

**Workshop Meeting of the Lamar County Board of Commissioners**  
**August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**12:00 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chair Thrash, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Heiney, Commissioner Traylor, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. The meeting was open to the public via Zoom.

**Recess of Workshop**

Commissioner Heiney made a motion to recess the Workshop meeting at 12:01 p.m. for lunch and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Glass reconvened the Workshop meeting at 12:44 p.m.

County Administrator Townsend presented a Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) paving list for eight roads. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) amount totals \$383,886.46. The County's match of thirty percent totals \$115,165.96. The total projected cost for all eight roads is \$1,891,035.20.

1. Crawford Road to Howard Road to Johnstonville Road
2. McLean Road to Etheridge Mill Road to County Line Road
3. High Falls Road to Hwy 36 to Chappell Mill Road
4. Johnstonville Road to the City Limits to Brooks Road
5. Five Points Road to 3500 Ft. of the Bad Area
6. Berry Road to Cannafax Road to Williams Road
7. Chappell Mill Road to High Falls Park Road to Hwy 36
8. Community House Road to Hwy 341 to Ramah Church Road

The board discussed the grass growing on the roads because of the rains. Commissioner Heiney suggested that some type of herbicide be applied to the roads. Commissioner Traylor stated that they would need to make sure that the chemicals that are being used are not causing issues with the asphalt.

County Administrator Townsend stated that the list could be submitted in September, but he wanted the board to start thinking about the eight roads he had received and stated that they could submit more roads if necessary. Chairman Glass stated that they used to present a proposed list of roads to GDOT and then they decided what roads from the list to pave. He said that now, the County submits a list of roads, and based on the money received from GDOT the County works down the list based on priority. County Administrator Townsend said the County received \$383,886.46 from GDOT and he has to show them where the thirty percent of those matching funds were spent. He said that at the end of the project, GDOT reviews the list of submitted roads to see if they were paved. Chairman Glass stated that it is not required that they have all eight of these roads paved. He said that this is a list of roads that they will apply the GDOT funds to along with Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds. Chairman Glass said that they could have fifty roads on the list if they wanted to. County

Administrator Townsend stated that the eight roads that are on the list are the ones that Public Works Director Rigdon submitted last year because of the amount of work that needs to be done on these roads. County Administrator Townsend stated that these eight roads were a part of the top thirteen roads that were submitted to him. He said that they have paved six of the eight roads this year and now with Community House Road added there are eight more roads to pave.

Commissioner Heiney stated that one of his constituents wanted to know why they could not do a Bond Issue and pave all of the roads at once. Chairman Glass stated that they could not get a Bond Issue passed for a new jail. Commissioner Heiney stated that this constituent suggested that they do a 20-million-dollar bond and pay it back over 30 years and do all of the roads at once. Vice-Chair Thrash asked where they would get the money to maintain them including paying the Bond Issue back. Chairman Glass stated that theoretically it is possible but realistically they could not get a Bond Issue passed to build a new jail. Chairman Glass said that he thought it would be smarter to get a T-SPLOST.

County Administrator Townsend stated that when they have these town hall meetings, he can address the need for a T-SPLOST. He said that Commissioner Horton already has a town hall meeting set up at the E.P. Roberts Center. Chairman Glass stated that one of his concerns is that if Lamar County's sales tax is eight percent and the surrounding counties have a seven percent sales tax then this will hurt. He said that Upson County already has an eight percent sales tax and he thinks that Spalding and Pike County are discussing this too. Chairman Glass stated that they could potentially do a Bond Issue, but he does not believe that this is the best solution and it is not what he would support. Chairman Glass said that it is legal and theoretically possible. Commissioner Heiney said that he does not support a Bond Issue either because a lot of bad things can happen in thirty years. County Administrator Townsend stated that you could do a Special Revenue Bond for forty years, but it would not make sense to go forty years on a road that will only last for twenty years.

### **Regular Business Meeting Discussion**

The board reviewed five sets of minutes:

- i. Planning Session-July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- ii. Workshop Meeting July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- iii. Public Hearing July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020
- iv. Regular Business Meeting-July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020
- v. Special Called Meeting July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The board reviewed the Lamar County Arena Usage Agreement and Horse Arena Use Form. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that she likes the Arena Usage Agreement because it puts the point out that if you go over there and cause problems, they will pull your permit.

The board discussed Resolution 2020-07 New Cingular Wireless, PCS, on behalf of AT&T. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that an email had been received from Planning and Community Development Buice stating that there are no grounds to withhold the approval of Resolution 2020-07 New Cingular Wireless, PCS, on behalf of AT&T based on any environmental

conditions that it might cause. Chairman Glass stated that they could not use the hearing aid issue as grounds for disapproval of the cell tower.

The board discussed Resolution 2020-13 Minor Subdivision by Larry Sheppard. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that the Planning and Zoning board recommended approval this morning. She said that the only comments that she had heard regarding this minor subdivision were how many houses were going to be built. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that there will be four houses built and one of them is the contractor's house. She said that the other houses will be family members. Vice-Chair Thrash said that there were also a couple of questions about internet service.

The board discussed the following millage rate Resolutions.

- i. Resolution 2020-14 BOC Millage Rate
- ii. Resolution 2020-15 LOST Millage Rate
- iii. Resolution 2020-16 BOE Millage Rate
- iv. Resolution 2020-17 Bond Repayment

Chairman Glass said that the options for the 2020 millage rate are to approve what was published, 13.157, or lower. He said that you cannot go higher. He said that the Board of Education voted to set their millage rate at 17.000. Chairman Glass said that he heard that they did not get any feedback from their last Public Hearing. He said that they had a few people that attended but no one spoke. He said that most of the feedback that they received, in all of their Public Hearings, were citizens asking about elderly exemptions. Chairman Glass said that they pointed out that if you went back to 2008 and 2009 the digest was higher than it is now. He said that the number of exemptions has increased by forty percent against the Board of Education digest. Chairman Glass said that this is separate from our digest. He said that there are different rules that go into their digest versus the Board of Commissioners digest. Chairman Glass stated that the Board of Education has a different PT-32 form that they use. The Board of Education's millage rate went from 17.077 in 2019 to 17.000 in 2020. He said that they also pointed out that Upson and Monroe County have a slightly lower millage rate and all of the other surrounding counties have a higher millage rate. Chairman Glass said that half of the counties in Georgia have 20 mills are higher.

County Administrator Townsend stated that the Bond Repayment millage rate is 1.5. Chairman Glass stated that the Local Options Sales Tax (LOST) millage rate is a result of the roll-back, and the millage rate shall be reduced by 2.243 mills leaving a net millage of 13.157 for 2020. This information comes from the Five Year History. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that she would like the verbiage about the roll-back to be changed because it is so confusing and causes so much chaos and turmoil when it could be easily explained. Commissioner Traylor suggested that they do a bullet point educational listing about this in the legal organ. County Administrator Townsend stated that they could include something in the legal organ on a different page, but it cannot be on the same page as the press release. County Administrator Townsend stated that not everyone's taxes will increase therefore he is showing a Lamar County map in the Public Hearings of those areas that might be affected.

County Administrator Townsend stated that Probate Judge Martin is trying to enforce tickets that were written on the roads listed below in Ordinance 2020-06 Sec 82 Route of Travel Through Trucks.

- Burnette Road
- Cannafax Road
- Williams Road
- Berry Road
- Grove Street

Vice-Chair Thrash stated that Grove Street is a huge issue. She said that the trucks that are going to the Solid Waste Authority are bypassing Fellowship Road and taking them to Grove Street because their Global Positioning System (GPS) is taking them this way. The trucks are turning off of Hwy 341 onto Grove Street.

### **Administrator's Report**

County Administrator Townsend reported that the cash flow looks good but there was \$183,000.00 received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) act that will need to be transferred out of the General Fund and put into a new account. This account will be listed on a separate line item as a special revenue. He said that next month he would do a budget amendment to fix this. County Administrator Townsend said that it would be a grant fund because it is coming from the Federal Government. Chairman Glass stated that this has to be handled correctly because if counties do not handle this correctly then the State could be liable and then they could possibly take State funds back. He said it has to be handled the way the Federal Government wants it, and this is why the funds were delayed.

County Administrator Townsend presented a list of Constitutional Officer's collections to the board that had been turned into the County through August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Chairman Glass stated that with the break on the insurance premium, and the LOST, SPLOST, and TAVT collections being higher along with the remaining CARES act funds there could be a nice sum of money to begin the year 2021. Chairman Glass said he is not confident that they can begin the next year without having a TAN, but he is hoping that they will not have to use near as much as they have used in the past. He said that the County did not draw from the TAN until May of this year. He said that he would like to make it until June or July of next year before funds are drawn on the TAN.

County Administrator Townsend reported that County Clerk Davidson had been coordinating with Ms. Dozier, an Area Loan Specialist, with the USDA for a grant/loan and also with the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) for information on the window replacement project at the Courthouse. He said that the Lamar County Courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) so it may take some time to work through all of the red tape.

County Clerk Davidson stated that she contacted the HPD and heard back from Mr. Santiago Martinez. She said that because of COVID-19 they are short-staffed at HPD and they do not go out into the State or the counties to meet with people. He wrote, "For our specific project,

HPD will be looking to see if it might be possible to repair rather than replace the windows, as this is generally the preferred course of action. If the windows are absolutely beyond repair, you will want to document this in great detail in order to demonstrate the need for replacement. Essentially, you will want to include as many photos of the windows as possible and make sure to include some that show how the windows are deteriorated. The reason for this is that there are specific guidelines from the National Park Service that deals with things like window replacement on NRHP-listed buildings. As far as getting quotes or selecting suitable replacements, you may want to contact the Historic Macon Foundation. They will likely be able to put you in touch with people in your area that have the knowledge to assess whether or not repairs are feasible and who can help you find acceptable replacements if needed. Replacement windows will need to be "in-kind" replacements, which means they will need to be wood-framed and have a similar appearance to the historic windows. Unfortunately, as much as we enjoy getting the opportunity to visit historic buildings, HPD will not be able to send anyone out for a site visit at this time due to current staffing levels and review loads." County Clerk Davidson stated that she is working with Ms. Tizra Dozier with the USDA. Ms. Dozier stated that she would continue to work with County Clerk Davidson but that they would have to go through a lot of red tape including contacting the HPD first. County Clerk Davidson explained that they would need to get other agencies in this area involved with this process. One agency is Three Rivers Regional Commission and they would need to get their permission to proceed with a USDA loan and grant. County Clerk Davidson explained that you cannot get a USDA grant without getting a USDA loan. The loan rate is currently 2.25 percent. Chairman Glass stated that this is a bureaucratic nightmare.

Commissioner Horton inquired about the amount of money that was drawn on the TAN. County Clerk Davidson reported that \$2,001,657.39 had been drawn on the TAN. County Administrator Townsend reported that the General Fund has a balance of \$930,892.55. He said that when County Clerk Davidson was on vacation the other staff members drew money from the TAN for the Accounts Payable, Payroll, and Outstanding Checks and did not consider the balance that was already in the General Fund. He said that this is why the balance in the General Fund is higher than it should be. County Clerk Davidson stated that she would reconcile everything for the next Accounts Payable and Payroll process. County Administrator Townsend stated that they may not have to take a draw from the TAN in September depending on the distribution amount of LOST and other collected revenues. County Clerk Davidson stated that there was a \$100,000.00 collection that came from the Tax Commissioners Office on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Commissioner Traylor inquired about what it cost for an average draw from the TAN. County Clerk Davidson stated that typically it ranges from \$650,000.00 to \$800,000.00 per month. Chairman Glass explained that no interest accumulates until a draw is made on the TAN.

Chairman Glass reported that he had sent an email to the board with a website showing LOST and SPLOST graphs and other things on the website.

County Clerk Davidson reported that on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) are planning on having an outside ceremony on the Lamar County

Courthouse lawn to dedicate the placement of a memorial monument honoring the patriots of the American Revolution. The plans are to have a reception at the library.

Chairman Glass inquired about the tree ceremony for the 100<sup>th</sup> year celebration for Lamar County. Vice-Chair Thrash reported that the committee for the 100<sup>th</sup> year celebration for Lamar County met that morning and decided that instead of a tree-planting ceremony they would rather have a monument placed at the Courthouse in honor of Lamar County turning 100 years old. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that because of the upkeep that comes with having a tree this would be a better idea. Commissioner Traylor stated that counties in Georgia are spending a lot of money on their Courthouses. He said that he did not notice the windows at the Courthouse until the tree was gone. County Clerk Davidson stated that the Lamar County Courthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and said that some of the Courthouses in Georgia are not on the NRHP so their hands aren't tied when it comes to fixing up their Courthouse. County Clerk Davidson stated that the committee also discussed other action items for the 100<sup>th</sup> Celebration as follows:

1. Christmas Parade in December rather than in November in conjunction with the City of Barnesville's Illumination Service.
  - a. Theme- 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration for Lamar County.
  - b. Entrance Fee for the Parade.
  - c. Employee Participation.
2. Memorabilia for the Employees and the Public – 100 Years of Service Pins.
3. Dedication of the Memorial Monument.
4. Running an Advertisement on the Billboard on Hwy 341 announcing the 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration of Lamar County.
5. Scratched the idea of having a 100<sup>th</sup> Year Birthday Cake.
6. Reading of the minutes of the Lamar County Administration's first existence.
7. Proclamation at the December Regular Business Meeting.
8. Suggestion for everyone to dress up in clothes as they wore 100 years ago.

Vice-Chair Thrash stated that everyone has a duty for the action items listed above and they plan to meet again in September. County Clerk Davidson stated that because of COVID-19, the committee will make some final decisions by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 for each action item listed above.

Vice-Chair Thrash shared her concerns about the trucking business on Shawnee Trail in Milner. She said that the code states that they are only allowed to have one truck because it is a home-based business. She said that the trucks are destroying the roads. She said that there are 27 to 30 trucks that are coming in and out of his place every day. She said that one of the neighbors contacted her about this. She said that they went through this with a trucking company on Jones Road. This person said that there are other people that are doing the same thing and he said if you are going to hold him accountable then you have to hold others that are doing the same thing accountable. Vice-Chair Thrash said that the home-based trucking business for Kip Pelt was mentioned. Commissioner Traylor said that there are about 25 empty tractor-trailers parked all over the field at a house on Martin Dairy Road. Chairman Glass said that when they discussed the issue on Jones Road, they discussed Kip Pelt's business and said that his trucks are off of the road where you cannot see them. He said that he talked to former

Building and Zoning Director Gunter about requiring a buffer for this type of business. Vice-Chair Thrash said that the home-based trucking business on Shawnee Trail is in the middle of a residential area and homes are all around him. She said that it is a fully operational trucking company. Commissioner Traylor said that it might be a good idea to add something that says that it cannot be visible from the road. Vice-Chair Thrash asked why they should have a code that says you qualify for a home-based business. Chairman Glass stated that the problem is that all of the home-based trucking businesses can be visible from the road. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she is concerned about letting these types of businesses come into the County and has Planning and Community Development Director Buice looking into this issue. Chairman Glass stated that they enforce code violations based on complaints and they are not out looking for code violations in the County.

Vice-Chair Thrash stated that on Old Alabama Road, Rudy Vaughn is building about seven sheds. She said that the road is circular and paved and she said that it looks nice. Vice-Chair Thrash said that he came to Planning and Community Development Director Buice and asked her for a permit to train horses. She said that the horses will have their own stalls. Planning and Community Development Director Buice told him that he cannot have spectators. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she thinks that what he will be doing will fall under agritourism. Commissioner Heiney inquired about him not being able to have spectators. Vice-Chair Thrash replied that he cannot have spectators because it then becomes a commercial business and it is not longer agritourism.

Chairman Glass stated that the board received an invitation to the First Responders Appreciation Celebration event on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Chairman Glass inquired about the invocation. County Clerk Davidson stated that Cyndi McDonald with the Barnesville United First Methodist Church had previously said that she would give the invocation in August. County Clerk Davidson said that she had been trying to contact Pastor McDonald, but the church had not been open. Chairman Glass said he heard that they have a finance meeting at the church that conflicts with the Board of Commissioners' meeting and would have Pastor McDonald contact County Clerk Davidson. Commissioner Traylor suggested that they contact Andy King with the Barnesville First Assembly of God. He said that he met a guy at a ball tournament whose pastor from Macon had recently moved to Barnesville. Commissioner Traylor stated that he would send the number to County Clerk Davidson.

County Administrator Townsend reported that he would be attending the Public Manager Training and Graduation ceremony in Athens from August 24 through August 26<sup>th</sup>. He said that the training is virtual and live. He said that the key speaker for the morning of graduation on August 26<sup>th</sup> had been canceled.

Commissioner Heiney stated that he had heard that there will be a resurgence in the fall of COVID-19 and said that it could be very serious. He said that if this happens there will be more lockdowns. He said that you could see contact tracing and forced vaccinations.

County Administrator Townsend stated that he is looking into replacing the projector and getting a new television at the Courthouse for the Board of Commissioners' meeting room. Vice-Chair Thrash said that the chairs have also been written on and need to be replaced.

**Adjournment**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to adjourn the workshop meeting at approximately 1:43 p.m. 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