

Lamar County Board of Commissioners
Special Called Meeting
December 8th, 2020
9:30 a.m.

Chairman Glass called the Special Called Meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. 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 available via Zoom.

Special Election of the Magistrate Judge with Qualifying Fee's-Resolution 2020-23

Chairman Glass explained that the Qualifying Fees are three percent of the base salary. Qualifying for the election shall be held January 4th, 2021, through January 6th, 2021, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The qualifying fee shall be \$1,392.25. Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-23 which is the call for a Special Election to fill the vacancy of the Magistrate Judge. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Appeal of Penalty

County Administrator Townsend explained that a lady from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) had given them different instructions for filing the appeal of penalty. He said that there were questions about the 941's, the W-2's and the W-3's. He said that a 941-X was found in the Payroll Office that the IRS did not have on record. County Administrator Townsend said that there was actually a letter that they had sent them as well. He said that 2016 and 2017 was not filed electronically and any company that has over 250 employees has to file the W-2's electronically. County Administrator Townsend explained that the County did not receive the notice until 2018. He said that at this point former County Administrator Zellner, Human Resource Director Kilchris and County Attorney Mayfield sent a letter asking for the IRS to waive the penalties. County Administrator Townsend said that the IRS only waived the penalties for 2016 and not the penalties for 2017. He explained that the IRS is not showing a claim for 2017 penalties in their system. County Administrator Townsend said that they had been instructed to send a 941-C form along with reasons as to what happened in 2017 with the electronic filing. He said that they faxed this to the IRS per their request and they are currently waiting on a resolution for the issue. County Administrator Townsend said that he had reviewed everything that had been corrected and instructed that the 941-X also be sent to the IRS again. County Administrator Townsend explained that the 941-X was in the 941 file and the letter to the IRS was in another file. He said that the IRS resolved the 2016 penalties based on the letter but they did not resolve the 2017 penalties. County Administrator Townsend said that they are now waiting on the IRS to approve the 941-X and waive the penalties. He said that Vice-Chair Thrash had given him a contact with the Association of Commissioner of Georgia (ACCG) to help with this issue and now other counties are calling with suggestions on how to get the penalties waived with the IRS.

Chairman Glass stated that they may have to go ahead and pay the 2017 penalties and suggested that they try to negotiate the amount with the IRS if the issue cannot be resolved. County Administrator Townsend said that they would continue to contact the IRS for an update. Chairman Glass asked to table the Internal Revenue (IRS) Appeal for Penalty until they can hear back from the IRS. Commissioner Horton made a motion to table the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Appeal of Penalty. Vice-Chair Thrash asked if this was until the January Workshop meeting. Chairman Glass said that it depended upon how soon they could get this resolved. County Administrator Townsend said that if they would add it to the agenda. Commissioner Horton amended the motion to table the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Appeal of Penalty until the December 15th, 2020 Regular Business meeting. Vice-Chair Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Quote from Michael's Paving for McKenzie Road and Silver Dollar Road

County Administrator Townsend said that the quote from Michael's Paving for McKenzie Road to pave the section of the road 175 ft. x 21 ft. with 2 inches asphaltic binder and then 2 additional inches of surface mix (4 inches total) is \$12,900.00 and the quote for Silver Dollar Road to pave a section of the road that is 9 ft. x 350 ft. with 2 inches of surface mix is \$6,300.00. Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to accept the quote from Michael's Paving for McKenzie Road for \$12,900.00 and the quote for Silver Dollar Road for \$6,300.00. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Letter of Support to Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission

Chairman Glass said that the legislation has passed a law that says it is legal to medical cannabis in Georgia but it has a lot of restrictions. He said that only six locations can be approved in Georgia. Chairman Glass said that they are in Tier 1 counties and one of the requirements is that they have to have the support of local governments. He said that Pure Therapy LLC is asking for a letter of support from the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Glass said that Lamar County is a possible location for growing medical cannabis in a medical facility.

Dr. Jada Reese and Dr. Dua Susheel with Northside Anesthesia Consultants addressed the board via Zoom. Their objective is to obtain a Class 2 cultivation license. Dr. Reese said that their interest is with the Class 2 production license that requires a facility that is up to 50,000 square feet to be able to provide a vertically integrated system. She said that this will consist of growing, cultivating, abstracting and producing products for Georgia residents needing medical cannabis. She said that there is a distinct difference between recreational and medical cannabis. Dr. Reese said that their goals are more on a scientific aspect because they work with cancer and chronic pain patients on a daily basis. She said that they have seen some of the benefits that the low THC oils have provided for the patient. Dr. Reese said that she has a personal interest in this because her son used these oils for a congenital condition. She said that she used to be skeptical because of the laws and regulations and the guidelines with opioid prescriptions. She said that her eyes were opened when she saw the benefits of what it was doing for her son. She said that she is

now an advocate for the cannabis oil and is now more open with patients and is better able to it with them because of the stigmatism associated with cannabis usage in general.

Dr. Reese said that she and Dr Susheel trained at Cleveland Clinic and the thought process is now with helping the patient and providing the scientific basis for cultivating and producing these products. She said that she obtained a special certification so that she could understand more about the benefits of the plant. Dr. Reese said that they have teamed up with a consultant that can put the proper procedure in place to become successful with their operation. They have also teamed up with someone in Arizona that has their own vertically integrated system in growing low THC oil. Dr. Reese said that this is a different product than what Georgia has allowed to be cultivated. She said that their training is in anesthesia and pain management so they understand physiology and pharmacology associated with administering drugs. Dr. Reese said that are in line with the State and the medicinal benefits with the low THC oil.

Dr. Reese said that when looking at locations they wanted some place that is amendable and open to having a cultivation facility for cannabis as well as the leaders of the community that are open to having this type of facility. She said that electricity and water is important so the infrastructure is very important. She said that some of the areas that they are studying in Lamar County are Milner and Barnesville and they have been looking at various properties. Dr. Reese said that if Lamar County has property that they are willing to sell or to lease they may be interested in purchasing it. Dr. Reese said that another benefit that this facility can bring to Lamar County is with the tax revenue in the City as well as the job creations. She said that they are committed to community involvement and they are trying to do the right thing by producing products that show people their scientific and medical background.

Chairman Glass asked how many locations in Lamar County qualify in terms of distance from school, daycares and churches. Dr. Reese responded that there are two properties that they have looked at thus far. She said that House Bill 324 specifies that you have to be 3000 feet from churches. She said that some facilities do not provide the water and electricity that they need for the facility. She said that some of them have streams and ponds for a well so that they can tap into for the water supply. Dr. Reese said that when cultivating the plants, they have to look at the water source because it is a weed and it absorbs everything around it therefore you have to make sure that the water source has certain minerals and no contaminants such as metal or mercury. Dr. Reese said that the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning system (HVAC) is important when controlling the humidity for the plants as well as the electricity.

Chairman Glass asked if the three properties that they are looking at meet the requirements. Dr. Reese said that they do. Chairman Glass inquired about the number of employees that they plan on employing. Dr. Reese said that this depends on licensing as far as permitting. She said that the initial goal is for the operation to get up and running within the year of the licenses being awarded.

Chairman Glass inquired about the size of the facility. Dr. Reese said that they are looking at starting at facility that is 20,000 square feet and then expanding. She said that for a Class 2 production the limit is 50,000 square feet. Chairman Glass asked how many employees would be employed at a 20,000 square feet facility. Dr. Reese said that for a 50,000 square feet facility they would employ 75 to 100 employees and for a 20,000 square foot facility they are looking at about half this number for employees.

Chairman Glass inquired about the tax revenues that the facility would bring to Lamar County. Dr. Reese responded that the tax revenues would come from water and electricity that would be used in the City. She said that the State tax revenue in California shows a 42 percent increase and 11 percent in Washington. Dr. Reese said that on a local level the tax revenues may be slightly lower or higher depending on the excise tax for the facility. Dr. Reese said that revenues from Cannabis sales exceeded 9 billion dollars in 2019.

Commissioner Traylor asked if the product would be sold from the Lamar County location or from Atlanta or Macon, Georgia. Dr. Reese responded that the next phase is for the State to provide dispensary licenses. She said that this are the people that will be the patrons to the low TCH oil to be able to dispense it out of their location. She said that there is a little bit of ambiguity as to whether or not they will allow a dispensary on site and they are not clear on those guidelines.

Dr. Susheel said that the license will only be allowed for the growing and manufacturing and the dispensing portion will be after the Class 2 license is awarded. He said that in other States the experience is that in order to receive the Class 2 license they have different goals.

Vice-Chair Thrash inquired about the lot size for this facility. Dr. Reese said that it would take more than 3 to 5 acres and it depends on the location. She said that the location they are currently looking at has 155 acres. She said that it has the water source that they need. They have another possible location that has 20 acres. Dr. Reese said that the only hurdle is the 3000 feet distance requirement away from schools and churches.

Dr. Susheel said that the facility will be indoors and the State requires them to have a security system in place. He said that they have very specific guidelines and they looked at Lamar County because of the low crime rate.

Commissioner Horton asked about the start time for manufacturing. Dr. Reese responded that it will probably take a year as long as the licensing is in place. She said that the first step is getting the structure built. Dr. Reese said that then they will need to get the plants ready for harvest, then the flowering cycle and then extraction. Dr. Reese said that this process takes anywhere from six months to one year. She said that it is important that they work with law enforcement. Dr. Reese said that they need to do things that are beneficial for the location and also the process of helping the community.

Chairman Glass inquired about having the investors lined up to cover the bonds and the applications fees. Dr. Reese responded that they have this in place. Chairman Glass inquired about capital investment. Dr. Reese said that they are looking at 1.2 million dollars

to build a facility including materials, HVAC, all of the infrastructure. Dr. Susheel said that it will take about \$800,000.00 to build a structure that is 10,000 square feet. He said that for 20,000 square feet building it will be about 1.2 to 1.5 million dollars to get it up and running.

Vice-Chair Thrash said that because they referred to this as a weed that they are growing, they don't have to worry about any wastewater contamination. Dr. Reese said that there are requirements for security and waste management. He said that they have an operation manager that is used to running plants, watching profit margins, watching waste containment. They are used to working in these facilities making sure there is zero environmental exposure. She said that because this is a controlled substance, they have to track it from seed to sale. Dr. Susheel said that tracking from seed to sale is in the Georgia House Bill 324.

Chairman Glass said that there having been several requests for these types of facilities in the community and most of them have gone through the Industrial Development Authority (IDA). He said that some have even done some 'site visits. Chairman Glass inquired about doing a letter of support.

Dr. Reese said that with the application process in order to be of merit the letters of support have to come from people in the community as well as law enforcement and the fire departments.

Chairman Glass said that the way the law is written requires letters of support from the County Commissioners and the City Council but other letters from law enforcement and community leaders and emergency services is a licensed decision.

Vice-Chair Thrash asked if they are going to vote to give letters of support for anyone that wants to have this type of medical facility. Chairman Glass said that this is not what they are asking. Chairman Glass said that the first question is are they in support of a medical cannabis facility in Lamar County and the community. Vice-Chair Thrash said that this is the way that the motion should be presented. Commissioner Traylor suggested that they do a case-by-case decision with each situation.

Chairman Glass called for a motion to consider medical cannabis facility in the community. Commissioner Horton made a motion to approve the letter of support for the medical cannabis facility in the community on a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Heiney seconded the motion. Vice-Chair Thrash asked if the case-by-case basis would be looked at in the permitting process. Chairman Glass said that the letters need to go in with the applications. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she wanted to be clear on the record as to how this presented to the Commissioners. Commissioner Traylor said that this would be for anyone else that wanted to have a letter of support. Vice-Chair Thrash said that Dr. Reese has submitted an email request so they haven't formally, in a meeting, supported the letter. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she wanted to be clear as to how they are going to do this. Chairman Glass asked if she wanted a personnel presentation, an email, or a representative from the IDA. Vice-Chair Thrash asked if the IDA was submitting the

letters of support or was the Board of Commissioners submitting the letters of support. Chairman Glass said that the IDA is writing letters of support as well. Vice-Chair Thrash said that if someone asks for a letter of support, she would like to see a presentation. Chairman Glass called for the approval for the letter of support for the medical cannabis facility in the community on a case-by-case basis.

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to issue a letter of support to Medical Medicinal LLC for their medical cannabis facility. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. Commissioner Heiney asked if they knew anything about this company. He asked if they knew anything about the background of this company or the people in this company. Vice-Chair Thrash said that they gave their background and their education in their presentation. Dr. Reese said that they are physicians of Northside. She said that Dr. Susheel is the President of the Georgia Interventional Team Specialist. Dr. Reese said that she is also a staff member at Northside and said that they are both local physicians. She said that they live in Cumming and Canton, Georgia. She said that they are upfront and honest people. She said that they could Google them and see that they are actually physicians. Dr. Susheel said that they, as two physicians will own about 75 to 90 percent of the facility depending on how much equity the other partners want.

Vice-Chair Thrash said that the board is agreeing to give them a letter of support to move forward with their application with the State and that the board will support the facility in Lamar County. She said later on they will start the permitting process which will give the board time to do any type of investigation as far as the facility is concerned.

Chairman Glass said that the rationale for the legislation for the letter of support is to make sure all of the authorities are aware of it. Commissioner Traylor said that knowing that these two physicians will own 75 percent of the facility as opposed to an investment group is very important. He said that they are selling themselves as two physicians from Northside and that is who they are expecting to make sure that everything goes right. Commissioner Traylor said that this is why he suggested that they do it on a case-by-case basis because they do not know about those other groups.

Chairman Glass called for a vote to authorize a letter of support for Medical Medicinal LLC for the Georgia Medical Commission from the Board of Commissioners. The vote passed unanimously. Commissioner Heiney abstained from the vote. The motion passed 3-0.

Regular Business Meeting Discussion

- 1) The board reviewed the information regarding a Public Hearing for BST subdivision. Planning and Community Development Director stated that there was no re-zoning for this subdivision. She said that this is a six-lot subdivision on Barnesville Avenue and is already zoned R-4. She said that tract is approximately 15 acres and the plan is to split the tract into 6 parcels. She said one lot is larger and it will be approximately 6 acres and all of the other lots are around 1 to 2 acres. Vice-Chair Thrash said that the only feedback that she had heard so far was with the traffic.

- 2) The board reviewed 3 sets of minutes.
 - i. November 5th, 2020-Budget Workshop
 - ii. November 12th, 2020-Workshop
 - iii. November 17th, 2020- Regular Commissioner Meeting
- 3) The board reviewed 3 Proclamations
 - i. Lamar County Centennial Anniversary
 - ii. Lamar County School Board Member-Horace Hightower
 - iii. Lamar County Coroner-Jim Smith
- 4) The board heard that Greg O’Neal wanted to address the board regarding his personnel property taxes due to not generating any business because of COVID-19.
- 5) The board reviewed the 2021 Beer and Wine Licenses.

Application Fee of \$150.00 for each.

I. New Beer and Wine License – Name Change

- i. The Rendevous Goodwood LLC
 - a. Malt Beverage Pouring-\$750.00
 - b. Wine Pouring-\$750.00
- ii. Honeywood Gardens LLC (Drinking on Site Only)
 - a. Malt Beverage Pouring-\$750.00
 - b. Wine Pouring-\$750.00

II. Renewal Beer and Wine Licenses

- i. Deer Trail Country Club
 - a. Malt Beverage Pouring-\$750.00
- ii. Sky Seven LLC-DBA T.J Outfitter
 - a. Malt Beverage Package-\$500.00
 - b. Wine Package-\$500.00
- iii. V.F.W. Post 6542
 - a. Malt Beverage Pouring-\$750.00
 - b. Wine Pouring-\$750.00
- iv. C&B 2015 Inc.
 - a. Malt Beverage Package-\$500.00
 - b. Wine Package-\$500.00

- 6) The board discussed the following Board Appointments for 2021

- i. Re-Appointment of Irvin Trice-Non-Public Member of the Council of the Three Rivers Regional Commission
- ii. Re-Appointment of Three Rivers Regional Commission-County-Bennie Horton
- iii. E911 Committee- County-Robert Heiney
- iv. Board of Appeals-Danny Vaughn
- v. Lamar County Solid Waste Authority-Nancy Thrash
- vi. Lamar County Industrial Development Authority
 - Charles Glass
 - Sandra Puckett

- 7) The board reviewed Resolution 2020-22 Budget Approval.
- 8) The board reviewed Resolution 2020-24 BST Minor Subdivision
- 9) The board heard a report from County Administrator Townsend stating that Public Works Director Rigdon contacted the Transportation Department for the school system regarding High Falls Park Road and Mrs. where Mrs. Morris would like the bus to come down the dirt portion of the road to pick the kids up. County Administrator Townsend said that there is not a place for them to pick them up and it is not safe enough for them. Chairman Glass said that they have to turn around and pick them up on the other side of the road. Chairman Glass requested that someone communicate this information to Mrs. Morris. County Administrator Townsend stated that he would. Chairman Glass said that there was also a request from Mrs. Morris to have a four way stop. County Administrator Townsend said that there would have to be a study done on the road before they could do this. Chairman Glass said that it was unlikely that they could get the 4-stop approved. He said that there are only 2 houses on the dirt road and it is very doubtful that this would meet the warrant qualifications. He said that they would look at the traffic and the number of wrecks on this road and said that it is unlikely that they can get the 4 way stop approved. Chairman Glass said that a crew from the Public Works Department went out and looked at the bushes.

Round Table Comments

Commissioner Traylor reported that the Centennial pins for Lamar County have come in and that he would be distributing those to the board and the departments.

Vice-Chair Thrash said that the Georgia Forestry Association has made ACCG aware that they are going to introduce legislation where they will ask for an increase in truck weights from 84,000 lbs. to 100,000 lbs. with the caveat that they have to add an additional axel. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she would be doing a presentation with ACCG when this first goes out to the committee. She said that from a safety standpoint, 100,000 lbs. is extremely dangerous as well as what it does to the County roads. Vice-Chair Thrash requested that the board do a letter adamantly opposing this legislation. She said that she wanted to get this letter to the Legislators immediately. Vice-Chair Thrash requested that they put on the agenda a "Letter to the Legislators Opposing Truck Weight Increases."

Vice-Chair Thrash stated that she was excited about the upcoming Centennial Christmas Parade and Street Dance and said that there had been a lot of work put into this event. She said that it would be a great event and a great day for the County. Chairman Glass inquired about the expectations for the board regarding this event. Vice-Chair Thrash said that they are going to meet at 11:00 a.m. for the Ribbon Cutting for the new Playground Equipment. She said that at 12:00 p.m. there would be a tailgate party for the employees. Vice-Chair Thrash said that at 3:00 p.m. everyone will meet at the staging areas to get their floats ready for the parade which starts at 5:30 p.m. She said after the parade there would be a concert given by Commissioner Horton and the Master Blasters. Vice-Chair Thrash said they are asking everyone at the concert to group with their families and to social distance as much as much as you can.

County Clerk Davidson stated that when Lamar County was founded and on the first day of operation in 1921, they celebrated the formation of the new County by having a “Street Dance”.

Planning and Community Director Buice presented the Centennial T-Shirt that all of the employees would be wearing on December 10th, the Centennial Day of Celebration.

County Clerk Davidson reported that the Centennial Celebration advertisement would be in the paper on December 8th, 2020.

Vice-Chair Thrash reported that the Board of Commissioners would also wear the Centennial T-Shirts and meet at the staging area which is the parking lot at Gordon College. She said that they would work on their float in the Board of Commissioners parking lot starting at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to adjourn the Special Called Meeting at 10:38 a.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

