

**LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**WORKSHOP MINUTES**  
**May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**1:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 1:20 p.m. on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Traylor, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. Commissioner Heiney was absent for the meeting.

**Planning and Zoning Commission**

Angela Preston Chairman of Planning and Zoning Commission, and Planning and Zoning Commission board member, L.D. Parks addressed the board with their concerns regarding the approval process for zoning request. Ms. Preston stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission board does all of the footwork for the zoning requests. Ms. Preston wanted to know if the information that they are supplying to the Board of Commissioners is adequate enough and asked what was expected from them. Ms. Preston wanted to know if the Board of Commissioners is applying the master plan for the County and asked how they see the community going forward. Ms. Preston said that the master plan is a projection based on trends but it is not written in stone. She said that sometimes they look at a change in zoning and then they look at the master plan and they can't protect the property. Ms. Preston said that they don't have to change it for probable zoning and they don't have to change it with commercial zoning just because commercial zoning is predicted. Ms. Preston said that she feels like the Board of Commissioners is using the master plan wrong. The master plan is a forecast and a potential and it's not a plan they have to follow. Ms. Preston said that this is a unique community and she tells her friends that there isn't a Walmart here. She said we still have local businesses and we still have a downtown and a lot of people just love that. Ms. Preston requested to know how the Board of Commissioners feel about the County's master plan.

Chairman Glass stated that until Gerald Thompson addressed the Board of Commissioners, he didn't understand all the leg work that the Planning and Zoning Commission board were doing and stated that they are working on getting minutes and other communication from them in the future.

Mr. Parks stated that a lot of work and background research goes into the zoning process and that the minutes are a great resource for the board to have. Mr. Parks said that they do site visits and travel county roads seeing how it affects the request that they have received. They visit with the neighbors to see what they think. Mr. Parks stated that there was a re-zoning issue where the neighbors didn't want the property to be re-zoned due to trucks coming in and out. He said the roads weren't built to handle these trucks and they are also noisy and you get a lot of pollution. So, the Planning and Zoning Commission board voted to deny the re-zoning request but the Board of Commissioners decided to approve the request. Mr. Parks said they didn't understand what happened. Mr. Parks said that all five members look at the guidelines and the area of the zoning request when making their determination.

Commissioner Horton thanked the Planning and Zoning Commission board for what they do. He said that the minutes will help them work closer together to help them make the decision. Commissioner Horton said that there aren't many times that the board has gone against the Planning and Zoning Commission board's recommendations.

Mr. Parks said that doing what is right is his personal goal regardless if anyone likes it or not. It makes it smoother for the future of the County. He said that the recent decision where the board went against the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission board was a big one. He said that they put a lot of time in these zoning request because they are voted in by the citizens.

Commissioner Thrash said that the Planning and Commission board has appeared at meetings when there were things on the agenda that the Board of Commissioners didn't know were there. Commissioner Thrash said that the board wants to know the opinions of the Planning and Zoning Commission board. She said that the tax payers spend a lot of money for the land use plan and the citizens, that are on that committee, put in a lot of time. Commissioner Thrash said that she would think that the Planning and Zoning Commission board would take that into consideration when they are making recommendations. Commissioner Thrash said that when an area is zoned commercial, they take the land use plan into consideration and they look out for the future of the County. Commissioner Thrash stated that she works with her appointee to the Planning and Zoning Commission board and she listens to his recommendations. Commissioner Thrash stated that the recommendation that they had for one of the last re-zoning requests, which was for the mobile park in Milner, was to have an environmental impact study as a condition. Commissioner Thrash clarified to Mr. Parks that they are appointed by the Board of Commissioners and not the voters. Commissioner Thrash said that as Commissioners they have to be very careful about their involvement with the Planning and Zoning Commission board. She said that they should be doing their own homework, including research and recommendations, but the Board of Commissioners do their own homework. Commissioner Thrash said that just because they don't take the Planning and Zoning Commission board's recommendation doesn't mean they aren't valuable and the Board of Commissioners appreciates everything that they do. Commissioner Thrash said that there may be some things that their board knows that the Planning and Zoning Commission board doesn't know.

Ms. Preston said that she agreed with Commissioner Thrash to a point but since they conduct the Public Hearings, they are exposed to a lot more of the protest and they very seldom come to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Thrash responded that this is not true and said that they do come to the Board of Commissioner members personally and they also come to the Board of Commissioners meetings. Chairman Glass said that the Board of Commissioners hold a Public Hearing for the zoning request before they vote. Ms. Preston said that she did understand that they don't have to have the same opinion as the Planning and Zoning Commission board but the Board of Commissioners should take into account the decision the Planning and Zoning Commission board has made.

Vice-Chairman Traylor stated that sometimes the parties involved don't show up to the Planning and Zoning Commission board's Public Hearing but then showed up for the Board of Commissioners Public Hearing. Vice-Chairman Traylor said that during the Dollar General zoning

request the room was full at the Planning and Zoning Commission board's Public Hearing but then, at the Board of Commissioners Public Hearing, only a handful of people showed up. Vice-Chairman Traylor requested that the Planning and Zoning Commission board encourage the parties to also come to the Board of Commissioners Public Hearing. Ms. Preston and Mr. Parks both said that they always tell them to attend the Board of Commissioners Public Hearing. Vice-Chairman Traylor said that sometimes they think that if they come to the Planning and Zoning Commission board's Public Hearing that is all they have to do. Vice-Chairman Traylor also said that he feels that the Planning and Zoning Commission board is very valuable and thanked them for the job that they do.

Chairman Glass reported that the replacement for Mr. Dan Gunter is Anita Buice from Monroe County. He said that the Regular Business meeting is always the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. and the Workshop meetings are the Thursday prior to the Regular Business meeting. They normally meet at 12:00 p.m. He thanked Ms. Preston and Mr. Parks for what they do and said that he tries to keep the Planning and Zoning Commission board a separate organization and he avoids coming to their meetings to keep the two entities separate. Chairman Glass said that there is a lot of experience on the Planning and Zoning Commission board and he appreciates what they do. Chairman Glass said that the Board of Commissioners will work to have better communication between the two boards.

### **Regular Meeting Discussion**

- 1) Reviewed the re-zoning application 2019-06 for Bankston Properties. Commissioner Thrash stated that she had concerns with what they are planning to do with the property and would make a phone call to Mr. Bankston to find out more details.
- 2) Reviewed the following minutes.
  - Workshop Meeting-April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2109
  - Regular Business Meeting-April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019
  - Special Called Meeting-May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019
- 3) The board reviewed two Proclamations.
  - Public Works Week
  - National Nurses Week
- 4) The board agreed to hear a Presentation by Nurse Manager Sherry Farr of the Lamar County Health Department. Vice-Chairman Traylor suggested a recognition of appreciation for Martha Holloway's 10 years of Service to the Lamar County Health Department and for being on the Board of Health for 15 years.
- 5) The board reviewed two board appointments.
  - The Emergency Medical System (EMS) Council re-appointing Dr. Robert Cox and Fire Chief Douglas Matthews.
  - The resignation of Martha Holloway from the Lamar County Board of Health and appointing Jody Kidd as her replacement.
- 6) The board reviewed the VFIS contract which is the Volunteer Firefighters Cancer Policy
- 7) The board reviewed the Lamar County Juvenile contract. County Attorney Mayfield has been working on the contract, including some firm changes and typographical errors. Commissioner Thrash suggested that they add that the contractors with John B. Milner be in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia.

- 8) The board heard from County Clerk Davidson that the contract with BB&T and ACCG, for the new Fire Truck, will close on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 provided they approve the contract at the May meeting and that all of the paperwork is in the hands of BB&T before May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
- 9) The board discussed the Ground Lease Agreement with McIntosh Trail Community Service board. Chairman Glass reported that the surveyor, James Butler, has drafted a plat and it is in keeping with what Fayette County had used for their Mental Health Building.
- 10) The board reviewed Ordinance 2019-06 Sunday Alcohol Sales. This will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.
- 11) The board reviewed Ordinance 2019-07 Posting of Numerals for New Construction Homes. Chairman Glass reported that he received a change from Fire Chief Matthews that reads, "Sign must be 12 inches wide by 6 inches high. Numbers must be 3-3/4 inches to 4 inches high" Chairman Glass reported that this is for new construction only. Vice-Chairman Traylor requested that some type of publication be done on this. Chairman Glass reported that the Fire Department and Fire Volunteers did a smoke detector installation this past Saturday.
- 12) The board reviewed Ordinance 2019-08 Specification for Roads. Chairman Glass stated that this was a cleanup of typographical errors and duplications that were found in the Ordinance.
- 13) The board reviewed Ordinance 2019-09 Amending the Zoning Ordinance for Lamar County
- 14) The board reviewed Ordinance 2019-10 Rezoning by Bankston Properties

### **Administrator's Report**

County Administrator Townsend reported that the revenues are higher than what was forecasted originally. He shared a cash flow report with the board that is attached to the minutes. County Administrator Townsend reported that there was an increase in revenue due to permits for new houses and Chairman Glass stated that this increase was also attributed to the increase with the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST).

County Administrator Townsend reported that a new air conditioner unit had been replaced at the jail and that all of the units in the County are around 15 to 20 years old. He said that he had discussion about the windows at the Courthouse with Maintenance Director Beverly. One window, needing to be replaced, will cost around \$1,000.00 and replacing 29 more windows will cost around \$31,000.00. County Administrator Townsend recommended having tinted glass windows. Chairman Glass recommended having windows that have divided lights. He said that he would like to get back to something like this which is the historical version. He said that this is an early version of double paned windows. Chairman Glass said that the windows are fogging up pretty bad and there are seal rot problems. Chairman Glass said that he likes the work that is being done but he would rather have divided lights instead of single pane or something that looks like divided lights.

County Administrator Townsend reported that he had received some quotes for the carpet at the Courthouse and also quotes for three air conditioner units. He stated that three air conditioner units were replaced at the Courthouse last year. County Administrator Townsend said that the staff is working on an RPF for three air conditioner units that have the brand name Trane because there are already three Trane air conditioner units at the Courthouse.

County Administrator Townsend stated that he and Public Works Director Rigdon had worked with Southeastern Site Development reviewing bridges in the County that are on the Critical

Bridge list from the GADOT report. Once they receive an estimated quote for the repairs, they will put out an RFP for sealed bids.

County Administrator Townsend shared a breakdown list for the Safety Refund from ACCG. He said that the idea is to invest money back into the County for Safety. The Administrative staff prioritized the list according to need. The Senior Center needs a concrete pathway from the building to the parking lot for a cost of \$2,150.00. Automated External Defibrillator (AED) units are needed for seven County buildings at a cost of \$1,245.00. The Courthouse needs carpet replaced in the Courtroom and the hallways for a cost of \$11,610.00. Carpet needs to be installed in the conference room at the Administration building for a cost of \$2,203.00. Chairman Glass stated that items that exceed the \$7,500.00 threshold will need board approval. Chairman Glass requested that they vote on this in June.

County Administrator Townsend stated that midyear budget amendments would be done for Planning and Zoning and Board of Elections. County Administrator Townsend stated that Building and Zoning and Code Enforcement will now be under the Planning and Zoning budget.

County Administrator Townsend went over a request made by Commissioner Heiney. County Administrator Townsend said that he would need to get with Public Work's Director Rigdon regarding paving Crawford Road up to the rock on both sides. County Administrator Townsend reported that triple treat will cost \$55,000.00 and the estimated material cost is \$105,402.67. County Administrator Townsend said that a base would have to be done first and then they would come back with the triple treat and asphalt. County Administrator Townsend reported that there is no one on staff who is trained on the triple treat machine. Chairman Glass said that the asphalt is the bulk of the cost, there are other aspects with the labor along with other things to consider such as striping.

Commissioner Thrash inquired about the Crane Road paving job. County Administrator Townsend reported that Crane Road is included on the LMIG contract. He also reported that Ga. Asphalt was bought out by C.W. Matthews who will honor all quotes related to the Request for Proposal (RFP).

## **ROUND TABLE**

Chairman Glass reported on the Towaliga Budget. He said that there is an increase in the Towaliga Budget due to a request from the Public Defender to add another attorney. He said that it has been based on caseload since around 2013-14. He has five attorneys and is asking for one more. The caseload has increased by 42 percent. Chairman Glass said that based on this percentage, he is justified to have an additional person and he needs more help from the State for Indigent Defense. Chairman Glass said that traditionally they split the caseload based on each department; the District Attorney, the Public Defender and the Juvenile Judge. Chairman Glass said that to be fair about it, they used the caseload by County for each of these departments. At a Towaliga budget meeting last night, they presented the standard caseload based on the Judges caseload. Chairman Glass reported that in the past they have been running 21 to 22 percent of the overall caseload and if they go with the Judges caseload it is 26 percent of the overall caseload. The caseload came down for Butts County but went up for Lamar and Monroe County. If they don't consider it the same way as they did last year, and use last year's formula for splitting caseloads, then Butts

County would save 2 percent, Lamar County would go up by 7 percent and Monroe County would go up by 30 percent. The primary reason for the big increase is because of the new attorney in the Public Defender's office. If you used the proposed splits, among all the departments, based on the Judges caseload, Butts County would save 20 percent, Lamar County would go up by 47.6 percent and Monroe would go up by 31.5 percent. Another proposal, if you go by population split, would be that Butts County save 16 percent, Lamar County would go up by 53 percent and Monroe County would go up by 24 percent. Chairman Glass stated that this would cost Lamar County about a 1/3 of a mill if they go with this proposal. Chairman Glass stated that Lamar County can't take this kind of an increase but most counties are going toward this type of split. He said that something will have to be worked out.

Commissioner Thrash stated that she spoke with Representative Marty Harbin and she told him that the Public Defender charges are not sustainable for counties or tax payers. She said that she was in court recently and just about everyone requested a Public Defender. The majority of these people are being charged with State charges and they are incarcerating them and housing them. Commissioner Thrash said that this is another prime example of unfunded mandates from the State where we are processing and abiding by State laws. Chairman Glass reported that it cost \$8.41 per person for Public Defender services, and \$10.92 per person, next year, for Public Defender services, for all three counties combined. Commissioner Thrash said that this doesn't include investigator or other outside charges that are billed to the County separately. Chairman Glass stated that the Juvenile Court Judge does not receive a separate supplement. The Public Defender currently receives \$15,000.00 in supplements and is asking for \$21,000.00. Chairman Glass stated that he isn't in favor of this. Chairman Glass explained about using a rolling average based on a three-year average. Chairman Glass said that one of the issues with the current system is when you do the drug task force in Lamar County, there will be a lot more cases in Lamar County, and for one year there will be a spike and to avoid that spike, in turns of budget planning, it would be nice to smooth that out and go to a three-year rolling average. Chairman Glass reported that Lamar County signed an agreement back in November of 2018 but Butts County and Monroe County did not.

Kay Pedrotti, with the Herald Gazette, reported that there would be a walk through at the high school on May 30<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 to 3:00 p.m. Also, students are invited to come and get their ceiling tile art. On June 19<sup>th</sup> and June 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a giant yard sale with tables, chairs, filing cabinets, etc.

County Clerk Davidson reported that the Proclamation read for the Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS) in April would need to be changed from 66 pinwheels to 29 pinwheels and signed by the Board of Commissioners because the number submitted from DFACS was incorrect. The replacement would be given directly to Christy Holliman with DFACS.

County Clerk Davidson reported that a voting delegate for the 2019 NACO convention would need to be signed by the chairman with a nod from the board.

Commissioner Thrash reported that the Pecan Festival is May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 from 8:00 to 4:00.

Commissioner Horton requested that a sink hole on Lanette Circle be repaired.

County Administrator Townsend reported that Howard Road was re-opened as of 1:45 p.m. today.

Chairman Glass reported and said that the dry wall, installation, painting, and caulking under the porch had been completed at the new Lamar County Health building. They are also starting on the bricks on the back of the building. He said that hopefully, by the end of June, there can be a Grand Opening; if people can go inside and look around the building.

The board decided to hold their Regular Workshop meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

Richard Smooty from Gordon College, present for the meeting, reported that June 30<sup>th</sup> is Asteroid Day and asteroids are always a potential threat to the Earth. Also, July is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 9 and the walk on the moon.

Commissioner Horton made a motion to adjourn the Workshop meeting at approximately 2:36 p.m. Vice-Chairman Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Charles Glass, Chairman

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Ryran Traylor, Vice-Chairman

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Bennie Horton, Commissioner

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Robert Heiney, Commissioner

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Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk