

Workshop Meeting of the Lamar County Board of Commissioners
October 14th, 2021
12:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on October 14th, 2021. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Horton, Commissioner Heiney, Commissioner Traylor, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. Commissioner Thrash joined the meeting via zoom and the meeting was also available via Zoom.

McIntosh Trail Community Services Update

Kenyatta Walker with McIntosh Trail Community Services addressed the board. Ms. Walker said that she is a licensed, clinical social worker. She said that her goal is to go out into the 7 counties that they service and speak to the Commissioners, Sheriff's Offices, and Police Chiefs regarding what they are doing in the community. Ms. Walker said that Lamar County appoints a member to the McIntosh Community Service board every three years and that member is Jeffrey Stephens. Lesley Cantrell provides the services at the Lamar County Counseling Center in Barnesville, Georgia.

Lesley Cantrell addressed the board and stated that they currently have 150 adults in Counseling for Mental Health or Substance Abuse. They have 58 students being served by a Counselor or a Case Manager. The schools normally serve 350 to 400 students but the numbers are down to around 217 due to COVID. They provide individual Psychiatry services with medication, group therapy, mental health and substance abuse services. They have a Peer Support Program which is a 4-hour program in the morning and afternoon for those that have a Mental Health diagnosis. Mrs. Cantrell said that there is a wide variety of people in the community that do not know that they provide these types of services.

Chairman Glass asked if they were a liaison with the Accountability Court. Mrs. Cantrell said that they used to provide the Mental Health Services and the Substance Abuse but the Drug Courts only provided Substance Abuse services so they would send those to them that had Mental Health issues. Mrs. Cantrell said that they have their own Substance Abuse services so if you are coming to them for outpatient services and you are in the Towaliga Court System they usually will not let them do both.

Mrs. Cantrell said that one of the things that she wants for the Community is a Mental Health Board. She said that Sheriff White calls her all the time with issues where the person is off of their medication so there is a mental health need. That person may or may not be in their system but if they are in the system then they can serve them. They could bring that person into the facility so that they can really review them at the Counseling Center. Mrs. Cantrell said if they could provide Court Ordered services for the habitual violators that would help the community a lot. They are trying to work with the Courts and other members of the Community regarding support for Mental Health Services. Chairman Glass suggested that they speak to the Assistant District Attorney.

Mrs. Cantrell said that their goal is to have a new building. They looked at the old Accountability Court building but there is not enough room. There were some hiccups within their agency that caused them some major delays. Their goal is to raise money but with COVID it has been hard. Mrs. Cantrell said that they are still in touch with Square Foot Ministries and she speaks to them frequently and they are still committed to building them a facility. The 5000 square ft. building that they originally had planned for has doubled to \$825,000.00.

Commissioner Heiney asked if people are referred to them or can people walk in off the street and say that they need counseling. Mrs. Walker explained that people can walk in and request services. They will

do an evaluation to determine what services that they need or they can be referred by someone such as family support, schools, or the legal system. Commissioner Heiney inquired about the cost of the services. Ms. Walker said that they are what's called a safety net so for a person who does not have any type of health insurance, and they are not working, the State will cover them at 100 percent. If they have Medicaid or Medicare or any other type of insurance, they will bill the insurance company. The person will be responsible for their co-pays. Ms. Walker said that they need to get the word out to the community that they provide Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Developmental Disability services. They have a Medication Treatment program that is very strict. Vice-Chairman Horton inquired about how many counties that they serve. They serve 7 counties. Ms. Walker said that in Spalding County, they have a Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC) which is Pine Woods Behavioral Health located on Greenbelt Drive in Griffin, Georgia. At this facility, you can be assessed by anyone from any county. It is an emergency receiving facility for people in a Mental Health or Substance Abuse crisis. Instead of going to the emergency room, waiting for a Psychiatrist to come and consult with the person, they can come directly to them. Also, the Sheriff or the Police can bring a person directly to them. They have 30 beds and the normal stay is for 5 to 7 days or until the person is stable. Ms. Walker said that they are full and it stays full. They do have a shortage of nurses that they are currently working on with other agencies. The BHCC is open 24 hours a day.

Regular Business Meeting Discussion.

- The board heard that Clayton Andrews, Senior Pastor/Founder at Building Relationships Ministries International will give the invocation.
- The board reviewed 3 sets of Minutes
 - Workshop Meeting-September 16th, 2021
 - Public Hearing Meeting-September 21st, 2021
 - Regular Business Meeting-September 21st, 2021
- The board heard that a group of Lamar County Citizens will address the board about their concerns with the gym and issues in the community.
- The board reviewed a list of Lamar County Board of Health fees that were updated due to inflation, growth in the County, and keeping up with the fees that are charged in the surrounding counties.

Recreation Director Lowe addressed the board and reported that she had an inspection done on the gym and they found several safety concerns.

Vice-Chairman Horton reported that a group of concerned citizens are coming to the Regular Business meeting to voice their concerns about playing basketball in the gym and possibly providing some solutions to the problems. Vice-Chairman Horton said that he wanted to hear the presentation from the community regarding the gym and other concerns that they may have.

County Administrator Townsend said he had requested a lot of quotes but no one has gotten back to them as of yet. He has requested quotes for heating and air from the manufacturers but the lead time is going to be a big factor for everything. Chairman Glass said that at the Regular Business meeting the concerned citizens could explain what they are working on at this time and what the options are for them.

Vice-Chairman Horton said that once they know the direction that the community wants to go, there are people out there that will help.

- The board reviewed a budget request from the Lamar County Department of Family and Children Services. They are requesting the usual allowed budget amount of \$15,000.00 for the fiscal year 2021.

The monthly payment will be \$1,250.00 and any expenditures over \$750.00 will require budget approval. They are also requested that any unused funds be carried over into the next fiscal year. These funds are used for children that need pajamas, shoes, socks, underwear, and other items initially.

- The board reviewed an updated Panel of Physicians adding Resurgens Orthopedics out of Fayetteville, Georgia. This is required for Workers Compensation that is administered through the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG).
- The board reviewed an updated Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) Priority List of Roads.

▪ Option # 1

Road Name		Linear FT	Tons	Projected Cost	District
Church Street		4,195	622.42	\$ 68,253.65	Horton
Woodruff Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
Ware Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
McBroom Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
Johnson Street		2,120	388.67	\$ 41,576.89	Horton
Banks-Walton		2,900	531.67	\$ 56,874.05	Horton
McCullum Road	Hwy 36- Perdue	11,335	1,589.19	\$ 175,573.72	Traylor
Skinner's Bypass		8,700	1,448.33	\$ 156,604.55	Thrash
Community House Road	341-Ramah Church Road	16,896	3,525.38	\$ 367,381.67	Heiney

• \$ 888,327.73

▪ Option # 2

Road Name		Linear FT	Tons	Projected Cost	District
Church Street		4,195	622.42	\$ 68,253.65	Horton
Woodruff Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
Ware Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
McBroom Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
Johnson Street		2,120	388.67	\$ 41,576.89	Horton
Banks-Walton		2,900	531.67	\$ 56,874.05	Horton
Burnette Road		8,835	1,375.31	\$ 149,907.05	Traylor
Brown Springs Rd		2,800	513.33	\$ 54,912.88	Thrash
Skyler Road		4,700	715.00	\$ 78,157.58	Thrash
Heatherwood Lane		900	165.00	\$ 17,650.57	Thrash
Yancy Road		3,500	641.67	\$ 68,641.10	Thrash
Heavy Road		1,200	220.00	\$ 23,534.09	Thrash
Community House Road	341-Ramah Church Road	16,896	3,525.38	\$ 367,381.67	Heiney

• \$ 948,952.73

▪ Option # 3

Road Name		Linear FT	Tons	Projected Cost	District
Church Street		4,195	622.42	\$ 68,253.65	Horton
Woodruff Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton

Ware Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
McBroom Street		375	68.75	\$ 7,354.40	Horton
Johnson Street		2,120	388.67	\$ 41,576.89	Horton
Banks-Walton		2,900	531.67	\$ 56,874.05	Horton
Skinner's Bypass		8,700	1,448.33	\$ 156,604.55	Thrash
Lovejoy Road		4,750	638.61	\$ 70,961.22	Traylor
Burnette Road		8,835	1,375.31	\$ 149,907.05	Traylor
Community House Road	341-Ramah Church Road	16,896	3,525.38	\$ 367,381.67	Heiney

• \$ 933,622.28

- The board discussed the purchase of a John Deere Gator TX (Model Year 2022) for the Recreation Department in the amount of \$8,568.55. This will be purchased from SPLOST.
- The board discussed the purchase of Caterpillar, Inc. Model: 304 Hydraulic Excavator (Yancey/Cat) for the Public Works Department in the amount of \$66,555.00. This will be purchased from SPLOST.

Other Discussion

Intergovernmental Agreement with Aldora

Chairman Glass explained that the original Intergovernmental Agreement was between the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the Town of Aldora (Aldora). The City of Barnesville already cut a check to Aldora. Chairman Glass said that the County is willing to pay their part but he would like it documented that the County is clear going forward so no one can come back 10 to 15 years down the road about owing this money to Aldora. Chairman Glass said that he proposes that they send money to the IDA and the IDA transfer the funds to Aldora with a letter from Aldora saying that it has been paid off. Chairman Glass asked about what is left on the loan, and as of this morning, the principal amount owed to the bank is \$417,000.00. The IDA has enough to pay the interest this year and 2 to 3 more years after that. The original plan was that this would be paid back to Aldora when the Chinese came but they did not come. Piedmont Green Power (PGP) bought some of the lands and a portion of this went to pay on the loan. Chairman Glass said that the asset is with the land and the goal is to sell the land.

Chairman Glass explained the history of the situation with Aldora. When the Chinese were coming, they were going to be on the other side of Forsyth Highway and they were going to set up a manufacturing process with anticipation that other suppliers and support agencies would be around them. The IDA wanted to buy the land across the highway for suppliers and at the time it was a great idea and everyone was on board. The IDA bought the land, the economy collapsed and the Chinese did not come. In order to purchase the land, the IDA had to borrow the money from the bank. The problem was that the IDA had no income and the bank wanted to know how they were going to pay it back. The plan was to sell the land and pay it back but they could not get this past the underwriters at the bank. They went to Aldora because the bank wanted them to show at least 3 years of payments before they would give them the loan. So, they asked Aldora to guarantee 3 years of payments and they did. Aldora put up the money and over the 3 years has cost around \$210,000.00 in interest. The agreement between Aldora and the IDA was that Aldora would make sure that they covered 3 years of loan payments and the bank recognized Aldora as the first

mortgage holder. After the 3-year period was up, the IDA started dipping into their Certificate of Deposit's (CD's). The IDA has paid the interest and some of the principal. Legally Aldora cannot call the loan because the agreement between the IDA and Aldora is that the bank is first in line. When they paid the bank off, they would pay Aldora off and the plan was to do this in 3 years. Chairman Glass said that this has been going on since 2007 and a lot of the history had been forgotten.

Chairman Glass said that the proposal is for Lamar County to pay \$105,269.00 and said that the City of Barnesville has already cut a check to Aldora for this amount of money. Once Lamar County pays Aldora then the amount that Aldora paid will be wiped clean and they can pay whatever amount that is owed to their grant to pave Peacock Road coming off of Hwy 18. Chairman Glass said that the IDA will still owe the \$417,000.00 on the property.

Commissioner Traylor asked if the property could be sold for the amount that the IDA owes the bank. Chairman Glass said that he did not think so. He said that there was originally around 50 acres and PGP purchased some of that. He said that there is a conceptual drawing that shows a gas station and a convenience store in the corner and then industrial-type buildings behind it. They would love for someone to come in and build this. There is water, sewer, gas, and electricity available at this site and rails is across the highway. The problem with this site compared to some other sites is the fact that it is not graded. Chairman Glass said that the County can push a lot of dirt around because we have the people and the equipment to do it but said it would still cost labor and fuel. Chairman Glass said that if grading the site is holding up the process then they could do that in the near future as in-kind work. Chairman Glass said that if there is not someone ready to buy it then it is not worth doing the grading because you do not want to do something that you would have to re-grade.

Chairman Glass said that there needs to be a Resolution added to the agenda for the Intergovernmental Agreement stating that Aldora has requested repayment of the money to assist with other projects in Aldora and Lamar County along with the City of Barnesville is responsible for one half of the funding of the IDA debt to Aldora in the amount of \$105,269.53.

Administrator's Report

County Administrator Townsend reported that the Department's expenses should be at 75 percent but are actually at 69 percent. Chairman Glass asked if this was due to CARES or ARP funds. County Administrator Townsend said that there was the Air Conditioners for the Courthouse that came out of ARP funds. Chairman Glass said that if they did not come from the ARP funds the air conditioners would come out of SPLOST and it would still not offset the General Fund. County Administrator Townsend said that the air conditioners would not have come out of the General Fund. Chairman Glass said that the air conditioners were not budgeted. Chairman Glass said that if they saved 5.5 percent of expected expenses, it is all because they have been frugal and not spent it and not because they have offset it. County Administrator Townsend reported that \$973,081.88 had been drawn from the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) and that there would be no more withdrawals from the TAN due to the deposit of the Insurance Premium in the amount of \$820,861.73 plus \$260,000.00 from the Tax Commissioners Office.

RingCentral Update

County Clerk Davidson reported that Jonas Camacho with WiRed Technology had sent an email giving an update on the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) porting process. "They have transitioned 5 other

customers from their carriers to RingCentral in the last couple months and each of those took the typical 7-10 days. I could speed the port process up but it would cause significantly more downtime. With the process we have in place, now the phones are down for roughly 10-15 minutes during the transition. If you are ok with it, I could switch the port process to include all remaining numbers at once. This would mean that some locations would be down for 3-6 hours while we transition everyone over on the day the port process completes though. Let me know if you would prefer for us to make this change. If so, I would need to cancel what we currently have in place and resubmit a large port request to happen all at once. Once submitted it would be 10-20 days to complete based on what we have currently experienced with GTA.”

County Clerk Davidson said that she would not recommend this because the biggest problem with all of the porting has been the fact that GTA owns the phone numbers and the phone lines and it has been a big headache since 2010. In 2013, they tried to get the numbers ported out but GTA kept saying that they own the phone numbers. In the past, Gordon College owned the numbers and somehow the numbers were transferred to Lamar County and GTA bought them. GTA has agreed to let the numbers be ported out to Lamar County through RingCentral. County Clerk Davidson explained that GTA is a third party that you go through in order to get to AT&T so there are all of these variables that WiRed Technology and RingCentral are having to go through to get them ported out. WiRed Technology stated that they have never been through anything like this before and they doubt they will ever port numbers out from GTA again. Chairman Glass requested a date of completion for this project.

Round Table

Chairman Glass reported that he spoke to the Lamar Leadership group about the upcoming TSPLOST and shared with them the FAQ list. The City of Barnesville spoke to the group about their litter clean-up efforts. Chairman Glass said that they had a lot of City staff and community involvement and they had a group clean up Atlanta Street. They are wanting an ongoing community program because of people throwing trash out.

Chairman Glass reported that there is development going on in College Manor and they cannot keep the flyers in the box. They were going to start with 4 lots and they sold those and moved on to grading other lots. There are 4 to 5 slabs already poured and at least 2 of them have walls.

Chairman Glass reported that there is interest in Loft apartments above the Collier building. They would like to have residential on the bottom floor but a Variance is required for that. There is interest in restoring the Murray building. Chairman Glass said that economically things are looking up and businesses are interested because of the competition that is out there. Commissioner Traylor said that a lot of College towns are doing this type of renovations in old warehouses. He saw one in Mississippi and said he was going to do a shuttle from Carters down to Gordon but some of his advisors did not think they were ready for that. Commissioner Heiney said that Covington and Newnan Georgia did this. Commissioner Heiney said that having houses above the store is a great revitalization for the City. Chairman Glass reported that there are apartments above Carter’s drug store but one of the questions was regarding handicap access. This location has long narrow steps to get up to the apartment but the owner was grandfathered in and the only requirement was that there was a second exit out the back. The requirement for buildings today is that you have to have a sprinkler system.

Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion to adjourn the Workshop meeting at approximately 2:06 p.m. Commissioner Traylor 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