

Workshop Meeting
Lamar County Board of Commissioners
1-12-2023
12:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:30 p.m. on January 12th, 2022. Present for the meeting were Chairman Traylor, Vice-Chair Thrash, Commissioner Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Gilles, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson.

Animal Shelter

County Administrator Townsend presented the proposal from Southern Classic Designs, including exterior elevations, foundation plan, floor plan, electrical plan, plumbing plan, HVAC Plan, structural plan, workmanship specifications, and site plan. Reported that the Animal Shelter committee visited several shelters in other counties including one in Clayton County. Issues y found were as follows:

Improper drainage

Ventilation,

Coating for blocked walls

Flooring in the dog pens

Cleaning Supplies

Software to track dogs and cases.

The Spalding County Animal Shelter has 88 pins, and 46 are court cases. It cost Clayton County 4.5 million dollars to build its animal shelter 19 years ago. As a requirement of the State of Georgia, an Animal Shelter Ordinance has to be updated and approved before an Animal Shelter can be built. Pike County's new Animal Shelter can open once they approve their Animal Shelter Ordinance. County Administrator Townsend said he reached out to Meriwether County for a wage study. To run their animal shelter, the total operating cost is \$262,070.00 per year. The Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project approved \$253,000.00 for the County to build an animal shelter. The Community Foundation in Macon, Georgia, has received approximately \$188,000.00 in donations.

Commissioner Lovett shared ideas and asked questions about the animal shelter. The animal shelter is around 4000 sq ft., and the cost is about \$200.00 a square foot, which will cost approximately \$800,000.00. Chairman Traylor said a builder recently gave them a quote of \$420,000.00 to build a block building. The proposed animal shelter presented is an open-air design. He pointed out that as they bring the dogs into the animal shelter, they are feral, with a potential disease. The fastest way to spread diseases is through an enclosed animal shelter, so he advocates for an open-air design. Commissioner Lovett noted that the total cost of the animal shelter that had been raised or budgeted is \$441,000.00, and the unbudgeted amount for the operation cost is approximately \$262,000.00. He proposed that since they live in rural areas, tons of vacant chicken houses resemble the proposed open-air design because businesses such as Perdue do not update their chicken houses. Commissioner Lovett stated that these vacant chicken houses have water and ventilation and could be renovated at the property owners' expense., then they could rent it or lease it from the owner. He said they have been working on this animal shelter project for seven years and are still in progress; if they go this route, they could have an animal shelter up and running within seven months. County Administrator Townsend pointed out that the \$253,000.00 has to be spent on a Capital Project. Commissioner Lovett said that since the SPLOST money has to be spent on a capital project, they could do a long-term lease using the funds of \$188,00.00 from the Community Foundation for operations. Vice-Chair Thrash said that it is in the Service Delivery Strategy Agreement that the County provides those

services. She said that the City of Barnesville has its own animal shelter and has not been interested in teaming up with Lamar County.

Vice-Chair Thrash said that the animal shelter project was sold on the platform that they would have a Director, but the volunteers would run the animal shelter. A budget of \$65,000.00 a month is needed for both Full-Time and Part-Time salaries plus Over-Time salaries. County Administrator Townsend explained that the State says that the Sheriff's Office runs most animal shelters. He said that when he spoke to Sheriff White, he was concerned about staffing. Planning and Zoning Board member Dwight Fleming (Mr. Fleming) addressed the board. He inquired about the overhead and profit number for the animal shelter. County Administrator Townsend said that Bill Head, the builder of the Boys and Girls Club, addressed the board with some rough numbers from local contractors. He presented a cost of \$405,000.00. Mr. Fleming said that the overhead of a job like this would be around 20 percent. He said if you had retired volunteers in the County, they could probably get the amount of supervision that would be needed. Chairman Traylor said they have to follow due process with an RFP and they have had companies with in-house architect designers submitting bids of over a million dollars. Mr. Fleming said that Mr. T.J. Heath, who built the Rock Quarry on the end of Van Buren Road, could give back to Lamar County by donating the overhead and supervision of the animal shelter. He has access to lots of subcontractors. Mr. Fleming also mentioned former Code-Enforcer and contractor Wimpy Vaughn, who might be willing to donate and give back to the County, which would take a chunk out of the construction budget. Bill Daniel, a neighbor, former candidate for Commissioner, and an advocate for animal shelters, was present for the meeting. Mr. Daniel said that he knows people who are block contractors that have crews that would be willing to help build the animal shelter. Commissioner Gilles asked about who was on the Animal Shelter Committee. Chairman Traylor said they were Fred Morris, Tom Wellner, and himself. Vice-Chair Thrash withdrew from the committee. Commissioner Gilles requested that they have an update from the committee.

Solid Waste Authority Update

Vice-Chair Thrash reported that they are waiting on the major modification to the Solid Waste Plan so they can operate the permit. Solid Waste Authority Director Johnny Poore (Mr. Poore) spoke to the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) yesterday. They received a draft of their air quality permit and expect the actual permit soon. Two of the evaporators have been ordered, and one has been shipped, and the 2nd one will ship within two weeks. The incinerator equipment will take about a week to ship.

Chairman Traylor explained that the Solid Waste Authority was established in 1993. Chairman Traylor Vice-Chair Thrash encouraged the new Commissioners to visit the landfill.

Commissioner Gilles confirmed with Vice-Chair Thrash that they plan to do Leachate Evaporation at the Landfill. Chairman Traylor said that once the evaporators are received and set up, they will be able to evaporate at the Lamar County landfill and any other landfill with industrial wastewater.

Commissioner Lovett expressed his concerns about revenue issues with the landfill and the equipment that is not being utilized. He stated that the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loan was for \$27,500,000.00 and since they have drawn almost all of that amount then they should be producing something. The project initially was where they would reclaim and sell plastic, and now, they are into the gasification of Leachate. Commissioner Lovett expressed his concerns with the Leachate gasification process with his understanding that Mr. Poore is not going to use flame-off gas from the landfill, but instead, they are going to buy gas from the gas company. He will buy gas and run it through the gasification process and then shoot Leachate in it. Commissioner Lovett spoke to the Finance Department about Lamar County not receiving tipping fees. Vice-Chair Thrash said they would get half of the tipping fees

from AmWaste that comes from the scales. Commissioner Lovett said that he understood that the scale trash is not going to the reclamation project because the reclamation project is actually for the gasification process because of the “Murph”; Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). The Murph is nonoperational, and there is approximately \$7,000,000.00 worth of equipment just sitting and not hooked up.

Chairman Traylor and the board continued their discussion about the Solid Waste GEFA loan for \$27,500,000.00. Vice-Chair Thrash said they must notify GEFA when they draw from the GEFA loan. To date, \$22,000,000.00 has been drawn from the GEFA loan. Chairman Traylor said that some documents from the Solid Waste Authority are being put together for the Commissioners with this type of information.

Regular Business Meeting Agenda Discussion

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Invocation will be given by Jason Teal
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Recess for Public Hearing
6. Rezoning and Minor Subdivision by Hazelrig Living Trust to rezone property from Agricultural Residential to Residential R-1 (Tax Map 055, Parcel 008B).

Planning and Community Development Director Buice (Ms. Buice) explained that the applicants wish to split a 2.37-acre tract from their 55-acre property for the use of a family member. This is for the wife’s identical twin sister but mostly to take care of their elderly father. The Hazelrigs would like the property to follow their driveway and not cross over their exiting driveway. They are in conservation, but since it is for a family member it will not breach. The Planning and Zoning Commission board recommended approval. Ms. Buice explained the zoning process. Once they accept the application, it is advertised in the legal organ, they put a sign on the property and send letters to the property owners within 300 ft. of the property lines of the proposed request. There are two Public Hearings. The first one goes to the Planning and Zoning Commission if it is a rezoning. It goes to the Board of Appeals if it is a Special Exception or a Variance. The second one goes to the Board of Commissioners. In the first Public Hearing the applicant presents their request, and the public is invited to speak either for or against the requested proposal. The Planning and Zoning Commission or the Board of Appeals then makes their recommendation of approval or denial. The Board hears the second Public Hearing of Commissioners, and during the Regular Business meeting the Board of Commissioners has final approval or denial except for variances for which the Board of Appeals has final approval. If the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Appeals are combined as one board, then everything would come back to the Board of Commissioners for final approval or denial. Vice-Chair Thrash pointed out that the Board of Commissioners could deny or table a rezoning, but if they deny the rezoning, the applicant has to wait a year before re-applying for the rezoning request. Ms. Buice explained there is a State rule where the minimum is two acres but no maximum. Commissioner Gilles asked about giving the family members more property so that they have conservation. Mr. Fleming explained that if the 2.5-acre parcel and if it is sold before the conservation easement runs out, it voids the conservation easement on the parent tract. It is designed to keep the property in conservation even if the land is given to the family. Ms. Buice said that if the family member sold the 2.5 acres of land, then the 50 acres of land that is in conservation would be breached.

7. Reconvene Public Hearing
8. Minutes Approval
 - Public Hearing Meeting-December 5th, 2022
 - Special Called Meeting Minutes-December 12th, 2022
 - Workshop Meeting-December 15th, 2022
 - Regular Business Meeting-December 20th, 2022
9. Ordinance 2023-01 Rezoning and Minor Subdivision by Hazelrig Living Trust to rezone property from Agricultural Residential to Residential R-1 (Tax Map 055, Parcel 008B)
10. Board Appointments
 - i. Three Rivers Regional Commission
 - a. County Representative-Jason Lovett
 - b. Non-Public Representative-Irvin Trice
 - ii. E-911 Appointment
 - a. County Representative-Ashley Gilles
 - iii. Region 6 Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Board-Jarrold Fletcher
 - iv. Board of Appeals-Doug Walker
 - v. Board of Elections-Acknowledgment by the Board of Commissioners
 - a. Elaine Williams-City of Barnesville
 - b. Bill Christopher-City of Milner

11. LMIG/TSPLOST Project Approval

County Administrator Townsend presented the bids for the LMIG/TSPLOST.

Microsurfacing Project: Two Bids Received; Asphalt Paving for a total cost of \$2,341,138.80 and the Scruggs Company for a total cost of \$2,510,426.52. The staff, Public Works, and EXP recommends Asphalt Paving for a total cost of \$2,341,138.80. EXP managed the bid process and presented a report of all roads with detailed estimates from contractors based on unit prices and totals. County Administrator Townsend explained the history of the LMIG (Local Maintenance Improvement Grant) and the Special Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) III, which runs from 2017 to October 2023. The Transportation Special Local Options Sales Tax (TSPLOST) runs from 2022-2027. The bond that was approved is borrowed on anticipated revenue. The bond was approved for TSPLOST at \$10,200,000.00 and cannot exceed \$12,500,000.00. County Administrator Townsend explained that there are 3 phases to the project. The first phase is for 40 miles of paving and includes Cauthen, Cook, Heavy, Van Buren, Bush, Johnstonville, Five Points, Country Kitchen and Brooks Road. Chairman Traylor explained that the County suffers from major road issues. The end of the fault line or Stone Mountain is in Lamar County, and with all of the Rock Quarries mining, and the rock/gravel, and the truck travel, this affects the roads. County Administrator Townsend stated that an engineering study was done on Possum Trott Road, and if they tried to widen the road, it would cost around \$3,700,000.00. Chairman Traylor stated that when he came on board as a Commissioner, each District Commissioner prioritized their road list then they allowed Public Works Director Rigdon to recommend which roads to approve as a priority road to pave. Currently, they have a professional company, EXP, that makes those recommendations.

12. Administrator's Report

- Reported that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is planning on working on bridges on two roads; Cannafax Road and Ethridge Mill Road.
- Reported that he has a video to share with the Commissioners of the construction at the Recreation Department.

13. Public Comment

14. Round Table

- Mr. Fleming explained that Monroe County and Lamar County do their pothole treatment

similarly. Monroe County patching holds up longer than Lamar County's patching. He asked if they could get Public Works Director Rigdon to speak to the Public Works Director in Monroe County to see if they are doing something different that might benefit Lamar County.

- Commissioner Lovett inquired about getting a County cellphone. Chairman Traylor said that using the Ring Central App with the assigned County RingCentral phone number was his recommendation.
- Chairman Traylor suggested that the Commissioners invite their families to their first board meeting on January 17th, 2023. The Commissioners Board Retreat will be held in Athens, Georgia, from January 25th through January 27th, 2023.

15. Executive Session

- Real Estate
- Litigation
- Personnel

16. Adjournment

Adjournment

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to adjourn the Workshop meeting at approximately 2:28 p.m. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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