

**/Lamar County Board of Commissioners
Regular Business Meeting
December 21st, 2021**

Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Horton, Commissioner Heiney, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, County Clerk Davidson, and County Attorney Mayfield. The meeting was available via Zoom.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Glass called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

Everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance. Scott Weaver, Pastor for the Lasting Impact Church gave the invocation.

III. Agenda Approval

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Minutes Approval

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve the following three sets of minutes. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- i. November 10th, 2021-Workshop Meeting
- ii. November 16th, 2021-Public Hearing
- iii. November 16th, 2021- Regular Commissioner Meeting

V. Board Appointments

- i. Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Irvin Trice-Non-Public Member of the Council of the Three Rivers Regional Commission. Vice-Chairman Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- ii. Commissioner Heiney made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Bennie Horton to the Three Rivers Regional Commission. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- iii. Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Robert Heiney to the E911 Committee. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion unanimously.
- iv. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to appoint Jimmy Matthews to the Lamar County Industrial Development Authority due to the resignation of Phillip Bell filling the unexpired term through December 31, 2022. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- v. Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion to acknowledge the re-appointment of Scott Cone to serve on the Board of Elections as the Democratic Party representative for a four-year term expiring 12-31-2025. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Resolution 2021-34 Budget Approval

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-34 Budget for 2022 in the amount of \$12,038,958.00. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Resolution 2021-35 Qualifying Fees

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-35 to set the following Qualifying Fees.

- i. County Commissioner-Chair \$126.00
- ii. County Commissioner-District 1 \$108.00
- iii. County Commissioner-District 2 \$108.00
- iv. Member, Board of Education District 2 \$198.00
- v. Member, Board of Education District 4 \$198.00
- vi. Member, Board of Education At Large \$252.00

VIII. Resolution 2021-36 Tax Assessors Board

Commissioner Traylor made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-36 Tax Assessor Board re-appointment of Betty Smith Banks and Brad Bryan to a 4-year term beginning 1/1/2022 through 12/31/2025. Commissioner Heiney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Resolution 2021-37 Supporting Reform to Georgia's Annexation Dispute Resolution Law

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-37 Supporting Reform to Georgia's Annexation Dispute Resolution Law. Vice-Chairman Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Resolution 2021-38 Budget Amendment

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-38 Budget Amendment amending the 2021 annual budget from \$11,817,667.00 to \$11,818,417.00. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Request for Proposal (RFP) Number 2111-04 Lamar County Emergency Ambulance Service

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to approve the Request for Proposal (RFP) Number 2111-04 Lamar County Emergency Services accepting the staff recommendation for the bid from AmeriPro for an annual contract amount of \$494,700.00. This will be a joint ambulance service between Lamar and Upson County and is for 2 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

County Administrator Townsend recommended that Chairman Glass sign the contract agreement with AmeriPro for the Lamar County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to allow Chairman Glass to sign the contract agreement with AmeriPro. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Administrator's Report

County Administrator reported the following:

- i. Reported that the cash flow for November 2021 actuals is higher than the forecasted trends.
- ii. Reported that the Courthouse windows should be installed the first week of January.
- iii. Reported that the Local Option Tax Sales Distribution (LOST) for November was \$129,184.43.
- iv. Reported that the Special Local Option Tax Sales Distribution (SPLOST) for November was \$230,686.62.
- v. Stated that the goal for 2022 is to operate without a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN)

XIII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

XIV. Round Table

Vice-Chairman Horton wished everyone a Merry Christmas and thanked everyone who participated in the Christmas Parade. He said that everyone is privileged and blessed to be able to come and go as they please in the great Country that we live in.

Commissioner Heiney said that he appreciated all the work that had been done on the ambulance service. He said that this was a saving that could be passed on to the taxpayer.

Commissioner Traylor thanked County Administrator Townsend and the staff for all of the hard work that had been done on the ambulance service and for working with Upson County.

Commissioner Traylor apologized to those that had reported issues with the recent trash pickup service. He said that he is on the Solid Waste Authority Board and learned that AmWaste has been updating the software for their mapping system and explained that this is why some of the addresses were missed. He said that AmWaste is one of the largest trash companies in the South and they are bringing in trucks from different locations to help out.

Commissioner Traylor reported that he had visited the Clayton and Spalding County Animal Shelters and that the drawings for the animal shelter will be finalized soon.

Commissioner Thrash read a statement to the citizens as follows.

“Good evening. I wish I did not have to make this statement to the Commission and the public, but given the accusations made against me and by implication against each of you as Commissioners, I really have no choice. First, there are two issues that need quick comment. As to my County cell phone, yes, I let my granddaughter use it for a couple of months when hers was broken and she was otherwise home alone without a means of communication. I took the shortcut of loaning it to her and then paying the County for those two months. Perhaps I should have been more careful, and in the future, I will be, but I do not apologize for making sure my granddaughter was safe. As to allegations about the use of a county trailer, there is nothing to that. I never used it, it was never used by my son at any time at my direction, and I will make sure no use of any trailer owned by the county is ever used by my son again. But I haven’t asked to speak here tonight because of those two minor issues, issues that have been addressed and are of no further importance. The reason I have asked to speak here tonight is that I was publicly and falsely accused of taking a \$25,000 bribe to vote a certain way on a zoning issue. The Commission was implicitly accused of knowing of and sanctioning that supposed bribery. Let me make this as clear as can be: This never happened. The person making the accusation has admitted head that they had no basis for such an accusation. It is a false and defamatory statement that may result in my filing a libel lawsuit against the poster of this accusation on Facebook. This whole Commission has been attacked through this accusation. We as Commissioners have a hard job and sometimes have to make hard decisions; that is something each of us knew when we sought the position. I make no complaint about that fact, or about the public discussion and disagreement that sometimes accompanies our actions. That public debate about important issues, local or state-wide, is what makes our country work and is the basis of all we do in the public realm. False speech, made out of meanness or ignorance or a lust for influence, does nothing to help our community or any of us as citizens of the county. False accusations just serve to distract from the work that needs to be done and to discourage people from wanting to make the sacrifices related to public service. We cannot tolerate these sorts of destructive lies. This sort of activity devalues all of us, the work we do, the decisions we make, and the lives we lead. I pray that this sort of lying and meanness will stop and each of us must do our part. I will do my part by moving forward to see that the never happens again. I have not decided on my final course of action, but in consultation with family, friends, colleagues, and counsel, I will make that decision shortly. Thank you.”

Chairman Glass wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

XV. Adjournment

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Vice-Chairman Horton 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