

Workshop Meeting of the Lamar County Board of Commissioners
May 13th, 2021
12:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on May 13th, 2021. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Horton, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. Commissioner Heiney joined the meeting via Zoom. The meeting was available to the public via Zoom.

Solid Waste Authority

The board deferred the discussion of the Solid Waste Authority until another time due to the illness of Johnny Poore.

Fred's Building

County Administrator Townsend went over several options for purchasing the old Fred's building and presented the following options to the board.

Option 1

- Rent 10,000 square ft. year one and 16,222 square ft. beginning year three, seven-year term. Rate \$5.50 per SF year 1 and 2, \$5.85 after, net, as is where is. Common Area Maintenance - \$1.48 /square ft. Bump 5% beginning year 6.

Option 2

- Rent 16,222 square ft year one, seven-year term. Rate= \$5.00 net, as is where is. Common Area Maintenance - \$1.48 / square ft. Bump 5% beginning year 6. (\$81,110 for Five years=\$405,550)

Option 3

- Sell 16,222 square ft. in a condominium. Price \$60 per square foot (\$973,320). Excludes outlots and shop space.

Option4

- Sell the entire center, not including the out lots, as follows: Vacant space 22,222 square ft. at \$60 square ft. totaling \$1,333,320.

Option 5

- Lease vacant 16,222 square ft. rate \$5.50 per square ft in year 1 and 2, \$5.85 after, net, as is where is. Common Area Maintenance - \$1.48 / square ft. Bump 5% beginning year 6, with an option to purchase exercisable before month 24 of the lease, sales price to be \$65 per square foot.

Chairman Glass stated that they could purchase the entire building and receive revenue for rent from the other tenants in the building but that would make them landlords. He said that either the staff would have to handle this or they could contract with a property management company. Chairman Glass said that this would offset any revenue that they would receive.

County Administrator Townsend stated that he had spoken to District Conservationist Carmen Westfield and Christy Holland with the Lamar County Division of Children Services (DFACS) and asked if they might be interested in renting the Administration building.

County Administrator Townsend recommended Option 4-Sell the entire center, not including the out lots, as follows: Vacant space 22,222 square ft. at \$60 square ft. totaling \$1,333,320.

Commissioner Thrash said that this is a great idea especially since they have the potential to borrow the money. She said that they have outgrown all the buildings. Chairman Glass suggested that County Administrator Townsend request that Attorney Mayfield put a request together for Option 4 with conditions such as contingent on inspection and a period of time to back out of the offer. He said that they would need to appoint people to be on the board of the Public Facility Authority. Chairman Glass said that they would handle the borrowing of the money or the IDA could take over as the titleholder and the bond. He said that they would be the originator of the loan. Chairman Glass said that the Board of Commissioners cannot be responsible for this unless they put it on a Referendum.

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to give County Administrator Townsend authorization to get with County Attorney Mayfield to make an offer on the Fred's building based on his recommendation of Option 4-Sell the entire center, not including the out lots, as follows: Vacant space 22,222 square ft. at \$60 square ft. totaling \$1,333,320 with the conditions such as contingent on inspection and a period of time to back out of the offer. Vice-Chairman Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regular Business Meeting Discussion.

- The board heard that Pastor Jeff Morgan of Antioch Baptist Church would give the invocation.
- The board reviewed 3 sets of Minutes
 - Workshop Minutes-April 16th, 2021
 - Public Hearing Minutes-April 20th, 2021
 - Regular Scheduled Meeting-April 20th,2021
- The board reviewed 3 Sheriff Vehicles for surplus.
 - 2010 Chevy Tahoe-1GNMCAEOXAR109982
 - 2010 Chevy Tahoe-1GNMCAE05AR108528
 - 2005 Chevy Avalanche-3GNEK12Z95G108967
- The board reviewed two Board Appointments
 - Board of Appeals-Lavetrece Walker
 - Board of Health-Laura Trice
- The board reviewed the LMIG Safety Action Plan Bid for Yatesville Road. The Staff recommends Midstate Striping at \$36,000.00.
- The board reviewed a refund request from White Horse Partners LLLP and Loblolly Investments LLLP; Claim for Property Tax Refund on Tax parcel 100-08. While filing renewal covenants for this calendar year, it was discovered that for some reason, although the covenant on Tax Parcel 100-08 had been timely filed and approved, they did not receive the tax savings benefit of the covenant. This was an oversight on the part of the Tax Assessors Office. The code section allows a taxpayer to request a refund of a tax that has erroneously been collected for three years after the payment of the tax to the County. The request for a refund is for tax years 2018, 2019, and 2020. The amount of the overpayment of taxes is the difference between taxes as paid and taxes based on the conservation use assessment value. The amount of the refund is \$1,815.05.
- The board reviewed the bid for the Recreation Gym Architectural Firm. The staff recommends accepting the proposal from Precision Planning of \$71,560.00.

- The board decided to table the Social Media Policy until the June Regular Business meeting. The recommendation was for the IT contractor WiRed Technology to consult with an expert at NACO and ACCG regarding having a Social Media Policy.

Public Works Director Report

The board heard a road report from Public Works Director Rigdon regarding a request from Tim Davis who works at the Sheriff's Office. He would like for Possum Trot Road to be widened. Public Works Director Rigdon said that they are building houses on it and it is only a one-lane road. He said that the same thing is happening on Potts Pond Road. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that he had received a request to put speed bumps on McCollum Road. He said that residents in Cole Forrest are also requesting speed bumps.

Public Works Director Rigdon said that he had been in communication with Commissioner Heiney about the situation on Possum Trot Road. He stated that the utilities would have to be moved and they would have to obtain the right of way along the road. Public Works Director Rigdon said that there is a lot of rock on the road. Commissioner Heiney said that with regards to Possum Trot Road they need to consider the other paved roads first if this will cost an excessive amount of money. He said that he does understand the issue with widening the road because Mr. Davis's wife had to back up her car so that another car could go past her on Possum Trot Road. Commissioner Heiney said that they do need to look at widening the road but said that if this road is going to cost an excessive amount of money, that money should go into updating the other roads that are already paved. Chairman Glass asked if they needed to consider a separate issue of widening the road. Public Works Director Rigdon said that Mr. Davis is not asking for it to be paved; just widened. Commissioner Heiney said that he was okay with that and asked what it would cost. Public Works Director Rigdon responded that it would be at 75 percent of the cost when widening it. He explained that 75 percent of the cost is widening the road when you have to pave a road. He said that the same procedures have to be followed as if you are paving the road. Public Works Director Rigdon said that they have no right of way on this road. Commissioner Heiney asked what percent of the road budget would it take to do this. Public Works Director Rigdon responded that the budget on that road is 75 percent to widen it. Commissioner Thrash said that he is asking about the Special Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) budget. Public Works Director Rigdon responded that he did not know but said that he estimated that it would cost \$1,000,000.00 to pave the road and said that it would take \$750,000.00 to widen the road. Commissioner Thrash said that if you are going to spend \$750,000.00 to widen the road then it would make sense to go ahead and spend the additional 25 percent and pave the entire road. Commissioner Heiney said that his question was what it would actually cost to pave that entire road and asked what was the percentage of the total road budget? Public Works Director Rigdon said he had no idea and there is no right of way to the road whatsoever. He said that the utilities would have to be moved and said that he did not know what that would cost. Public Works Director Rigdon said that on any paved road they have to have 64 feet of right of way and 24 feet of pavement. Commissioner Heiney said that Ingram Road needs to be done too. He said that there are trees in the way and it is a major process. Commissioner Heiney said that this diverts money from other roads that still need to be done. He said that these roads are already paved and need to be resurfaced. Commissioner Heiney said that he did not know if he was being fair about it but said that he knows that there are a lot of existing roads that need to be resurfaced. He said that he thinks before those roads collapse entirely, they need to look at those first.

Chairman Glass said that he estimates that it will cost 1.49 million dollars to pave Potts Pond Road including obtaining the right of way, the cost of the surveys, preparation of the road, and all of the materials. He said that this is for 1.7 miles of roadway. Commissioner Heiney said that Possum Trot Road is 1.3 miles of roadway. Chairman Glass said that there is no way to deal with the rock that is on some of these roads. Public Works Director Rigdon said that removing the rock would be an extra

cost from a grading company. He said that Possum Trot Road is very curvy. Chairman Glass said that to straighten it out would be more right of way cost. He said that with Potts Pond Road, he plugged in some donated right of way, assuming it would cost about \$2,000.00 an acre. He said that the timber companies would not donate any right of way and they would have to pay them a lot more. Commissioner Thrash said that they could condemn the road. Chairman Glass said that they would still have to pay the fair market value which could be \$4,000.00 an acre. He said that right of way is a cost that they have to plugin even though it is not a huge percentage and the survey cost would have to be considered. Chairman Glass said that he spoke with the County Surveyor James Butler and he said that each parcel has to have a new plat if they take part of their right of way from what they have existing. He said that would have to create a new plat for them to file at the Courthouse

Commissioner Traylor inquired about how many houses are on this road. Public Works Director Rigdon said that there are five or six lots that are being built on Possum Trot Road. He said that Mr. Davis lives in a dangerous section of the road. Chairman Glass said that houses are being built on dirt roads that were never intended for development. He said that Bottoms Road follows this same type of history where it was never intended for development. Chairman Glass said that they may need to find a different way of permitting these types of roads. He said that they may need a long-term plan to do something about these roads. He said that it is not feasible to put houses on these roads. Commissioner Traylor said that people bought property on Turner Bridge Road knowing it was dirt and until it was deeded or changed hands, they did not know it was a lucrative piece of property that could be sold and divided. He suggested that they could have a special Fire District so that the developers could absorb some of these costs. Commissioner Thrash said that she was not interested in doing that.

Commissioner Thrash suggested that Public Works Director Rigdon look at how he can implement a five- or ten-year plan for the roads so that the citizens know that they are looking at it and working on it. She said that it is nothing that they are prepared to jump into and it is not an emergency situation even though there may be some danger. She suggested that some safety things be put in place such as blind curve signs. Commissioner Thrash said that she agreed with Commissioner Heiney and said that she does not think that this is something that they need to do right now. Chairman Glass said that he likes the idea of having a long-range plan. He said that they need to have a schedule of recommendations. He said that this type of plan could be included in the TSPLOST. Chairman Glass requested that Public Works Director Rigdon send me a long-range plan for the condition of the roads including a different route for some of the curvy dirt roads or suggestions on how to straighten the roads. He said that 25 years from now they need to have some sort of plan in place for these roads and what makes the most sense for the community and the ideal solution for the citizens.

Public Works Director Rigdon said that he changed some speed limits on certain roads at the request of Commissioner Heiney. He said that Major Holmes told him that he had to change the signs back to the original speed limit based on what is in the County Code. He said that they changed the speed limit to 25 miles an hour on Skylar Road but said that it is 45 miles an hour in the County Code. Commissioner Heiney said that he requested these changes because he thought he had that authority. Public Works Director Rigdon said that Major Holmes brought him a list of roads where the speed limit had been changed and he had to change them back to what is in the County Code. Chairman Glass said that the board can change speed limits and adopt them so that they can be enforceable. He said that the Ordinance for this change would take two readings and it has to be submitted to Probate Judge Martin and then onto the State. Commissioner Thrash explained that people received tickets but the charge was dismissed because the speed limit did not match what was in the County Code. Public Works Director Rigdon said that High Falls Park Road was the biggest road with speed limit changes. He said that Probate Judge Martin cannot enforce a fine for the ticket that was given to a person speeding because it does not match the County Code. Public Works Director Rigdon said that Sheriff White knew about these speed limit changes but Major Holmes had him change them back because they are not enforceable.

Commissioner Thrash said that Cole Forrest subdivision has a lady that moved here from Henry County. She said that she is very proactive. Commissioner Thrash said that there were issues with the contractor in the undeveloped portion of the subdivision and she has been calling Public Works Director Rigdon day and night and weekends. Commissioner Thrash said that she explained to her that she and others in the subdivision would have to go through the work order system for Public Work requests.

Public Works Director Rigdon said that they put up a new stop sign on Hwy 36 in Cole Forrest because someone took the stop sign and turned it around backwards. Commissioner Traylor said that there are fines for tampering with government equipment and suggested that he submit the picture of the backwards stop sign to the paper.

Public Works Director Rigdon reported that Lanette Circle had been paved. County Administrator Townsend said that a paving company would have charged \$8,000.00 but the Public Works Department paved it for \$700.00 with the new paver.

Continuation Review of the Regular Business Meeting

- The board reviewed Resolution 2021-07 Special Exception in Agriculture-Residential to Operate a Kennel-Robert Leigh and Heather Henderson.
- The board reviewed Resolution 2021-08 Special Exception in Agriculture-Residential-Fortified Telecom on behalf of Verizon Wireless to place a cell tower at 1444 Hwy 18 West.
- The board heard that the Special Exception request from Kong Real Estate Holdings, LLC had been withdrawn and agreed to leave the Ordinance on the agenda for the record.
- The board reviewed the 2nd Reading Ordinance 2021-06 Financial Policy. County Administrator Townsend said that he had heard no new feedback from the Constitutional Officers.
- The board reviewed the 2nd Reading Ordinance 2021-07 No Thru Trucks McKenzie Road; McKenzie Road beginning at the Milner City Limits and ending at the intersection with Martin Dairy Road.

Administrator's Report

County Administrator Townsend said that they are doing pretty well. He said that the expenses are at 28.71 percent and said that they were projected to be at 33.33 percent. He said that they still have a balance of \$1,600,000.00 in the Money Market account and the General Fund account has a balance of \$190,000.00. County Administrator Townsend said that he is hoping that they do not have to have a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN). He said that the cash flow is going in the normal trend. He said that the Local Options Sales Tax (LOST), the Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT), and the SPLOST distributions were higher this past month.

County Administrator Townsend gave an overview of the ongoing projects.

- Porting for the Voice Over IP (VOIP) will begin at the Courthouse on May 17th, 2021.
- Windows for the Courthouse have been ordered.
- Waiting on the third bid for the Recreation Gym.
- Installation of the repeater will begin soon. They are first repairing a hole on one of the poles that was hit by lightning.

County Administrator Townsend reported that they will begin the budget process with the Departments in the first and second weeks of July.

Commissioner Thrash requested a report on the American Relief Fund (ARP) from the Treasury Department. County Administrator Townsend reported that the auditor has been on site for the last two weeks. He said that his biggest concern is giving money out to third parties. County Administrator Townsend said that the auditors explained to him that since this is a Federal Grant, they just need to follow their guidelines. County Administrator Townsend said that he and Chairman Glass talked about their prior-year revenues and said that if they do not meet the 4.1 percent, they can actually put money into the General Fund account for lost revenue. He said that he is updating his revenue manual and looking at the revenue trends that have shortfalls. County Administrator Townsend said that the biggest ones have been the Courts. He said that they have applied for the ARP and said that a banking account for this has already been set up for deposits. County Administrator Townsend said that it will be going to third parties and businesses therefore they have to create an application with guidelines. He said that he was going to check with other counties to see how they are doing it. County Administrator Townsend said that the auditors are also discussing this so that all of the counties that they service can be on the same page. He said that this will be a single audit so for the next two years he will need to budget for this. Chairman Glass said that these funds should be covered by the stimulus money and said that it should not have to come out of the operating budget.

Chairman Glass said that when using the funds to replace lost revenue, it says that you can take the average growth rate between 2017, 2018, and 2019 and apply that to what you have expected in 2020, and the difference you can count as lost revenue. He said that you can move the stimulus money into the operating fund budget or you can take 4.1 percent, which is the national average from 2015-2018, and apply that to what you should have received in 2020.

Chairman Glass said that he spoke to Interim County Manager Tim Turner and the City of Barnesville will get money directly as well and they are asking the same types of questions. He said that they are also going to set it aside in a separate account for tracking purposes. He said that he believes that the City of Milner and the Town of Aldora will receive some too. He said that they will probably not have to do a single audit. Chairman Glass said that this is a two-year process and all of the money has to be spent by December of 2024 or the money has to be turned back in. County Administrator Townsend said that he is working on a couple of things for the employees.

Commissioner Traylor inquired about the fuel issue. County Administrator Townsend said that the County is fine. He said that Public Works Director Rigdon has fuel that will last him for three months but they told everyone if it did not need to be done then do not do it. Chairman Glass said that the Sheriff's Office is only responding to calls and they are not out patrolling in general. He said that they have not heard from Walthall Oil Company about the next delivery for the bus barn. Chairman Glass said that with school being out in two weeks the busses will quit running which will help with the supply.

Round Table

Chairman Glass reported that yesterday was the last day that vaccinations were being given at the Southern Rivers EMC. He said that the vaccines will still be administered at the Health Department and other locations in Barnesville.

Adjournment and Executive Session

Commissioner Thrash made a motion at approximately 1:38 p.m. to go into Executive Session for litigation. Vice-Chairman Horton seconded the motion. Commissioner Heiney exited Zoom and joined the Executive Session meeting via phone conference. The board came out of executive session with no action taken. Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion at approximately 1:55 p.m. to adjourn the Workshop meeting. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Bennie Horton, Vice-Chairman

Robert Heiney, Commissioner

Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk