

Workshop Meeting  
Lamar County Board of Commissioners  
2/10/2022  
1:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:52 p.m. on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Heiney, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. The meeting was available via Zoom.

**Public Works Director Rigdon-Approval for County Pavement Rating and Planning Road Evaluation**

The board heard comments from Public Works Director Rigdon regarding the bid for the County pavement rating and planning road evaluation coming out of TSPLOST. He received three bids; Keck and Wood for \$28,500.00, Neel-Schaffer for \$49,500.00, EXP for \$23,000.00. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that they would analyze every road in the county along with a video of each road. Chairman Glass explained that the goal is to prioritize the list of roads that will be funded through TSPLOST and LMIG. The recommendation from the staff and Public Works Director Rigdon is EXP for \$23,000.00.

**Juanita Fletcher-Gym Discussion**

The board heard concerns from Juanita Fletcher, Clifford Barber, and Teresa Harvey-Davis regarding using the former Barnesville Academy (BA) gym. Ms. Fletcher shared with the board that she had managed the BA gym in the past in the morning and evening hours and they charged people to play basketball. Ms. Fletcher stated that the community would like to use the gym for not only basketball but birthday parties and other events to help the children. Ms. Fletcher said that the monies charged could bring revenue into the county. County Administrator Townsend and Chairman Glass stated that because the floors, the basketball goals, and the roof of the building needs repair it is unsafe to allow citizens to come into the gym for these types of events. County Administrator Townsend said that it would cost around \$70,000.00 to repair the floor, and \$90,000.00 to repair the roof. This is not including other repairs such as the air conditioners, the goals, the bleachers, and the rust on the backside of the metal building. County Administrator Townsend explained that allowing adults to play basketball on the floor is different from children playing on the floor because of the weight of the adults. Ms. Fletcher inquired about the Wrestling teams that are allowed to use the gym. Chairman Glass explained that they put down a platform for the wrestlers to use. The board explained that the plan is to build a new gym with two courts that can be used. There was continued discussion about whether or not they would repair the BA gym or tear it down once the new gym is built. Ms. Harvey-Davis suggested that they sell or donate the BA gym to a non-profit organization. Ms. Fletcher stated that she had volunteers including Maggie Moreland with the Barnesville Police Department who are willing to give their time to help repair the gym. County Administrator Townsend provided Ms. Fletcher with the build design for the new gym.

**Magistrate Judge Kunst-Approval to Purchase Software for Magistrate Court**

The board heard a request from Magistrate Judge Kunst in regards to purchasing a new software system for their case files. The board reviewed three options; ICON for a bid of \$8,000.00, CJT Software for a bid of \$20,000.00, and Tyler Technologies for a bid of \$12,500.00. Magistrate Judge Kunst and Magistrate Clerk Sandy Studle proposed that the board accept the bid from CJT Software because many of the counties in Georgia use CJT software and also because of their customer support, and onsite support they can receive from surrounding counties.

**Commissioner Thrash-Legislative Update**

The board heard a Legislative Update from Commissioner Thrash.

- i. HB855 relates to workers' compensation and allows for a coverage for first responders for post-traumatic stress disorder arising in the course of employment.
- ii. SB350 relates to elections and primaries generally, so as to authorize the General Assembly to provide by local legislation for nonpartisan elections for any county offices; to provide procedures for such nonpartisan general elections; and for other purposes.
- iii. HB75 relates to general provisions regarding ad valorem taxation of property, to change certain requirements relating to advertising and notice requirements pertaining to millage rate adoption; to change certain provisions relating to acceptance of a tax digest.
- iv. HB997 relates to property tax exemptions, so as to provide for a state-wide exemption from all ad valorem taxes for timber equipment and timber products held by timber producers; to provide for a referendum.
- v. SB325 relates to elections and primaries, to remove provisions relating to absentee ballot drop boxes.
- vi. HB726 relates to elections and primaries generally, to provide for the ability of the judge of the probate court to cease acting as superintendent of elections; to provide for the creation of a board of elections and the selection and appointment of members to take the place of the judge of the probate court; to provide for the qualification, terms, and removal of members; to provide for oaths and privileges; to provide for meetings, procedures, and vacancies; to relieve the judge of the probate court of certain powers and duties with regard to elections and to provide for the transfer of functions to the newly created board; to provide for certain expenditures of public funds; to provide for compensation of members of the board and personnel; to provide for offices and equipment; to provide for the board's performance of certain functions and duties for certain municipalities.
- vii. Commissioner Thrash said there have been additional retirement discussions for Probate Judges and Sheriff's Offices receiving supplements for every Court that they represent.

### **Planning and Community Development Director Buice- Paid Hunts in Agriculture, Large and Small Scale Agritourism**

The board heard from Planning and Community Development Director Buice regarding Paid Hunts in Agriculture, and Small and Large Scale Agritourism. The consequence of the updated zoning regulations that went into effect on January 1, 2021, is a change in how paid hunting events are categorized. In prior rules, only deer camps (including campers) were addressed as a special exception in AR. Current rules are as follows:

- i. Hunting/Deer Camps: permitted in AR with a maximum of one hunter per twenty acres.
- ii. Paid hunting/fishing: permitted in AR under small-scale agritourism with a cap of twenty-five people.
- iii. Paid hunting/fishing; special exception in AR under large-scale agritourism for events over twenty-five people.

The board discussed the number of people that could be at events such as hunting and fishing, quail, and pheasant shoots. Currently, Planning and Community Development Director Buice has an open code enforcement regarding complaints about traffic during a hunt. The board agreed to continue this discussion in a Special Called Workshop Meeting within the month of February.

### **Ameripro EMS Presentation**

The board heard comments from AmeriPro EMS; Suhas Uppalapit, President and CEO of AmeriPro EMS, Larry Richardson, Executive Vice President, and Marvin McLellan, COO regarding an amendment to the original contract related to communication infrastructure. Mr. Richardson explained that this relates to how the Fire Department and the Sheriff's Office communicates with the ambulances and the security of the infrastructure. Community Ambulance bought the communication infrastructure from Upson Regional Hospital many years ago so they have had to look at how to rebuild this asset and put it into place. Their plan was to utilize some of the facilities in Upson County, which would have supported both counties. That plan was unsustainable because their

fire stations are all volunteer and they do not have internet therefore they do not have enough facilities to run an effective ambulance service. The one facility that could have helped is the Hugo Star Fire Station in Upson County but it is owned by the Upson Regional Hospital. A fair market assessed value on that facility has not been done in over six to eight years. Mr. Richardson stated that they did not account for all of these things and they need a plan as to how they can move forward. He said that they had also discussed with Fire Chief Matthews an issue with payroll. He said that when they came into this, they thought, in regards to payroll, that they were at the highest level of services with keeping the senior paramedics however Community Ambulance inflated the wages because of so many people were leaving because of the COVID vaccine mandate. So, in order to retain those employees, they had to go with the highest level of pay and this was in excess to what AmeriPro EMS pays and what they have as a normal market analysis. They did not know this fact about the payroll because they had no access to Community Ambulance employees. Mr. Russell said that there is one paramedic for every four jobs in the State of Georgia and one of their competitors is offering a \$22,000.00 sign-on bonus and \$65,000.00 a year which is significantly below what AmeriPro EMS is paying including their bonus structure. Mr. Russell said that one of their biggest competitors is Henry County and they want to be extremely pragmatic going into this agreement because the reason there have been failures in the past is because the project was completely underfunded. He said that they were using one resource for 911, interfacility and discharges from the hospital, and taking patients from the local hospital to Macon, Georgia, and when you do this, it takes the capacity out of the 911 system and you do not have ambulances to respond. Mr. Uppalapit said that they are not using that model for the 911 system and this is where the cost is going to go up. Mr. Russell said that he does not want to send his ambulance crew out there for a psychiatric patient and then they are not able to talk to Police officers when their crew is getting assaulted or if an officer gets shot and they cannot talk to 911 because they do not know where he is. The communication infrastructure is vital but it will take a lot of time to build it and there are grants that they can apply for to help with the cost but on the beginning side of this they cannot take an unforeseen loss. Mr. Russell said that there is also an encryption issue with the communication infrastructure as well which puts the County and AmeriPro EMS at liability.

### **Recess Workshop Meeting**

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to recess the Workshop Meeting at approximately 2:55 p.m. to take a tour of one of the new ambulances. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The board resumed the Workshop meeting approximately 20 minutes later.

### **Major Subdivision Discussion**

Chairman Glass stated that this will be a first reading. He explained that the City is getting serious about its sewer capacity and they may not be able to approve any more subdivisions. The board reviewed the Ordinance 2022-01 First Reading Appendix A, Lamar County Development Ordinance Amendments. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that this was different from what they had originally planned. He said that the idea was to have a core around the cities and within that core you could have high-density subdivisions which is called a circle or bubble. Outside the city limits would be 5-acre zoning. Planning and Community Development Director Buice addressed the board and stated that she was looking at the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning board. Chairman Glass said that his rationale was that it was not just about having water but having the services such as Fire and Ambulance, and Sheriff patrolling. Vice-Chairman Heiney said he was present for the Planning and Zoning meeting and they were concerned about the restrictiveness for the developers. The original idea was to preserve the rural area of the county. Commissioner Thrash said that needed to comply with the Affordable Housing Authority. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that we are getting more and more traffic and density in population in the county and questioned how much the Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS services that they could handle. The idea is to concentrate the growth within the city limits. Commissioner Horton said that this will give the younger generation opportunities while controlling the County so that it does not turn into Henry County. Vice-Chairman Heiney said that there are still places that could be built in the City. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that there is still a lot of vacant developable land. The point of location is the County Courthouse and the City Hall in Milner and that is where you start the measurement for the boundary.

The board discussed having an 1800 square ft. minimum requirement outside the circle/bubble compared to an 800 square ft. minimum. Chairman Glass noted that an 800 square ft. home is not going to generate much revenue. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that anything that is developed outside of the circle will not have to be rezoned and will most likely stay agriculture which usually has a 1400 square ft. minimum. There was a discussion about allowing 2-to-3-acre tracts outside of the circle/bubble. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that when talking about having 5-acre tracts or more they need to consider things such as side entry garages and staggered setbacks. There was a discussion about allowing side-entrance garages within a 1-acre subdivision. The board discussed having the following requirements: an additional twenty-five (25) percent (accumulative total of fifty (50) or more percent) must be reserved for homes of at least one thousand eight hundred (1,800) square feet. The third twenty-five (25) percent must be at least one thousand six hundred (1,600) square feet. The remainder must be at least equal to or greater than the minimum allowed in that applicable zoning district. Properties zoned R3 and R4 are exempt from this requirement because they require sewer. In all major subdivisions, the developer must provide for a minimum of six different homes styles. Mirrored or reversed floor plans and exterior finishes will not be considered a different style. All developments must leave or provide a natural tree buffer of at least 10' to 25' along all property lines of the original undeveloped tract. The maintenance of this buffer will be the responsibility of the future property owner of the individual lot and is required in perpetuity unless a variance is granted.

### **County Administrator Townsend-Personnel Policy Updates**

- i. Changes to PTO Policy for Attendance and Leave
- ii. Tobacco, Smoke, and Vape-Free Workplace

The board tabled the Personnel Policy updates until the Department Heads and Constitutional Officers can review the policies.

### **Regular Meeting Discussion**

The board reviewed the Regular Business Meeting agenda.

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. The board heard that Frank Abbott is giving the invocation
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Minutes Approval
  - i. Workshop Meeting-January 13th, 2022
  - ii. Public Hearing Meeting-January 18th, 2022
  - iii. Regular Business Meeting-January 18th, 2022
6. Proclamation-Black History Month
7. Ordinance 2022-01 First Reading Appendix A, Lamar County Development Ordinance Amendments.
8. Resolution 2022-01 Clarification and Change in Conditions to Special Exception Application 2021-02. The board reviewed the changes made that related to buffers and issuance of citations.
  - i. 12. Fencing and buffers, as shown on the attached site plan, shall be maintained on each boundary of the subject property.
  - ii. 15. If 3 citations are received in a year a cease-and-desist order will be issued. The applicant may appeal as provided in Lamar County Code.
9. De-Annexation of Powell Place Apartments in the Town of Aldora.

Chairman Glass explained that the City of Barnesville Mayor Banks sent him a letter stating that they are planning to de-annex the Powell Place apartments and they expect the Town of Aldora to annex the Powell

Place apartments because Aldora has no population. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is telling them that they do not qualify for grants. The Service Delivery Strategy Agreement states that the City of Barnesville provides police protection but if it is a part of Aldora then the Sheriff will provide the protection. The recommendation from Chairman Glass was to approve the de-annexation of the Powell Place Apartments in the Town of Aldora.

10. Approval to Purchase Software for Magistrate Court.
11. Approval for County Pavement Rating and Planning.
12. Tyler Technologies Quote to Update from Incode 9 to Incode 10 Migration.
  - i. Employee Self Service  
County Administrator Townsend explained that the Financial Software was purchased back in 2013. The version is Incode 9 and the migration would take the software to Incode 10 which will have additional functions. The quote received from Tyler Tech for the Migration to Incode 10 was \$25,420.00 and the quote received for the Employee Self Service was \$10,400.00.
13. Approval for Two Sheriff Vehicles from the Special Local Options Sales Tax. (SPLOST)
  - i. 2022 Ford F-150 Responder Crew Cab
  - ii. 2022 Chevrolet Tahoe PPV
14. Surplus a Public Works Vehicle
  - i. 2014 Chevrolet Silverado Truck  
The animal control truck was involved in an accident and deemed totaled.
15. Administrator's Report.
  - i. LOST and SPLOST distribution came in higher than in past months.
  - ii. Hogan and Barnsley Construction are being considered to build the new gym.

**Round Table Discussion**

Chairman Glass stated that a letter of intent had been sent to the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) in regards to building on Roberta Drive, the jointly owned property between the County and the City of Barnesville.

**Adjournment**

The board adjourned the meeting to go into executive session for personnel at 4:36 pm. The board came out of executive session at 4:53 p.m. and adjourned the Workshop meeting.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Glass, Chairman

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Robert Heiney, Vice-Chairman

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Bennie Horton, Commissioner

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Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

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Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk