton thanked everyone for being there tonight and announced that at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) would be sponsoring a breakfast at the E.P Roberts Center. Commissioner Horton said that he wanted to piggyback off of what Mr. Settles said earlier in the evening. Commissioner Horton said that he was the Co-Chairman on the committee regarding Booker School. They worked very hard and went to Atlanta a couple of times to meet with the State. They could have made a difference, at the moment, but they did not. Commissioner Horton stated that they never could get a Grant but that they worked very hard on this project. Commissioner Horton said that this is "water under the bridge" and he said he would accept part of the charge to try to help to see where they are and to see if they have any ideas. Commissioner Horton suggested that if they are serious and they get something going there are folks in Lamar County who are willing to help, along with Grants. There is the City of Milner and the City of Barnesville and the whole community that might be willing to help find some building or build a new one.

Commissioner Traylor thanked everyone who came out to share their theme and those who diligently represented their theme. Those from the E.P. Roberts Center to the opposition to the Sunday alcohol sales. Commissioner Traylor said that there has been a lot of Facebook communication with those people who have been heavily involved in soliciting people to vote for the Sunday alcohol sales and who want it put it on the ballot. Commissioner Traylor said that he told them to come to the board meetings whether they are for it or opposed to it. People who are for or opposed to the Animal Shelter or the Tax Increase, they show up to the meeting. Commissioner Traylor commended those that show up for the meeting because that is what

needs to happen. Commissioner Traylor said, "It is not about Facebook or putting things on Social Media. It is not about calling me at night, on Sunday afternoon. Come to the meeting and share. This is what this platform is for. If not, obviously your opinion is not that strong and he has been approached quite a bit about it." Commissioner Traylor said that he was on his soap box about this issue. Commissioner Traylor announced that the Lamar County Community Health & Wellness Event is February 22nd, 2018 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Lamar County College & Career Academy and encouraged everyone to participate. Commissioner Traylor shared a personal note and said that for many years he worked in hospitals and participated in Health Fairs. Some thirteen to fourteen years ago, his dad showed up and helped him setup for a Health Fair and he told him to get some free blood work and he found out that he had leukemia and six months later he passed away. Commissioner Traylor noted that early prevention is the key. Commissioner Traylor went on to say that his dad and him played golf the weekend before they found out he had leukemia and he rode in the cart and his dad walked, like he normally did. He didn't show any signs of having cancer or anything wrong with him. Through getting that early detection and the bloodwork done, they found out he had leukemia. Commissioner Traylor highly encouraged everyone to attend the Health Fair. Commissioner Traylor, who serves on the Lamar County Health board, reported a spike in rabies in Lamar County, in the High Falls area of Liberty Trace. One possible case in the Forsyth-Yatesville area. Commissioner Traylor pointed out that no matter how cute animals might appear to be, they need to be approached with caution. Commissioner Traylor told everyone to make sure they are protecting themselves from danger. Commissioner Traylor said that there was a case where someone picked up a dog and when they got it home they thought the dog was fine but then they got bit by the dog and found out the dog had rabies. Commissioner Traylor told everyone to please be careful.

Commissioner Thrash thanked County Administrator Zellner, Finance Director Townsend and County Clerk Davidson. Commissioner Thrash reported that in the regular scheduled workshop for February, Stifel, a full-service brokerage and investment banking firm came into look at the financial stability of the county regarding building a new jail and other facilities and she was very impressed. They said that a County the size of Lamar County is one of the best run counties for our situation and looks better than he has seen. The representative spoke of bond ratings, which is what you look at when you borrow money, and he stated that Lamar County would be a high A bond rating which is unheard of for a county our size. Commissioner Thrash said that the staff works very hard and Commissioner Thrash wanted them to know how much she appreciates them.

Chairman Glass stated that the Health Fair is free and last year it was in the Upson Regional Health building and this year it is being held at the Lamar County College and Career Academy and there will be plenty of room to move around. Chairman Glass said he was gracious for the use of the Upson Regional Health building but that the Lamar County College and Career

Academy will be better. Chairman Glass said that the students are out of school this week on winter break and the whole building is available and there will be plenty of room and privacy for screenings and counseling.

Chairman Glass also stated that last month at the Regular Business meeting the Ross's spoke about the use of the railroad site that is zoned M2 which is manufacturing. It still had agricultural going on out there. Chairman Glass stated that this was grandfathered in and he was technically correct about it being grandfathered in but he is wrong for his reasoning. Chairman Glass said he thought that you were allowed to continue the use after the re-zoning, that you had there before hand. Chairman Glass said, "You are only allowed to continue that use if the County or governing authority makes that change. In this case, the City of Barnesville requested the change. In looking back at the records, it turns out that in 1996, when the City of Barnesville requested the zoning, agricultural use was permitted in M2 areas. So, at this time it was agricultural use and they were permitted to keep the cows. The County changed the code ten years later to remove it from agricultural use as one of the permitted uses and manufactured areas. Because the governing authority made that change the property owners weren't grandfathered in past that change. This is why they were still allowed to keep the cows out there." Chairman Glass apologized to Mrs. Ross and said that she asked specifically if he was sure and he said he was sure and he shouldn't have made that assumption. Chairman Glass said he was not correct for the reasons that he thought he was. Chairman Glass said he was sorry about that. Chairman Glass said hopefully he learned from this and he won't say that kind of thing again.

Chairman Glass announced that the groundbreaking for the school will be held on February 27th at 1:30 p.m. in front of the high school. They expect to have everyone in the new building by August of 2019.

XVII. Adjournment

Commissioner Horton made a motion to adjourn the Regular Business meeting at 8:00 p.m. and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Robert Heiney, Vice-Chairman

Bennie Horton, Commissioner

Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk