

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Budget Workshop Minutes

June 12th, 2018

1:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Heiney, Commissioner Horton, and Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Zellner, County Clerk Davidson.

The board meet with allotted departments to discuss the proposed 2019 budget Based on the actuals line items the proposed budget for 2019 either increased, decreased or remained the same.

Board of Elections

Chairman Glass stated that there was a request for a raise for the Elections Supervisor. The requested increase was for \$50,000.00. The Part Time Salary was decreased from \$25,000 to \$20,000.00. The rent decreased from \$1,000 to \$400.00. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that the rent for the board of elections is \$100.00 and next year it is an odd election unless they have a special election They pay rent to the Redbone Community and Milner Baptist. Chairman Glass stated that City elections do not require rent. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that the board meets once a month and this doesn't cover the office. The salary that they are being paid \$9.00 an hour and comes out of the part-time line item. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that her board fluctuates from year to year and there are fewer elections in 2019. They also have to plan for Special Elections in case someone resigns or dies. When a Special Election is held all precincts are open including City elections. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that the Warranty Cost increased and she is requesting \$9,100.00. This is because they added new equipment and all of it is under warranty and has to be paid for. The Special Election and Municipal General requested is \$5,900.00 and the Overall Election Expenses requested is \$15,000.00. Commissioner Thrash noted that there was a \$30,000 reduction in the budget and asked why she didn't just take some of that money and move it around and increase the salaries. Chairman Glass stated that she couldn't because in 2020 the budget will be increased due to Elections. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she tried to do this and every time she was told that they don't have the funds or it can't be justified. Commissioner Thrash noted that their current budget is \$169,000.00. County Administrator Zellner stated that next year those funds won't be there. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she went back to school and got her degree. She stated that she has shown dedication over the 14 years she has been with the County and asked what more she could she do. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she works overtime and she doesn't get paid and when you actually add in the amount of hours that she is working and the amount of hours that go into an election she feels like that she has earned this. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she has worked hard to get where she is. Commissioner Thrash stated that she admired her for this and said that this is not a personal issue but a business issue. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she does understand this. Commissioner Thrash stated that there are several people that share the same story and she commends Elections Supervisor

Reid and admires her for what she has done and how she has advanced. Commissioner Thrash stated that Elections Supervisor Reid does a great job but it is not a personal issue it is the financial situation with the County. Board of Elections board member Elaine Williams said that Elections Supervisor Reid does a great job and one of the reasons that they have been asking for her a raise is because of the things that she can do and the things that she knows. If Elections Supervisor Reid wasn't here and couldn't do them anymore it will fall on the board to get them done and then back on the Commissioners. Ms. Williams said that no one knows everything that has to be done, when it has to be done, and there are guidelines and rules that they have to follow. Ms. Williams said that she deserves an increase because they would be up the creek without a paddle if something happens to Elections Supervisor Reid. Ms. Williams said that she knows that they could get someone from the State to come down and do it but how would that look for the Board of Elections and the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Williams said that it would be bad if they had nobody and someone with all of this knowledge slip away because of pay. Board of Elections member Harold Ivey stated that counties the size of Lamar County had been compared to her salary. Commissioner Traylor stated that as an individual, Elections Supervisor Reid's qualifications are way beyond that job and the concern is with this particular job in comparison with other counties. Commissioner Traylor stated that she could go and be a Vice-President of a company based on her capabilities. Chairman Glass noted that the counties compared were from North Georgia where the budgets are higher. The counties compared were Morgan, Rabun and Banks County. These counties can afford to pay higher than what Lamar County is currently paying. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she is not too proud to apply at Ingles to work a second job but said that everyone knows where she works and they would want to know why the County doesn't pay enough to keep her from working a second job. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that LNA training is tiring when you aren't being compensated. Elections Supervisor Reid said she can't just say she has worked 40 hours a week and I'm not coming in today, you all handle it. Elections Supervisor Reid said she can't do that. Commissioner Horton inquired about a meeting that Elections Supervisor Reid had with County Administrator Zellner and Chairman Glass regarding her salary. Commissioner Horton stated that he thought that they had come to some type of agreement. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that they pretty much told her she would be given a \$1,000.00 over a period of time. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she felt like this was holding a piece of steak over a dog. Commissioner Thrash stated that if Elections Supervisor Reid wasn't satisfied here, then she probably needed to go find another job. Commissioner Thrash said that she was not going to sit there and listen to this because she knows the situation. She attends the budget meetings and she knows the situation that the County is in. Commissioner Thrash said that Elections Supervisor Reid brings in a comparison of Morgan County with a 23-million-dollar budget. Commissioner Thrash stated that they have the same population as Lamar County. Commissioner Thrash said that not to long ago Elections Supervisor Reid was given a substantial raise and she knows the situation that the County has been in. Commissioner Thrash said for Elections Supervisor Reid to say that she has been mistreated differently, she has to say something about that. Commissioner Thrash stated that Elections Supervisor Reid has done a great job but to hear from Elections

Supervisor Reid that she has been mistreated is an issue and maybe Elections Supervisor Reid needs to find another job. Commissioner Traylor stated that he didn't hear her say that she has been mistreated and his opinion is that he is hearing her say that she feels like that there is more for her here. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she is not saying that she is being mistreated and she was trying to answer a question. Elections Supervisor Reid said that County Administrator Zellner and Chairman Glass told her that they could give her a \$1,000.00 but said that they couldn't justify it now. Elections Supervisor Reid said that the salary comparison for Morgan County was handed to her and she didn't know that they had a 23-million-dollar budget and she thought it was based on a comparison at that time. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she was told to get her own comparison based on the same information that they received online. Elections Supervisor Reid said it does not tell you how much their budget is so she didn't know automatically that they have a 23-million-dollar budget. Elections Supervisor Reid said she shouldn't be fussed out because she chooses and the body of the Elections Department choose counties that have a population compared to Lamar County. Commissioner Thrash stated that no one was fussing at her but when you sit there and say that you may have to go to Ingles and get another job to supplement yourself and say how is that going to look for the County and I'm an employee of the County and the County is not taking care of their employees that is what upset her. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she has heard people say that to her and she can't help this. Commissioner Traylor stated that the board knows the value of Elections Supervisor Reid and said that maybe she has outgrown this job because \$37,822.00 is the salary for this job in Lamar County. Commissioner Traylor stated that she is magnificent at her job. Elections Supervisor Reid said that her board members didn't want to hire her and that was her motivation for going back to school. Elections Supervisor Reid inquired about the people that don't have anything and they have been promoted. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she is not talking about Carl Vinson Institute certificate hanging on a wall. Elections Supervisor Reid said that she didn't come in to the meeting to set anyone off or to say that she is not happy, she said that she is just speaking from her stand point. Chairman Glass said that this position doesn't justify a \$50,000.00 salary and this is not her fault and he agreed with Commissioner Traylor. She can go to any other county and do much more than you are doing here and demand more money than Lamar County is able to pay and he would hate to lose her. Chairman Glass stated that they offered her something in addition to justify more salary but that she wasn't interested because she didn't pursue it. Elections Supervisor Reid said this was because his plan wouldn't go into effect into next year. Elections Supervisor Reid said they spoke to her about having a full-time part time person in the office and would it make a difference with the work load. Commissioner Thrash inquired about this offer and Chairman Glass stated that they were just talking. County Administrator Zellner stated that there would be 2 fulltime positions. Commissioner Thrash stated that this would mean a pay increase. Chairman Glass stated that this would not affect her but would be a budget increase in the Board of Elections budget. Commissioner Thrash stated that if there is money there to do this then why not just increase Elections Supervisor Reid pay. Chairman Glass stated that he didn't say there was money there, they were do the what if's. Commissioner Thrash said that they offered it though. Chairman Glass

stated that he asked her if it would make any difference to hire an extra full-time part time position. Elections Supervisor Reid pointed out that this would be the same amount of money because you are not having to factor in the health insurance. Commissioner Thrash inquired about the bare minimum of \$50,000.00. Elections Supervisor Reid stated that she asked for the bare minimum of \$46,000.00 but her board suggested \$47,000.00 so she put down \$50,000.00 because she knew that they would cut where they wanted to. Commissioner Horton stated that he appreciated what Elections Supervisor Reid does and he felt like they should discuss this issue at a later time. Chairman Glass stated that they would take this action into review.

Probate

Judge Martin with the Probate Court addressed the board and said that she kept everything the same except communications. She requested to increase the communications line item from \$890.00 to \$2300.00 for the internet support. Judge Martin expressed her desire to increase the salaries for her employees so that they were same or more than the employees in Superior Court. Judge Martin stated that she has three fulltime employees. Judge Martin requested that Machele Smith's salary be increased to the same salary as the Chief Clerk in the Superior Court. Machele has been with the County for over 20 years and with the Probate Court for 19 years. She has been Chief Clerk/Office Manager for many years and her salary should reflect her dedication, professionalism and hard work that she provides the County and the Probate Court daily. Her salary should be in line with the same job title as the Superior Court. Judge Martin requested Susan Fennel's salary be increased to \$16.54 an hour, who has been with the County for 23 years and Rolanda Foster's salary be increased to \$14.00 an hour, who has been with the County for 10 years and the Probate Court for 13 months. Judge Martin stated that all three ladies go beyond the call of duty and are cross trained for all matters handle in the Probate Court. Chairman Glass stated that they could consider giving an eight percent raise this year and then another eight percent raise the next year.

Public Works

Public Works Director Rigdon requested \$200.00, based on actual year to date expenditures of \$160.00, for Physical and Drug Screens. For physical's they currently use Dr. Woodall but Human Resource Officer Kilcriss is working on getting a cheaper price through Dr. Buice. Drug Screens are done at the Sheriff's Office. Chairman Glass noted that Purchased Contracted Services went up \$4,000.00. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that this was because he has that copy machine out there. Finance Director stated that it would be paid off as of September 2019. Commissioner Horton inquired about the decrease in HT/Air/Elec/Plmb/Rep/Mn from \$1,500.00 to \$600.00. Public Director Rigdon stated that this was due to new equipment. Public Works Director Rigdon explained that a lot of purchases come out of the Special Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) including Culverts and Gravel. He stated that fuel prices for vehicles is going up and Public Works Director Rigdon stated that he only had \$11,000.00 left to spend in the Gasoline/Diesel line item. He is requesting a \$10,000.00 increase in the vehicles and fuels line item from \$50,000 to

\$60,000.00. An increase of \$25,000.00 is requested and Public Works Director Rigdon explained that this is due to Animal Control being placed back on the Public Works Department. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that the over time in the Animal Control line item has already been exceeded this year. He also stated that due to the down trees he has employees that have also exceeded their overtime this year. He is requesting a \$2,000.00 increase from \$10,000 to \$12,000.00 in the Uniform line item. Chairman Glass inquired about the Supplies/Tools line item. He is requesting a \$2,500.00 increase for supplies and tools from \$20,000.00 to \$22,500.00. Public Works Director Rigdon explained that everything is costing more to buy things and a drill that used to cost \$50.00 is \$75.00 to \$100.00. Commissioner Traylor inquired about the Tires and Tubes line item and Public Works Director Rigdon explained that it was moved into Maintenance and Repairs. The board and Public Work Director Rigdon discussed surplussing the old motor graders. Chairman Glass inquired about the Capital Lease increase of \$70,000.00 and Public Works Director Rigdon responded that this was for 2 four door trucks. Finance Director Townsend stated that he backed out any Capital Lease increases and any salary increases. The board discussed the fact that the paving of roads in the County won't happen for the next seven years because the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds are slated for Industrial Road. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that he is getting a lot of after hour animal control calls he requested to be compensated for these hours. The board discussed putting in a pipe on Country Kitchen Road and it was suggested that County Administrator Zellner apply for another emergency Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) to cover this work. Public Works Director Rigdon reported that it would cost \$4084.00 to put in a new pipe at the City Park in Milner. There was discussion about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the Health Department. County Administrator Zellner stated that a pre-bid was held on June 12th, 2018 and that the Bid Opening would take place on June 26th, 2018. The plan is to break ground between September and October of 2018. Commissioner Traylor inquired about using local vendors for the project and County Clerk Davidson replied that local vendors are covered under Section 3 when using Federal funds.

Building and Zoning

Building and Zoning Director Gunter addressed the board and stated that there will be a Special Exception regarding a solar power generating facility located on a 40-acre farm. There is currently no opposition for this request. This Special Exception has been advertised and is scheduled to be heard at the July 17th, 2018 Regular Business Meeting. Building and Zoning Director Gunter learned through a Georgia Tech study that Georgia is not a good place for solar powered farms since there is not that much sun because of the clouds. Building and Zoning Director Gunter requested an increase for the Board of Appeals fees and for the Planning Commission fees because of more meetings. He stated that site-built homes in Lamar County are growing and revenues from permits are going up. There was discussion about the long-term goals and needs for Building and Zoning Director Gunter and he expressed his desire for more room and filing cabinets. He stated that he has been working on more files and that he has notebooks with permits categorized by

address or the person's name as far back as 1980. He said that he checked into scanning these files but the cost was too high. He stated that he has plans to retire in 2019 and he has been training Lavetrece Walker regarding permits, special exceptions and updating files. He doesn't know if she is interested in taking his position. As far as Roads and Sedimentation Plans, this job will have to be contracted out because you have to be Level 2 certified in the County. Building and Zoning Director Gunter addressed the upcoming Comprehensive Plan and stated that he had an upcoming meeting with the Comprehensive Plan committee on Friday at 2:00 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was regarding contacting stakeholders from the previous Comprehensive plan and getting information out to them based on the requirements of the committee and their recommendations. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that he wants the Comprehensive Plan completed by December of 2018 and that he has already had one Public Hearing where only two people showed up. Commissioner Thrash stated that she was in a recent training where she learned that all meetings and Public Hearings are subject to Open Records as well as board members and committee members. Open Records that are done in writing are subject to a three-day response whereas verbal requests are not. Commissioner Thrash recommended that this be mentioned in the next Comprehensive Plan meeting. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that one of the topics for the Comprehensive Plan committee to consider is the Broad Band availability in rural areas. Chairman Glass stated that there is pressure on the providers. There is no revenue to invest the money. Commissioner Thrash said the vendors don't want to put out the money to lay the fiber optic cable. Building and Zoning Director Gunter said that it is also cost prohibitive to run the power lines. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that people in the County don't want sewer services. There is no sewer service in the County and people don't want sewer service in the County. Please have septic systems but one of the requirements to get sewer services is that you have to have at least 1 acre of land even if you have county water and 2 acres if you don't have county water. For subdivisions to get sewer services they have to have 1 acre of land because they have county water. Building and Zoning Director Gunter said that there are more people asking about this because they come from the City life and people in the County tend to want larger homes. Commissioner Traylor stated that those people that are coming into the County need to adhere to the new codes regarding zoning laws. Commissioner Traylor stated that Butts County had issues with growth because there was no structure in place and the board needs to consider this because as Lamar County grows the resources become doubled. Building and Zoning Director stated that R2 is 1600 square feet and R3 is 1200 to 1400 square feet. Lots over 3 acres will be zoned as Agricultural Residential (A-R). Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that if someone wants to build a smaller house, which is a variance from the code, they have to put in a variance request. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that A-R zoning is 1400 square feet because in their survey of people, the survey stated that they wanted 1600 square feet because the majority of the people in the County want larger homes. They compromised with 1400 square feet. R4 zoning is 800 square feet. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that the majority of the subdivisions have homes built under R2 zoning which is 1600 square feet. Needleleaf Subdivision R3 because when it was approved it was approved as 1200 square feet as A-R and they wanted to

start building homes and they were anywhere from 1200 to 1400 square feet so they got it zoned as R-3. For M1 zoning, any new technology that is not listed can be considered under a new technology unless M1 zoning says it not authorized or you do a special exception. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that the fee structure on permits are low and this is another thing that effects the growth of the County. Building and Zoning Director Gunter requested that the board review changing the fee structures before January of 2019. Building and Zoning Director Gunter stated that he is working on the Comprehensive Plan and the Service Delivery Plan to be completed by February of 2019.

Building and Zoning Director Gunter made the following requests.

1. Increased Board of Appeals Fees from \$500.00 to \$900.00.
2. Increased Planning Commission Fees from \$70000 to \$1200.00
3. Increased Professional Services from \$ 8,000.00 to \$10,000.00
4. Increase Schools Meetings and Trainings from \$500.00 to \$400.00
5. Increased Advertising Fees from \$400.00 to \$800.00.
6. Decreased Printing and Office Supplies from \$1500.00 to \$950.00.
7. Increased Schools Meetings and Training from \$550.00 to \$600.00
8. Increased Office Equipment to \$300.00.

Maintenance

Maintenance Director Jim Beverly addressed the board with his request and to report about his Department. He stated that one of his employees has resigned to pursue a different career. The Senior Center roof has major storm damage and he is requesting that his M&R Building line item be increased.

Maintenance Director Beverly made the following requests.

Courthouse

1. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$2,050.00 to \$2100.00
2. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$1,813.00 to \$10,000.00
3. Increased M&R Building from \$7,350.00 to \$ 10,000.00.
4. Increased Exterminating from \$420.00 to \$450.00.
5. Increased Communication from \$6,346.00 to \$6,500.00
6. Increased Supplies & Tools/Etc. from \$450.00 to \$500.00.
7. Increased Cleaning Supplies from \$1,949.00 to \$2,000.00
8. Increased Gasoline/Diesel from \$4,622.00 to \$4,800.00
9. Increased Uniforms from \$1,177.00 to \$2,000.00

Accountability Court

1. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$780.00 to \$1,000.00
2. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$780.00 to \$1,000.00
3. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn to \$3,000.00
4. Increased M&R Building to \$1,000.00
5. Increased Communications from \$3,639.00 to \$3,700.00

Administration Building

1. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$900.00 to \$1,100.00
2. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$735.00 to \$1,000.00
3. Increased M&R Other Equipment from \$200.00 to \$400.00
4. Increase M&R Building from \$2,375.00 to \$2,500.00
5. Increased Exterminating from \$399.00 to \$400.00
6. Increased Communications from \$2,671.00 to \$2,800.00
7. Increased Supplies & Tools from \$271.00 to \$300.00
8. Increased Cleaning Supplies from \$1,367.00 to \$1,400.00

Senior Center Building

1. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$1,410.00 to \$1,500.00
2. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$1623.00 to \$2,000.00
3. Increased M&R Building from \$1,900.00 to \$2,200.00
4. Increased Exterminating from \$285.00 to \$350.00
5. Increased Communications from \$153.00 to \$750.00
6. Increased Cleaning Supplies from \$1,439.00 to \$1,850.00

Service Center Building

1. Increased Lawn Care Maintenance from \$1,276.00 to \$1,400.00
2. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$2,269.00 to \$2,500.00
3. Increased M&R Building from \$2,850.00 to \$3,000.00
4. Increased Exterminating from \$902.00 to \$1,000.00
5. Increased Communications from \$153.00 to \$750.00
6. Increased Cleaning Supplies from \$1,450.00 to \$1,500.00

Tag Office Building

1. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$74.00 to 700.00
2. Increased M&R Building from \$692.00 to \$500.00

Fire Head Quarters

1. Increased HT/Air/Elec/Plmb-Rep/Mn from \$74.00 to 700.00

2. Increased M&R Building from \$692.00 to \$500.00

FIRE STATION

Fire Chief Matthews made the following requests for the 2019 budget.

- 1) Hiring three additional Firefighter/EMTs to man Station 6 at Parker Branch to handle the emergency responses in the North-East half of the County. The current response from south of town at Country Kitchen Road is not adequate with a 16-20 plus minute response.
- 2) Hiring 3 new fire personal and increasing the pay for the current full-time staff based on rank.
- 3) Uniforms to cover the 7 paid firefighters.
- 4) Burn building maintenance and training props for the training building.
- 5) Truck and Tanker (4,000-gallon tanker with pump) for \$122,988.04 and Fire Hose Replacement for \$8,986.00.

Fire Chief Matthews addressed the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) ratings for Lamar County and said that the rating is based on three volunteers to one paid fireman. The impact is on the manpower side. The County has an average of 12 volunteers that were looked at for every fire and this will help on the manpower side. It won't change the ISO rating but it will benefit the ISO on the manpower side. Fire Chief Matthews stated that the last time they were inspected was in February and they received an (ISO) rating of 5 5 X which is the same as a 5 9. The biggest impact for the community would be to lower the ISO rating. Fire Chief Matthews said that he needs more paid personnel and a ladder truck to capture the ISO rating of 4. The way to make the biggest impact is to get rid of the split class and become a class 1. This would give us a 5 5 ISO rating. If a house is greater than 1000 ft from a fire hydrate then they would have a 5 ISO rate. Fire Chief Matthews said that this is about a \$600.00 insurance savings for people who live outside the 1000 ft of a fire hydrate. The tankers purchased, in a three-year span. would allow for them to do a haul water system which will give them an ISO rating of 5 5 throughout the County. There are no fire hydrants being put in unless it is in a subdivision. Fire Chief Matthews stated that a hydrate map will show which roads have water. Fire Chief Matthews gave an example where if someone is greater than 1000 ft. from the hydrant but 2.3 miles from fire station and they are listed with an ISO 9 and it will cost them more money. Another example he gave would be if the insurance company gives a premium based on an ISO rating of 5 and then they come look at the house and they increase the insurance. At first, they give an ISO rating of 5 and then they rate you with an ISO rating of 9. Fire Chief Matthews suggested that the board look at a hydrant map and get the data from the local insurance companies and compare the savings. Fire Chief Matthews stated that he would like to have a Fire District millage as an option so that it would impact everyone and not

just some. Fire Chief Matthews stated that they get 500 calls from the City of Barnesville and this justifies the tankers. Chairman Glass said if you raise the general millage and justify to those that already have a 5 ISO rating there is no benefit to them as it only benefits those that have a 9 ISO rating. Chairman Glass said that if they go up a half a mill then it impacts everyone.

Fire Chief Matthews said that he had received a grant from the Lamar County Give 365 for two sets of Turn Out gear. Fire Chief Matthews said that the hoods on the turn out gear help to protect the neck and he could use one or two sets for \$11,400.00. He needs \$5,000 for the burn building and he needs new radios. He needs \$4,800 to repaint the burn building and \$5,000.00 for repairs to the burn building.

Fire Chief Matthews stated that the ISO requires 240 hours of training per person and they train every Monday. They take 200 hours of drivers training per year. When they are riding on calls, they are logging all of their hours. The Volunteer Firefighters Insurance plan requires classroom training and not just physical driving. The pump operators are behind on two classes. They get 8 hours of hazmat training on Saturday's and it takes 12 or more volunteers to hold a class. There are a lot of requirements that they have to follow. Fire Chief Matthews stated that there is a new class that has a minimum is 16 hours. Fire Chief Matthews stated that they don't have a paid position for rank and the difference between a Lieutenant and a Captain is .25 cents. Fire Chief Matthews stated that his staff handles maintenance, inside and outside controls, and par system data, if he is not there they handle it. Fire Chief Matthews stated that he works anywhere from 50 to 60 hours a week and his wife works two jobs. He said that he has to go to lots of training and he tries to leave early in the afternoon for a mental break. Fire Chief Matthews said that all three of his guys work a second job but he himself doesn't have time to work a second job because he needs to be available as the Fire Chief. He gave an example of a house fire where 14 volunteers were there to help but the next morning they had a fire and no volunteers showed up (because they were at their day jobs) and there were only three of them to work the fire.

Chairman Glass stated that he would talk to State Farm and Farm Bureau about the ISO rates. The board discussed the waters in the hydrates and how if it is not moved it becomes stagnate.

Fire Chief Matthews addressed the new Volunteer Firefighter Insurance plan and stated that it is costing \$4,000 to \$5,000.00 per year and that it becomes complicated when a volunteer is an actual firefighter in another county.

Fire Chief Matthews stated that E911 business is booming because of the growth in the County and he is anticipating growth coming in the next five years. He stated that the fire service is going to have to be expanded. He stated that it is 19 miles to get to the interstate on the North end of the County and that when E911 calls for someone it takes 20 miles to get there and 20 miles to get back. Fire Chief Matthews stated that this is the reason that he is requesting three new firefighters. Fire Chief Matthews reported that he gets a \$35,000.00 Firehouse Subgrant for Extraction Tool. He stated that the engines that he received from SPLOST funds covers 3100 feet from ground to

the eve. The ladder truck can't reach the buildings at Gordon State, Rocks Spring Methodist Church or Jordan Flour Mill because a 3500 ft ladder can't get on the roof. Fire Chief Matthews said that the ISO impact for businesses that come here is great and 5 is a good number. Fire Chief Matthews stated that 4 is a better ISO rating but 5 is not bad. The board continued discussing the County Code having a subdivision without a hydrant. Fire Chief Matthews said that there is a lot size requirement and if it is under 2 acres you have to have a municipal water supply. Chairman Glass said that one possibility for the Tankers would be to put the millage on the Tax Commissioners Bill (for those in that district).

Fire Chief Matthews made the following line item requests.

1. Increased Salary Dept Head from \$42,937.00 to \$61,017.84.
2. Increased Salary-Regular Employee from \$89,636,00 to \$240,437.86
3. Increased Salary Over Time from \$11,789.00 to \$26,789.00
4. Increased Phys/Drug Screens/Poly from \$80.00 to \$200.00
5. Increased Equipment Inspections from \$2112.00 to \$4635.00
6. Increased M&R Office Equipment from \$293.00 to \$500.00
7. Increased M&R Vehicles from \$11,253.00 to \$27,600.00
8. Increased M&R Buildings from \$21.00 to \$5000.00
9. Increased Communication from \$4,249.00 to 4,623.00
10. Increased Stamps/Postage to \$25.00
11. Increased Schools/Meetings/Trainings from \$432,00 to \$750.00
12. Decreased Printing Office Supplies from \$874.00 to \$650.00
13. Increased Supplies/Tools from \$5,634.00 to \$11,400.00
14. Increased Medical Supplies from \$729.00 to \$1,100.00
15. Increased Gasoline/Diesel from \$ 11,579.00 to \$14,000.00
16. Increased Uniforms from \$385.00 to \$ 3,500.00
17. Increased Capital Outlay to \$122,988.04

Round Table

Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that the Fire Department has merit but said this is a substantial increase. There are other areas that need attention as well such as the Sheriff's Office. There is a request for parity and those include Public Works, The Sherriff's office and the Fire Department. The board needs to factor that in and offer them more or do something with the requested increase. People tell him that they don't want to pay more taxes unless they get more services. Vice-Chairman Heiney listed all of the requests from Fire Chief Matthews which include, 3 additional fire fighters, a Fire District millage for the Tankers, each is \$122,000 and they want 3, plus \$9,000 for accessories, and this is a quarter of a mile, 3 firefighters and this is worth a mill, 3 tankers and 3 additional firefighters. Everything would be a 2 mill increase. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that if he gets all of his request then what about everyone else. If they honor all of the request then this

would be at least 4 to 5 mills. Then they also have the bond issue with Jail and then the Animal Shelter which will cost \$450,0000 to build plus the funds to staff it. Lamar County doesn't have a budget like other counties.

Commissioner Horton agreed that these are tall, serious decisions. Commissioner Thrash said that this is because they are experiencing growth. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that some of the revenue should come from the property taxes and he doesn't see this coming in just yet. Commissioner Thrash said that this is why they paid the company to come in and evaluate the businesses and they found out that the businesses are not paying what they are supposed to be paying. This takes some of the burden off of the property owners when they do that. Commissioner Thrash said that there are going to be things that they don't have a choice about and it their responsibility to protect the community, to protect the future and the growth and they are going to have to make some difficult decisions. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that it could take a 3 mill increase. Chairman Glass said it could take a 2.6 mill increase. Commissioner Horton stated that maybe someone can come up with some ideas that will get the burden off the property owners. County Administrator Zellner said that they are working to get the burden off the State. The State wants to do away with State income tax so that they will look good. Commissioner Thrash said that she doesn't want them to get in a situation where they say they are going to lower the millage rate and be in a situation like what Butts County is in where they wake up one day and they see there is not enough money to run the County. Commissioner Thrash said that this is why they are doing their planning sessions and they don't ever want to find themselves in that position. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that he agreed with Commissioner Thrash but asked her how they do that. Commissioner Thrash said that they have done it through good planning. They haven't had to raise the millage rate but they also haven't had to deal with the growth that they are fixing to have to deal with. Vice-Chairman Heiney said it was a mistake not to look at some incremental increase every year. The question is how they divvy it up so that it is fair to everyone. Chairman Glass stated that planning is the key. Chairman Glass stated that if they are truthful they know they are going to have to do something about the buildings. They need to look at some options instead of waiting on the floor to collapse in the Courthouse and then have to close the building until they can build something else or find another place to rent. They need to consider what they can do to lower the ISO rate. The Sheriff is losing a lot of deputies and the salary is an issue. Commissioner Thrash said that it is also because law enforcement officers are getting out of law enforcement all together. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that the biggest value to the County is law enforcement, fire protection and roads. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that they can't bring people to Lamar County because they have an Animal Shelter. County Administrator Zellner stated that the board needs to prioritize the departments that they need to work on. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that the board made a solid investment by fixing Industrial Road. This will help to bring business here. Chairman Glass said that looking at their counterpart there is reason that it is called Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). You can't ignore operating cost down the road but sometimes you have to put some special projects in there to make sure that the whole package goes through. Chairman Glass said that he didn't vote for the Animal Shelter but if they have to build something they can put a sign on it that says Lamar County

Animal Shelter. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that if Lamar County had a budget of 17 million dollars he wouldn't feel that way about the Animal Shelter. If the operating budget is less than the total percentage of the budget then the County isn't ready for an Animal Shelter. Vice-Chairman Heiney stated that they should work on raising the permit fees. Chairman Glass said that the permit fees for Lamar County are lower than average permit fees in the Middle Georgia area. Commissioner Thrash wrapped up the workshop by saying that with growth there becomes an increase in crime and they can't do anything about all of the unfunded mandates.

Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Heiney made a motion to adjourn the workshop at 4:12 p.m. and Commissioner Horton 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