

Lamar County Board of Commissioners
Special Called Meeting
Administration Building
January 19th, 2023
1:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:30 p.m. on January 19th, 2023. Present for the meeting were Chairman Traylor, Vice-Chair Thrash, Commissioner Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Gilles, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson.

Vehicles for Sheriff's Office-SPLOST

County Administrator Townsend explained that the funds for the requested vehicles from the Sheriff's Office would come from excess funds from the 2016 ballot for the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). They budgeted \$130,000.00. In July 2020, a new law went into effect where the service that was delivered, the sales tax collections, comes to Lamar County. This allowed the SPLOST collections to increase by \$100,000.00 more than what was forecasted. The Sheriff's Office is allocated funds to buy several more cars. They received bids from Ginn Commercial for three 2023 Charger Police RWD 5.7L V8 cars. County Administrator Townsend stated that the vehicles coming in are usually sold within a week.

Sheriff White explained that they had not made any V8 Chargers in a couple of years, and the V6 Chargers that they purchased had not held up. They used to be able to purchase a V8 charger for \$24,000.00, and now they cost around \$38,000.00. They ordered two F150 trucks from Brannon Motor Company in Unadilla, Georgia, and have those trucks on the lot for around \$38,500.00. The equipment for the old cards from the V6 Chargers will go into the new V8 Chargers. They will have to purchase new equipment for the trucks. Sheriff White said that the Dodge Chargers were having trouble with the lifters, and the Chevrolet Tahoes had issues with the transmission going out at 400,000 miles. He said that there had been no reported issues with the F150s. Sheriff White stated that automobiles are expensive.

Chairman Traylor explained that when he first became a Commissioner, he was hit with questions from citizens about why all of the Departments had new vehicles. He found out that it is easier to maintain a newer vehicle than an older model vehicle because buying a newer vehicle helps the maintenance cost go down. He said they had 12 to 15 years old cars that were only worth about \$4000.00 to \$5,000.00, and they were spending \$10,000.00 to maintain them. They were able to reduce the staff in the Maintenance Department by buying newer vehicles. Sheriff White said they used to buy black and white law enforcement cars because, in 2010 and 2011, there were some rough times with funding. They were fully equipped and had one car they could be used for parts. Sheriff White said that buying used cars is not feasible because buying a used car costs more than a new car. Commissioner Lovett stated that he likes white law enforcement cars. Currently, they have a mixed array of vehicles in all different

colors. Sheriff White said that he is opposed to black patrol cars with black lettering because you are defeating the purpose. He said they have some with contrasting colors, and the law used to state that to run radar, you had to run contrasting colors. Commissioner Lovett stated that he likes white vehicles from a public safety standpoint, especially with neighborhood help, because black-on-black defeats the purpose.

Sheriff White explained that the retrofit cost for the vehicle is around \$20,000.00. County Administrator Townsend explained that \$200,000.00 to \$225,000.00 had been budgeted for the Sheriff's vehicle. Sheriff White stated that they needed one Administration car and two patrol cars.

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the funding for the three 2023 Charger Police RWD 5.7L V8 cars from Ginn Commercial for an amount of approximately \$114,000.00. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment and Executive Session

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to go into Executive Session at approximately 1:17 p.m. for the purpose of personnel. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The board came out of Executive Session at approximately 1:40 p.m. with no action taken, and Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to adjourn the Special Called meeting.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Ryran Traylor, Chairman

Nancy Thrash, Vice-Chair

Jarrod Fletcher, Commissioner

Jason Lovett, Commissioner

Ashley Gilles, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk