

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session Minutes

July 9th, 2020

9:00 A.M

I. Call to Order

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

II. Budget Review

County Administrator Sean Townsend presented the budget calendar and stated that since the millage rate will not be rolled back only one Public Hearing will be necessary. He said that the goal is to have everything approved and sent to the Department of Revenue for Approval by August 31, 2020. The Public Hearing will be held in December and adopted by the board on December 15th, 2020.

County Administrator Townsend reported that the overall budget is slightly down and said that this includes revenues and expenses. He said that the major work that needs to be done has been delayed. He said that the budget would be amended to \$10,967,962.00. A budget summary sheet was presented to the board showing each amended amount for all of the Departments and Constitutional Offices including a chart of trends for each one from 2017 to 2020. He said that with the prior year forecasted numbers he was able to predict the expenditures. He said overall the projected expenditures for the year 2020 are \$10,098,202.17.

Vice-Chair Thrash asked about the Mowing and Trash Pickup contract for the County. County Administrator Townsend reported that from the beginning, they picked up trash, and then they would come in with the big mowers. He said that they are now on their second trip around the County picking up trash and then mowing. County Administrator Townsend reported that there was a learning curve in the beginning but said that they are now doing better.

Chairman Glass asked about the \$18,000.00 transfer from the General Budget in the budget amendment. County Administrator Townsend reported that this will come from the Drug Abuse Treatment Fund. He said that the budget amendment also includes \$200,000.00 from the E-911 Fund which helps to fund the salaries that come from the General Fund.

County Administrator Townsend reported that the decrease of \$182,050.00 for Debt Services, reported on the budget summary sheet, was because when he created the budget he anticipated that they would go with United Bank but in the end, they choose Branch Bank and Trust (BB&T) and the payment is not due until March of 2021 instead of December 31st, 2020.

County Administrator Townsend reported that on the PT-32-1 form the rollback millage rate is 12.829. He stated that the digest had increased due to the re-evaluations of County property. He said that the rollback percentage is 0.328 and overall this is about a \$400,000.00 increase.

County Administrator Townsend stated that the revenues are lower because of the 91 percent collection rate rather than a 100 percent collection rate. He said that the current budget for 2020 was \$4,885,878.00 and the 2020 budget amendment is \$4,161,092.00. County Administrator Townsend reported that the Tax Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT) current budget is \$949,086.00 and the 2020 amendment is \$873,442.00. He said that the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) and the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) both continue to have higher than budgeted distributions. County Administrator Townsend reported that the total 2020 budget amendment revenue forecast is \$10,967,962.00 with a difference in expenditures of \$10,098,202.17 comes out to be \$869,760.00. Commissioner Traylor inquired about the beer and wine license revenues with the current budget of \$9,000.00 compared to the \$90,000.00 revenues reported for the 2020 amendment. County Administrator Townsend said that this was a typo in the manual and said he would make this correction. Commissioner Traylor also inquired about the building inspection revenues of \$40,000.00 compared to the \$100,000.00 revenues reported for the 2020 amendment. County Administrator Townsend reported that there had been some changes with the way the building and inspections are being reported and said that they are now combining the permits and the inspections. County Administrator Townsend reported that the revenue for the Lamar County Resource Officers has decreased due to the fact the schools have been out since March due to COVID-19. He said that the excise tax at the end of the year for the alcohol beverage revenue has increased from \$15,000.00 to \$18,000.00. County Administrator Townsend reported that the TAVT has been low compared to what was forecasted but noted that \$99,000.00 had been received from the Tax Commissioners Office which was higher than what he has been forecasting.

Chairman Glass inquired about the motor vehicle tax which was budgeted at \$62,155.00 with an amended amount of \$131,419.00 according to the digest. County Administrator Townsend reported that the penalty on real property was down due to waving penalties on taxes during the COVID-19. He said that penalties were being collected as of June 1st, 2020.

County Administrator Townsend reported that he had also included a revenue trend comparison of all of the revenue sources from 2012 to 2020.

III. Wage Study

County Administrator Townsend presented a wage study to the board including a classification and compensation plan implementation and estimated cost for 127 employees. The estimated cost with an established pay grade scale is \$132,956.79 with a 5-month increase of \$55,398.66 starting in August of 2020. The estimated cost with a merit increase including a pay grade scale of \$228,175.01 with a 5-month increase of \$95,027.90 starting in August of 2020. He stated that he and Human Resource Director Kilchriss had spoken to other counties when creating the wage study. County Administrator Townsend reported that this is a 2.5 percent increase and does not include the Constitutional Officers. County Administrator Townsend explained to the board that he plans to put each employee into a job position classification along with a pay grade scale for each position. The pay grade scale for each position will reflect a minimum to a maximum hourly and salaried range.

County Administrator Townsend explained to the board that he is planning on using an employee performance evaluation along with smart goals to measure each employee. He said that he has spoken to the Department Heads about implementing a 5-year plan with goals and needs for each employee.

Vice-Chair Thrash stated that she liked this plan and she especially liked the employee performance evaluation because it is giving the employee their responsibilities along with helping them to obtain their goals. County Administrator Townsend stated that if they set goals and meet them it is a 3 but if they come in with a goal of a 4 or 5 then he wants something in writing showing him how they can meet and exceed their goals and objectives. He said that he did not want to give everyone a 5 across the board because he wants explanations as to how they meet their goals. County Administrator Townsend said a lot of employees are discouraged when they do not get feedback and they think they may be doing something wrong. This creates communication between the supervisor and the employee, and it makes the departments look better which makes the board look better. Commissioner Traylor stated that one supervisor may be harder with expectations than another supervisor and it levels the playing field. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that County Administrator Townsend and Human Resource Director Kilchriss did a good job with the wage study and said it was very well prepared.

IV. Department Briefings

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Brad White addressed the board and stated that he was going to have to sit down with County Administrator Townsend to look at the 911 expenditures because they are \$30,000.00 over budget. He said that he knew that they had a dispatcher that had a complication with a childbirth and was out for an extended period of time. He said he also had two other dispatchers that were out, and they were spending a lot on overtime. Sheriff White said that the only issue he had with his budget was with the salaries and he would get with County Administrator Townsend about this.

Vice-Chair Thrash inquired about his expenses for next year including his need for cars. Sheriff White said that he will get four cars from SPLOST next year. Two cars were ordered over 18 weeks ago that are coming out of debt service that still are not ready yet. Sheriff White said that they are almost finished building them and should be ready in the next few weeks. He said that they are going to quit making the Dodge Chargers. Sheriff White said that in the SPLOST six-year plan they quoted \$23,000.00 for Dodge Chargers. He said that the closest thing to this is a \$30,000.00 to \$35,000.00 basic law enforcement car with no equipment. He said in the past they purchased Crown Victoria's for \$21,900.00. Sheriff White said for a \$30,000.00 car the equipment will run about \$13,000.00. Sheriff White said that the plan now is to purchase Dodge Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs).

Vice-Chair Thrash inquired about the medical contract for the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff White said that the plan is to talk to County Administrator Townsend about re-bidding the medical contract. He said that for years they handled their own medical needs. They had two nurses and they used Dr. Woodall. He said that he was not pleased with Dr. Woodall, so they decided to go with an outside medical contract. They chose Southern Correctional Medicine and they have learned a lot through the process. He said that medical companies give you a choice of 5 days with 8 hours of service, 7 days with 8 hours of service, 7 days with 12 hours of service, or 24 hours of service. Sheriff White said that the current medical contract was the cheapest bid and cost around \$140,000.00. He said that they were about \$30,000.00 cheaper than their competitor. He said that they only have 5 days of coverage for 12 hours of service. They do not cover the inmates that are working outside of the jails. Sheriff White said that they have already broken their contract twice. He said that they want everyone tested for TB when they come into the jail and those kits are expensive. Sheriff White said that these

test kits were a part of the contract. He said that they have on-call nurses that come into the jail and two of them had accidents on the way to another jail and their insurance dropped the on-call nurses. Sheriff White said he had spoken to other Sheriff's who are using other companies and they are all having issues with the medical contractors. He said that based on current rates, the cost for medical contracts is running anywhere from \$160,000.00 to \$200,000.00 depending on the coverage and the service time.

Sheriff White reported that they should have their new digital control board by the end of the month and the funds will come from SPLOST. He said that they need a new jail. He said that no revenue is coming in from housing inmates because most of the surrounding counties have new jails. He said that Lamar County is one of the oldest jails in the State. He said that no jails are at capacity and that they do not lock up people for criminal trespassing or marijuana usage. He said that they let them out.

Sheriff White reported that everyone tested negative for COVID-19 at the Sheriff's Office. He said that they did have one jailer that tested positive that is now negative, but they never were sick. He said that there are 42 cases positive for 45 addresses and that they notify the Fire Department, the ambulance services, the EMA office so that when the dispatcher gets a call from a positive address they will know before they go into the home. Sheriff White said that the numbers are low and if a person is positive, they do not always tell them. He said that positive cases drop off every day, they age out or new positive cases come in. He said that they had a death where their wife tested positive, but they did not have that address listed as positive.

Tax Assessor

Tax Assessor Haddock Jeannie Haddock addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that building is up and that commercial prices are good.
- Reported that in 2017 there were 9231 parcels and the real and personal digest was 452 million dollars
- Reported that in 2018 there were 9241 parcels and the real and personal digest was 546 million dollars. This included the reevaluations of all of the commercial and industrial properties.
- Reported that in 2019 there were 9412 parcels which were attributed to new subdivisions.
- The digest went from 546 to 556 with the reevaluations done in the City of Barnesville.
- Reported that in 2020 there were 9515 parcels and the digest went from 556 to 586.
- Explained that due to COVID-19 there has been a delay in finishing the re-evaluations on the North end of the County.
- Reported that in 2017 there were 54 permits for houses.
- Reported that in 2018 there were 88 permits for houses.
- Reported that in 2019 there have been 450 new homes built in Lamar County with 80 of those in the City of Milner.
- Reported that in 2020 there have been 57 new homes built in Lamar County.
- Reported that the values have not dropped but the sales have slowed down.

- Explained that the Field Appraiser has been very busy measuring homes, checking on sales and conservation, and working when others have not been. Requested that the Field Appraiser receive a raise.
- Reported that the re-evaluations will begin in 2021 on the North end of the County and in 2022 re-evaluations will begin in the South end of the County. Re-evaluations are done every three years.
- Explained that there have been 151 appeals out of 9500 assessment notices. There are 40 appeals that have gone before the Board of Equalization.
- Reported that the houses in Liberty Estates are selling for \$160,000.00 to \$180,000.00.
- Reported that the houses in Vintage Park are selling for \$140,000.00 to \$160,000.00 and are 1400 to 1600 square foot homes. The homes are built on .014 of an acre. Only one car can park in the driveway and then the rest of the cars are parked on the side of the road. There are 80 houses in this subdivision.
- Reported that the values of property that are going up are affecting the elderly.
- Reported that the digest went up by 35 million dollars over last year.
- Reported that the sales ratio will reduce the utilities by \$70,000.00.

Tax Assessor Haddock explained that they used to take the 2019 sales versus the 2020 digest. This would give her from January to April to look at the houses and see what they were selling for and to see if they could adjust them. Now, they use the 2019 sales from the 2019 digest and that only gives her four months to look at the houses because she has to send assessment notices out in April. Tax Assessor Haddock said that houses used to sell a lot less than what they were valued at so the next year you paid based on the value of the home. She said that they are not giving enough time. She said that they did the sales up until April and if it sold, they changed the value and put them on a new schedule. If the property had not been looked at then it is still on the old schedule. If the house sold from January to April in 2020 then they looked at the home and it went on the new schedule. Tax Assessor Haddock said that this is affecting the person that sold the house. She said that because of this they will lose money on utilities. Tax Assessor Haddock said that Pike County went up by ten percent on everyone and she said that she feels that this is not fair. Tax Assessor Haddock said that she wants every house looked at before she ups the value and it may take a little longer to get to where they need to be because not every house has been looked at since 2017. Tax Assessor Haddock said that Lamar County is not the only County that is being hit hard. She said that there has been a decrease in breaches because of big pieces of property that are being sold and divided up. She said that they received a letter in October and then in March regarding this before the conservation was removed. Tax Assessor Haddock said that from 2008 to 2017 the value was steady. She said that the inflation growth went down until 2018 and then everything went up and she has to stay at market value.

Tax Assessor Haddock said that COVID-19 affected the re-evaluations and the contractor has had a gun pulled on him already. She said that they do go and knock on the doors of the property owner before they go onto the property. Tax Assessor Haddock said that she has posted information about the contractors that are doing the evaluations on Barnesville.com, Barnesville Dispatch, the Lamar County Discussion Page, and the Lamar County website. Tax Assessor Haddock said that they knock as a courtesy, but the property owner does not have to answer the door. She said that a lot of people have been home because of COVID-19.

She said that the contractor is not wearing a uniform, but he does have County identification. They are driving a truck with Lamar County magnets on it. Tax Assessor Haddock said that she does not know what else to do to let the people know that their property will be re-evaluated. It was suggested that they wear County shirts or reflective vests. Tax Assessor Haddock said that the Sheriff's Office has the contractors' tag number and the make of his vehicle, which is a white Chevrolet truck. Tax Assessor Haddock said that if a person is uneasy, they will take a picture of the front door and leave and come back.

Tax Assessor Haddock reported that the 3D Flight data is available via a secure website and is id and password accessible. She is working on getting the public data on the Lamar County Qpublic website in the coming weeks.

Planning and Community Development

Planning and Community Development Director Anita Buice addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that in 2020 there are 200 new lots had been created.
- Reported that the developers are putting -contracts on homes before they are built.
- Reported that there are two new commercial businesses in Lamar County
 - Diesel Mechanic Shop on Hwy 36
 - B&G is expanding its operation
- Reported that there are changes in Zoning-Agricultural and Home Businesses
 - People working in homes in 2020
- Reported that in 2019 there were 323 total businesses in Lamar County with 78 businesses from 2019 that have not renewed
- Reported that in 2020 there are 293 total registered businesses with a net gain of 50 new businesses in Lamar County.
- Reported that she is using a vehicle from Public Works for inspections when she has to go into the fields.
- Reported that there is continued growth in Lamar County.
- Reported that their conferences and training had been canceled for 2020 but would catch up in 2021. Requested an increase in the training line item of the Planning and Community Development budget due to the training and conferences being an expense.
- Reported that there had been a 105 lot subdivision requested in Lamar County and stated that they may need to have another inspector in the field soon based on the growth of the County.
- Suggested that another person may be needed in Milner based on the growth of the County.
- Reported that ordinance re-writes are needed on the community development side.
- Suggested that town hall meetings be held for community input.
- Suggested that they use social media as a means of transparency for the Planning and Community Development Department. Suggested that they have a Facebook Page like the Recreation Department already has in place.

Public Works Department

Public Works Director James Rigdon addressed the board with the following: Public Works

- Reported that his crew had done a good job on Old Alabama Road
- Stated that it is hard to come up with a 5-year plan when you have road issues.
- Reported that the road crew is working on low hanging limbs including Ramah Church, Sappington, and Bush Roads. Reported that they are having trouble with beavers on Bush Road.
- Reported that they have had to scrape the roads due to the heavy rains back in the Spring.
- Reported that his budget is good.
- Reported that the contractors for the mowing and trash pickup are doing a great job. Explained that twelve bags of trash were picked up in three months and then they started the process all over.
- Reported that they are cutting kudzu on guard rails of bridges.
- Reported that a power surge or lightning strike damaged the motherboard of his sign machine. Explained that the software still works and that the Georgia Department of Transportation has a version where they do not have to create the design. They can create any design as long as they have blanks.
- Explained that the snakes on swampy roads were bad and discussed purchasing snake boots for a cost of \$79.00 to \$129.00
- Stated that the big goal is to buy a new dump truck.
- Reported that the septic tank at the Public Works Facility is leaking and needs repair.
- Reported that he had lent the old animal control truck to the Board of Elections Office to pull their new trailer that is used to haul election equipment.
- Reported that Charlie Peters with Animal Control is doing a great job.
- Reported that cats are an issue in the County and stated that litters of kittens would not be picked up without picking up the mother cat. Reported that it is costing the County \$400.00 a month for euthanization.
- Discussed the different options for Bottoms Road because it cannot be repaved due to the pipe in the middle of the road. Reported that it would cost 2.5 million dollars to pave Bottoms Road. The road was cut because it was the City of Barnesville's right of way to get water and power to the City Pond.
 - Making it Dirt
 - Making it Gravel
 - Re-Routing the Road
- Reported that the hydraulic oil from the garbage trucks is eating up the asphalt.

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Director Jim Beverly addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that he had A&B Heating and Cooling to put in a new thermostat at the Senior Center because lightning or a power surge damaged it.

- Reported that COVID-19 had slowed him down and projects that he had planned to do had been delayed.
- Reported that the installation of the windows at the Courthouse had been delayed.
- Reported that he had been installing the plexiglass dividers and they have been installed in all of the buildings.
- Reported that the plans for 2021 were to install new windows on the front side of the Courthouse.
- Reported that the rolling project for the Courthouse air conditioners on the roof of the Courthouse still needs to be replaced.
- Reported that the new carpet in the Courthouse has made a big difference.
- Reported that the Jail is the building that has the most problems.
 - Plumbing
 - Air Conditioners
 - Parts for various items in the Jail are outdated and/or obsolete
- Reported that they spray the buildings with a battery-powered sprayer every Friday to kill the COVID-19 virus.
- Reported that the Van, which was a surplus from the Georgia Department of Transportation, has 305,000 miles on it.
- Reported that the lawnmowers have high mileage.
- Reported that the sewage lines at Station One need to be replaced
- Reported that a bathroom and an office is needed at the Fire Station on Morgan Dairy Road.
- Reported that they are continuing to work on various issues in the County.

Emergency Management Agency

Administrative Assistant Becky Martin addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that they are continuing to receive personal protective equipment (PPE's) including N95 masks and they are working with the Department of Health to make sure that all of the Departments have enough. They have worked with every Department except the Fire Department.
- Reported that they continue to have Area 4 meetings regarding the Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPA) with big plans for the coming year.
- Reported that there will be no new Grants or new sirens in Lamar County for the next four or five years.
 - County Administrator Townsend reported that the \$59,000.00 budgeted for the sirens is listed in the budget amendments.
 - 10 sirens in the County in addition to the sirens in the City of Barnesville's and at Gordon State College.

Tax Commissioner

Tax Commissioner Andrea Anthony addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that only two people are allowed inside the building at a time.
- Reported that the Tax Assessor is working on updating Qpublic for Lamar County.
- Reported that she has been having credit card issues with her pay online system.
- Reported that she did not know about the jump from \$68,000.00 to \$99,000.00 for the Tax Ad Valorem Taxes (TAVT) because she does not handle these reports. Noted that there is no way to predict who buys cars.
- Reported that the vehicle she drives is a 2001 Tahoe and a loaner from the Sheriff's Office. She says it has 216,000 miles and is constantly in the shop at the Public Works facility. Reported that she drives her own vehicle when she attends out of town trainings.
- Reported that a Sheriff's Deputy has to go with her when she inspects handmade trailers or vehicles that may have been stolen. Reported that one of the Deputy's was rude to her. She said that a Certification of Inspection (T-22B Form) has to be filled out every time and the Deputies are not filling out the forms correctly. Requested that they assign an off-duty Deputy to handle this task. Explained that tags for homemade trailers require inspections and proof from the Sheriff's Office that they are not stolen.
- Requested that grout in the tiles needs to be replaced.
- Requested fireproof shelving for bank recs and other records at the Tax Commissioners Office. Requested to have more regular shelving in the storage room.
- Requested that her office staff receive a raise
- Thanked the Maintenance Department for the plexiglass dividers but said that there is an issue with people hearing in the office with the new dividers.

Fire Dept

Fire Chief Douglas Matthews addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that the new tanker trucks had come in and he is working on getting them lettered.
- Reported that they were used for a house fire on the North End of the County. It took 10,000 gallons of water.
- Requested that his 5-year goal is to have more paid Fire Fighters and stated that they need 10 more volunteers.
- Reported that more drivers are needed.
- Reported that it takes 4 people on a fire call before they can go into a house. One paid Fire Fighter has to be on the call.
- Reported that not having manpower will affect the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating.
- Reported that to save a house at 30 percent it takes 5,000 gallons.
- Reported that the SPLOST money for the Fire Department was spent wisely.
- Reported that classroom training is an issue because of COVID-19.
- Explained that once they train a volunteer they leave and go somewhere else. Salary and Insurance is a factor. The pay is \$4.22 for every call. The call could last anywhere from 2 hours to 10 hours, but the pay is the same. Reported that he had invested time and money on a student from Gordon State College that wanted to be a volunteer firefighter, but he did not show up to work. Reported that the invested training was around \$4,000.00 and it takes about 8 months to train them.

- Explained that the City of Barnesville and Lamar County compete for Volunteers but noted that the City of Barnesville is not willing to share volunteers.
- Reported that he had requested a Safer Grant. If awarded this will assist the Fire Departments in changing their salary scale. If the Grant is received, then they will be able to employ three new firefighters for a cost of \$151,402.00 per year. The Grant specifies that the first and second year will be for \$113,00.00 and the third year will be for \$52,000.00. The County will contribute \$ 37,850.00 for the first two years and \$98,000.00 for the third year. Explained that if the Grant is not awarded to the Fire Department then the County will need to look at funding three new firefighters for a salaried cost of \$150,000.00 plus \$15,000.00 for uniforms.
- Requested that Station 6, Parker Branch Fire Station, has four paid firefighters.
- Reported that there had been a save at Ingles without the use of an ambulance but that manpower with firefighters is still an issue.
- Reported that the subdivisions on Piedmont Road, Fox Crossing and Hwy 18 are an area for concern regarding fire safety.
- Suggested that a SPLIT Station be done on the Rock Road and Piedmont Road with the surrounding counties.
- Explained that there is a major concern for fires that could happen in Vintage Park in Milner due to the houses being so close together. Houses are 15 feet apart and it takes 10 minutes at least from Fire Station 1 to get to that location.
- Requested that they build a new Fire Station in Milner with 2 to 5 firefighters and 7 bedrooms based on the growth and the future growth of the Northern end of the County.
- Currently, there are two bedrooms in the Fire Station in Milner with 2 bays. The EMS team lives at the Milner Fire Station.
- Reported that Community Ambulance and \$8,000.00 from the City of Milner SPLOST funds were used to upgrade the Fire Station in Milner. They put in new cabinets but there are no windows except for the bathroom.
- Requested that the Station 7 have a restroom, a heater, a Fire Truck and 4 people to man it for ISO ratings.
- Reported that currently, only one paid Fire Fighter is on duty and it takes 18 minutes to get to the interstate.
- Reported that it is not the number of calls but the amount of work that is the struggle at the Fire Department.
- Requested that they purchase a \$750,000.00 to 1.2-million-dollar ladder truck because if a building or a roof is greater than 20 feet then they cannot access it. Reported that there are 80 commercial properties and Rock Springs Church that could have issues.
- Reported that he has 10 building inspections to complete but had to stop this process due to COVID-19.
- Reported that a repeater is needed for the Fire Department to use on the North End of the County for communication purposes. If they lose signal it goes to the repeater. The Sheriff's Office uses a blue tooth for communication whereas the volunteers use their radios.
- Stated he would give up SPLOST to have the radios fixed.
- Stated that if the Fire Department gets sick with COVID-19 they would have to depend on the volunteers that they currently have on staff.

Recess for Lunch

Chairman Glass called for a recess to break for lunch at 12:16 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Board of Elections

Board of Elections Board Superintendent Anita Reid and Board of Elections members Jimmy Hearn and Bill Christopher addressed the board.

- Reported that during the early voting and the last elections they had endured many accusations that were not true, and they had had a really rough time.
- Requested that improvements be made before the November election.
 - Camera's be installed
 - Keep the public downstairs
 - Keep voting officials upstairs
 - Poll workers are trained
 - Increase the number of poll workers
 - Purchase new sturdy tables for each voting device and a printer
 - Continue to Practice Social Distancing
 - Move the Board of Elections Office out of the Administration Building
- Requested that they have a larger area to count the votes.
- Explained that people are talking while they are trying to count the ballots and said that this is very distracting.
- Reported that the advertise the upcoming elections based on the code of law.
- Requested that they have a new building with drive-thru service.
- Elections Superintendent Reid reported that someone would not give her an absentee ballot because of what she looked like. Stated that there were many issues with collecting the absentee ballots.
- Reported that the ballot box will remain on-site at the Lamar County Administration Building until the end of the election cycle in January of 2021.
- Requested that the compensation time for Elections Superintendent Reid be accrued during the November Elections be extended beyond the end of the year due to the time frame of taking the compensation time. There will also be a Special Election and a possible run-off during this time. The board agreed to this request and asked that they document this with a letter for the Human Resource Department.
- Reported that the only scheduled election in 2021 is for the City of Barnesville.
- Requested that the poll workers have extra training.
- Reported that there had been issues at the polling precincts during the elections.
- Requested that the poll workers receive \$25.00 for new equipment training.
- Reported that there would need to be more training for the new equipment.
- Reported that there may be money that can be received from Grants.
- Reported that they are increasing their equipment and supplies and they need extra room to store these items.
- Requested that all of the Board of Election workers have a remote room to work in because they need to be more spread out.

- Reported that on Election Day June they left the Board of Elections at 4:00 a.m. and were escorted out of the building with Sheriff White. Reported that they did not get the notification from the State that they were released to go home. Reported that there were lots of things to do before they could leave.
- Commissioner Thrash apologized to the Elections Superintendent Reid and the Board of Elections board members for them being questioned about the ability of the Board of Elections office to do their job.
- Reported that only Elections Superintendent Reid and the Board of Elections members have a key to the secure data room.
- Reported that they are looking for a replacement in the Board of Elections office due to the resignation of an experienced Board of Elections employee. Requested that the position goes from a part-time position to a full-time position based on the amount of work that is now being required.

Recreation Department

Recreation Director Tiffany Lowe addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that she had to deal with a custody issue at the Recreation Department and apologized to the board if they were involved.
- Reported that normally this is the busiest time of the year but because of COVID-19, there is no baseball being played.
- Reported that the staff members will have more time to train in preparation for the Fall and Spring baseball season.
- Reported that \$8,000.00 was refunded to the parents.
- Reported that they have uniforms that can be re-used but reported that there would be uniforms that would still need to be purchased because of size issues.
- Reported that 2 Soccer teams are playing.
- Reported that a limited amount of concession supplies has been purchased and they have been able to sell some concession supplies at cost. Reported that they had a large Coke order but noted that the product does not expire until November.
- Reported that not much was lost in the way of fees but that fees had to be paid to the Dixie Youth and that the Georgia Soccer fees will need to be paid in the fall to cover both seasons. Reported that they may get some credits and noted that they do not have to pay anything extra in the Spring.
- Reported that the Soccer fees of \$65.00 cover the uniforms and that the official's fees come from the sponsors.
- Reported that there would be a shortened season for football along with shortened quarters that will be played. Reported that may only have 2 or 3 football teams.
- Reported that social distancing is an issue so they have been cleaning more than they normally do. Reported that there are 2 employees at each field.
- Reported that Lamar County does not require an out of County fee.
- Reported that they do provide some helmets for baseball but if they do not fit then the parents buy their own. Noted that a good baseball helmet costs between \$25.00 to \$35.00.

- Reported that baseball hopefully will begin in the fall but if not then it will be in the Spring of 2021.
- Reported that there had been about \$9,000.00 to \$10,000.00 in sponsorship donations and that they have notified the sponsors that this will carry over into the Spring season. Most of the sponsorship is for advertisement, it cost around \$250.00 or each team. The advertisement is on the uniforms.
- Reported that the fundraisers that were planned were canceled and that the home run derby has been pushed back.
- Reported that the grant opportunity from Kaboom had been pushed back until August 31st, with a decision being made by the company at that time. The stipulation for accepting the terms of the grant is that the playground equipment would have to be installed by the end of the year. If the grant is not received, then it will be next year before any playground equipment can be ordered and paid for by the County.
- Reported that a group of people in sports cars have been doing doughnuts close to the Administration Office at the Recreation Department and one sports car almost hit the building. Reported that the cameras could not pick up the tag number.
- Reported that vandalism is still going on in the bathrooms.
- Suggested that they get an electronic gate to prevent people from driving through the park at a certain time but noted that the Fire Department, Police, and Sheriff Offices would need access to the locked gates.
- Reported that there are no changes in the 2021 budget.
- Reported that they are excited about getting a new building for the Gym.
- Reported that the City of Barnesville supplies the utilities for the old Gym with a discussion about Southern Rivers servicing the utilities for the new Gym.
- Reported that they would still need to utilize the old gym for wrestling and basketball for the next two seasons.
- Reported that there was still gas and water leaks in the old Gym.

Administration

County Administrator Townsend addressed the board.

- Reported that training was the biggest issue.
 - Accounting Technician/Administrative Assistant Martha Windle needs to finish Level 1 Accounting
 - Accountant Baleigh Burkett needs to finish Level 2 Training.
 - Planning and Community Development Director Buice needs training in her office including her Administrative Assistant. The goal is for her to have Level 1 Accounting Training
- Reported that County Clerk Davidson and Planning and Community Development Director Buice are going to begin working on Policy and Code of Law updates sometime in August.
- Reported that there has been ongoing work on the Financial Policy

- Reported that Accountant Burkett had tested positive for COVID-19 and had been out of the office for 14 days but had tested negative and was scheduled to return to work on Monday; two negative tests were required before she could return to work.
- Reported that Accountant Burkett was still in training and still learning.
- Reported that he had changed to the lunch schedule from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. for the Administrative Staff because he is a very structured person. One person covers lunch in the office each day from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- Reported that he had been communicating one on one with the Department heads regarding their department goals.
- Reported that a separation of duty was being done in the Administration Office. Accounting technician Windle is doing the data entry, Accountant Burkett cuts the checks and County Clerk Davidson makes the fund transfers in the bank.
- Reported that the Lamar County Audit had been extended for 90 days.
- Reported that everything has been done and looks good except for there were still issues with the Clerk of Superior Court.
- Reported that the audit at Solid Waste had been completed.
- Reported that the previous auditor, Robyn Underwood had received a peer review extension.
- Reported that there were plenty of cleaning supplies including hand sanitizer.
- Reported that Fire Chief Matthews is in the process of obtaining masks with filters that cost around \$16.00 each. It will cost under \$1000.00 for 20 masks and they will be good for six months to a year.

Probate

Probate Judge Kathy Martin addressed the board with the following.

- Reported that there had been an increase in Gun permits since COVID-19 began.
- Requested new filing cabinets for the Probate Court.
- Praised the Maintenance Team for installing the new Plexi-Glass dividers and putting in a new door for her office including a new bell that the citizens have to ring. Stated that when they close, they now have a new shade that they can pull down when they are closed.
- Reported that they are scanning documents and storing them in the cloud. Reported that their records are backed up and stored in another State.
- Requested that they look into a new VOIP phone system.
- Reported that the windows in the Courthouse are rotting away and requested that they be replaced.

Clerk of Superior Court

Clerk of Superior Court Caleb Tyson addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that revenues were affected by COVID-19 due to the Courts not being in session.

- Reported that he had heard rumors that the Judicial Order has been extended until August 4th with more requirements and noted that there may not be any more Court meetings for a while.
- Reported that Judge Wilson had taken 6 furlough days.
- Suggested that Zoom meetings would continue or could begin to be used in Court. County Administrator Townsend suggested that they use headsets and a camera.
- Reported that people cannot be forced to come to Court but felt like that when Court resumes there will be a big surge in revenue at the end of the year.

Chairman Glass reported that revenues are solid including the fact that the LOST and SPLOST are continuing to increase and that the Insurance Premium would be received in October. He stated that the rollback is based on the digest. Chairman Glass said that the goal is to get rid of the TAN and if they collect a little more each year then they can take a bite out of the TAN each year. He stated that the school board plans to keep the same rate even though they have endured Federal and State Cuts. The elementary schools are getting computers for the students through grants. Chairman Glass stated that they will probably not increase the millage rate due to receiving more money from property taxes.

- Reported that he needs more shelving and storage space for the deed books. He said that currently, they are lining the room. Reported that Title Researchers need room to spread out when they are doing a title search.
- Reported that he may have a new room at the Courthouse to use that Suzanne Cooper used when she was at the Courthouse.
- Reported that he is waiting on an estimate from Wired Technology for the data migration from the old computers to the new computers.
- Reported that the rotted windows are an area of concern.
- Reported that there needs to be a designated person to turn off the air conditioners and the lights that were left on at the Courthouse.
- Stated that he had concerns about his staff and the Court Staff becoming sick and testing positive for COVID-19. He said that people are not as efficient working from home as they are in the office. He noted that there could have to be an emergency order for a staggered staff if they continue to have Court meetings.
- Requested to know the protocol if someone does get sick and test positive for COVID-19 and suggested that a memo be sent to all department heads and Constitutional Officers.

Executive Session

Vice-Chair made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel at approximately 3:12 p.m. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Board came out of executive session at approximately 3:30 p.m. and resumed the planning session.

Lamar County UGA Extension Agency

Octavia Jackson of the Lamar County UGA Extension Agency addressed the board with the following:

- Reported that she has been doing virtual learning with the students while the students were in school during March and April since they have been out of school.
- Reported that there have been some issues with reaching the students due to internet issues or because they are riding their four-wheelers or going to the lake.
- Reported that the UGA advisory board has a five-year plan regarding what they need to do with health, physical activity, and nutrition.
- Reported that they work towards College and Career readiness with the students.
- Reported that the Agricultural Agent, Haley Robinson does lunch and learns in both Upson and Lamar County for a small fee. She works with the homeowners and producers in the County.
- Reported that she has had lots of interactions with the students and she hears that they miss their friends at school, they miss their teacher, they miss being in the classroom.
- Reported that she makes every effort to not interfere with the student's academics and meets with the students either before or after school.
- Reported that she supports the school system and will adjust according to their decisions, either onsite or online learning.
- Reported that their office is already offering virtual learning and said that the office has the equipment that they need to do this but noted that the information may change based on the needs of the teacher.
- Reported that they have the same issues that the Lamar County Health Department did when they decided to get a grant and build a new building.
- Reported that there are still snakes, rodents, mold, and leaks in the building.
- Reported that they had been in the building for 20 years and that the students still come to the same building.
- Reported that the plumbing is on the outside of the walls and that the carpet has not been cleaned in 18 years.
- Requested that they be able to move to another location.
- Requested that they have another plexiglass divider for the extension office on the side of Darlene Williams's desk.
- Reported that their budget with the State is good thus far and there have been no furloughs.
- Reported that the Northwest Extension was cut by a half-million dollars which is about 10 to 11 percent of their budget.
- Requested that they be able to park the 4-H bus at the EMA office inside of the gate with the EMA equipment.
- Reported that they are taking safety precautions including keeping the door locked, and only allowing 2 people in at a time with 6 feet intervals in the offices. They also encourage people to make appointments via email or by Facebook.

Senior Center

Senior Center Director Antionette Williams addressed the board with the following

- Reported that the ceiling and the doors are leaking. The front door and the left side door needs seals.
- Reported that the ice machine is broken but is workable.

- Reported that the bathrooms need to be renovated to meet the American Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
- Reported that there is a security issue with the front door. Stated that if they are in the back hosting or doing an activity anyone can walk in. Requested to have a button like the one in the Administration Building. Reported that when the Senior Center is open the receptionist leaves at 1:00 p.m. and there is no one to answer the door.
- Reported that they do have a temperature machine that is used when people come into the Senior Center.
- Reported that they were doing 34 Meals on Wheels Deliveries but now they are doing 54 with more people applying.
- Reported an increase in fuel cost and the hours of operation for delivering the meals.
- Reported an increase in their budget for their paper due to online support.
- Reported that they will be going to the park with the Seniors because it has more shade.
- Reported that part-time help may not come back.
- Reported that the sink in the kitchen is leaking and water gets on the counter and behind the sink. Reported that it was leaking when she came on board at the Senior Center.
- Requested that they have an exercise area with some exercise equipment for the Seniors. The equipment that used to be at the Senior Center was sold.
- Reported that they will be doing book sales, raffles, and other fundraisers to help with the funds for the Senior Center. Reported that she continues to look for Grants.
- Reported that new Seniors are coming into the program every day.
- Reported that on Tuesday and Thursday's they normally have anywhere from 20-25 Seniors and on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday's they have anywhere from 30 and above.
- Reported that the Senior Prom was a success.
- Reported that they take the Seniors to the store, to the movies and they go on trips when the Senior Center is open.
- Inquired about the former lawn care service and requested that the Senior Center grounds be enhanced and that a sign be placed on the side of Collier Road. Requested that they have mulch and pine straw.
- Stressed the importance of a security system for the front desk of the Senior Center.

V. Adjournment

Commissioner Heiney made a motion to adjourn the planning session at approximately 3:46 p.m. and Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Nancy Thrash, Vice-Chair

Bennie Horton, Commissioner

Robert Heiney, Commissioner

Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk