

**Lamar County Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Business Meeting**  
**June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Present for the meeting were Chairman Traylor, Vice-Chair Thrash, Commissioner Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Gilles, County Administrator Townsend, County Clerk Davidson, and County Attorney Mayfield. The meeting was available via Zoom.

**I. Call to Order**

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

**II. Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation**

Everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Waylon Knight of West Mt. Sinai Baptist Church gave the invocation.

**III. Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**IV. Minutes Approval**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- i. Workshop Minutes May 11th, 2023
- ii. Regular Business Meeting-May 16th, 2023
- iii. Special Called Meeting May 23rd, 2023

**V. Ordinance 2023-06- 2nd Reader Transient Selling**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-06 Transient Selling. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Ordinance 2023-07 Robert and Alice Beachamp-Rezoning from Agriculture-Residential to Residential 2-Tax Map 007, Parcel 124**

Planning and Community Development Director Buice stated that the rezoning application from Robert and Alice Beachamp had been withdrawn.

**VII. Ordinance 2023-8 Alphonzo and Mary Watson-Rezoning from Agriculture to Commercial 2-Tax Map 086, Parcel 044**

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-08 Alphonzo and Mary Watson-Rezoning from Agriculture to Commercial 2-Tax Map 086, Parcel 044 with the

following conditions. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- No Gas Station
- No Electric Substation
- 25 Ft. Vegetative Buffer

Vice-Chair Thrash noted that she would like to add three more conditions.

- No underground tanks
- No Off-street parking or parking garage
- No Clubs

Commissioner Lovett amended his motion to include the six conditions. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- No Gas Station
- No Electric Substation
- 25 Ft. Vegetative Buffer
- No underground tanks
- No Off-street parking or parking garage
- No Clubs

**VIII. Resolution 2023-06 Ivan Minks-Thousand Hills Cattle Ranch-Special Exception in Agriculture-Agritourism and Retail Sales-Tax Map 027-Parcel 034**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-06 Ivan Minks-Thousand Hills Cattle Ranch-Special Exception in Agriculture-Agritourism and Retail Sales-Tax Map 027-Parcel 034 with the following condition. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- No Paid Events

**IX. Resolution 2023-07 Verizon Wireless-Special Exception in Agriculture-Residential to place wireless telecommunication facility-Lamar County Line Road-016-042**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-07 Verizon Wireless-Special Exception in Agriculture-Residential to place wireless telecommunication facility-Lamar County Line Road-016-042. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**X. Resolution 2023-08-Transient Fee Schedule**

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-08 Transient Fee Schedule for the following transient license fee schedule. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Lamar County Permit Fee \$100
- Environmental Health Authorization Fee \$50
- Environmental Health Inspection Fee \$100

## **XI. Lamar County EMS Mutual Aid Agreement**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the Lamar County EMS Mutual Aid Agreement with Pike County noting that non-emergency calls was removed from the agreement. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **XII. Reallocation of Victim Advocates Funds**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to allocate 3 percent of the 5 percent Victim's Advocate funds to the District Attorney's (DA) and 2 percent to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. Commissioner Lovett stated that the Sheriff's Office no longer needs the funds of the 50 percent funds of the 5 percent money and that the DA's office has had an increase in their budget. He said the Director of CASA would refund the County \$5,000.00 from their General Fund if we give them the 2.5 percent. He said that it is a win for the community and for CASA. Vice-Chair Thrash said that the DA's office advocates for all of the victims in the County. Vice-Chair Thrash pointed out that the Board members of CASA have to determine allocations of money and not the Director. DA Jonathan Adams pointed out that the payments received from the 2.5 percent are \$10,000.00. Commissioner Gilles made a motion to table the reallocation of Victim Advocates Funds. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **XIII. Administrator's Report**

County Administrator Townsend reported the following:

- i. Reported that revenues over expenditures for March are at 38.2% and are at 41.67%.
- ii. Reported that the Cash Flow is on schedule for December.
- iii. Reported on the gym that they are finishing with the painting in the bathrooms and under the bleachers. Working on lighting, flooring, wiring, and concreting a portion where a gas line was installed. Once they are done, they will contact the Fire Marshall for inspection.
- iv. Reported on the Administration Building. The temporary HVAC units have come in, and they are waiting on the City of Barnesville to do an inspection. They will be installing ceiling tiles, tiles in the bathrooms, lights, fire alarms, and Wi-Fi for the camera system
- v. Reported that he has three bids; the Courthouse Roof, The Roof at the Jail, and the Animal Shelter. The bids are due by July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- vi. Reported that the Local Options Sales Tax (LOST) distribution for May was \$139,0128.05.
- vii. Reported that the Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) distribution for May was \$238,739.43.
- viii. Reported that the Transportation Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (TSPLOST) for April was \$224,099.36.
- ix. Reported that EXP is checking on the paving project, and road striping will be done soon.

#### **XIV. Public Comments**

Lynn Hadaway of Morgan Dairy Road and Chair of the Lamar County Democratic Party addressed the board. Ms. Hadaway said that she was looking for a resource that she could not find. She said many years ago she received a list of all of the boards, Commissions and Authorities in the County, with the people on the board, along with their terms and expirations. Ms. Hadaway said she realized that some of them are voluntary while others have specific criteria's of qualifications to serve in that position. Ms. Hadaway requested the Board of Commissioners announce these positions via social media, the newspaper, or the website. Vice-Chair Thrash stated the list of Board Appointments is on the website. County Clerk Davidson explained that the list was located under "About Us" on the Homepage and the third item down. The name of the Board, and the Board members term of expiration are listed. Vice-Chair Thrash noted the website is "lamarcountygga.com."

Rick Stephenson of 184 Jones Road addressed the board. Mr. Stephenson said the Superior Clerk board he serves on is not listed because only the Board Appointments that the Board of Commissioners are responsible for are listed; the Grand Jury appoints that board. He wanted to know what the Fire Department has found out about the flow rate and asked if they could share it publicly via the newspaper or social media to put some pressure on the City of Barnesville. Mr. Stephens wanted to know if there was anywhere in the County that would be conducive for a gas station outside of the City of Barnesville. He said for two years, within a mile of I-75 there have been stipulations put on commercial property; no gas stations. Mr. Stephens said there is nowhere to buy gas in Lamar County unless you drive to Barnesville. He said that he does not know what kind of tax revenue a Quick Trip would bring to Lamar County. Mr. Stephens said on the High Falls Road exit and off of Johnstonville and below is Lamar and Monroe County. Mr. Stephens wanted to know if it was possible to establish a Water and Sewage Authority for this area with Lamar and Monroe County. He said he thought it would be conducive to the industry in District 2. Commissioner Gilles said there was one gas station in District 3.

Vice-Chair Thrash stated a while back, they announced. in the newspaper, a program where you could go online and use because people are stealing property by doing quick claim deeds. She said that Mr. Stephenson got a hit off of the program and they notified him that someone was potentially messing with his property. Vice-Chair Thrash said if anyone had not signed up for the program to see her after the meeting.

Elaine Hallada of 131 Steeple Chase addressed the board with her concerns about grants. Mrs. Hallada said that there was a \$250,000.000.00 grant for improvements that were put out by the Governor and was due August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, including recreation facilities. Lamar County never took advantage of applying for this grant. Mrs. Hallada said she called the Governor's office. They gave her a website that showed in February of 2022, where Representative Camp had announced there were \$422,00,000.00 in awards to reinforce water and sewer infrastructures in communities across the State. Mrs. Hallada said Lamar County would have been eligible. She said she was concerned the County does not seem to take advantage of applicable grants. Vice-Chair Thrash said the City of Barnesville did take advantage of this opportunity. Mrs. Hallada said her question was related to rules they go by and got this from

the Governor's Office. The Governor's Office notifies which grant is available via social media, newspapers, radio, and television. It is up to each municipality to apply for these grants. The municipality gets their State representative only after they have made their application available and then the State representative writes their letter of approval that goes with the application to the Governor's Office. Mrs. Hallada said that she spoke with someone at the Governor's Office and they said once the application and the approval letter come in, they send it back to the municipality and they tell them what they need to fix. The grant process begins and grants are awarded. Mrs. Hallada said they had a town hall meeting recently and one of the things said was the District representative for Georgia should have notified Lamar County about the grant and this is not how it happened. She said that the State representative is there to support you once you apply for the grant. She said that when she was talking to this person at the State office, who has held this position for 20 years, she asked her what County she was from and when she told her Lamar, she told her that Lamar is one of the County's that has an attitude and she chuckled. She said that people in Lamar County are not likely to apply for grants because then they will have to follow State rules. She said that she heard this from the previous Commissioners three or four years ago and then she heard it repeated recently. Mrs. Hallada said to look at what happened with the gym when they did not follow State rules. She asked the board why they are missing out on grants and said she was told from the Governor's Office that there are water and sewer grants every second year. She asked if they had applied for a water and sewer grant over the last seven to eight years. Chairman Traylor stated that the 3 minute time was up for Mrs. Hallada and stated that he would respond to her during the Commissioner Comments.

Cindy Bushby of 155 Redbone Run addressed the board with a question about the gym. Ms. Bushby asked who would pay for the repairs to repair the issues. Will the contractors absorb the initial cost since they did the work that the inspectors did not approve, or will the County be responsible for the additional cost? Ms. Bushby asked if they had a dollar figure. Chairman Traylor said this was Public Comment, not for them to go back and forth. Ms. Bushby asked where she could find her answer. Chairman Traylor said thank you very much. Ms. Bushby asked if it would be on the website. Chairman Traylor said they would have responses.

Holly Wells of 689 High Falls addressed the board. Ms. Wells said that since they are talking about sewers, she said they just approved Commercial 2 (C-2), and on High Falls Road there is no sewer. Ms. Wells said look what you have done and think about that. She said they need to work on things they approve and said they have put the cart before the horse again. She said they have to think and look at the big picture.

## **XV. Commissioner Comments**

Chairman Traylor addressed the grant application process. He said that Monroe County has a full-time person who looks for and writes grants all day. Lamar County does not have a designated employee that looks for grants; if there is one you all know about, then let them know. He said when they started working on the gym renovation, Ms. Barkley talked about possible grants, and they looked to see if there were some Lamar County qualified for. Chairman Traylor said they welcome any grants they know about and asked that they do their due diligence and share it with them. He asked them not to wait to come to these meetings

once a month to share information. Their contact information is on the website, and they call them anytime. Chairman Traylor addressed the sewer and water grant and said they recently met with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Commissioner Gilles set this meeting up, and he asked the DCA representative how the City of Barnesville and the City of Milner help access these grant funds that are available for water and sewer. The response was the County cannot because only the City of Barnesville can apply for a water and sewer grant because they own the Water Authority. Commissioner Gilles said that the City of Barnesville has applied for sewer and water grants. Chairman Traylor learned that the McElroy buildings with restaurants and businesses in Pike County are all on a septic system because they do not have sewer. The entire commercial development is on a septic system. Chairman Traylor said that they are building an animal shelter on a septic system.

Commissioner Gilles said the City of Barnesville can only apply for sewer and water grants. The City of Barnesville has received the most grants per capita in the State of Georgia. Commissioner Gilles said that they need to speak to the City Council about the grant issues.

Vice-Chair Thrash asked if Mrs. Hallada would volunteer the information about who she spoke with in the Governor's Office. Mrs. Hallada said that she had just called the Governor's Office. Vice-Chair Thrash asked if she would share the contact information that she spoke so despairingly of Lamar County. Mrs. Hallada said that she would not share that information. Vice-Chair Thrash said that she would like to make a motion that Mrs. Hallada's comment about speaking to someone at the Governor's Office be stricken from the record. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. Commissioner Lovett said that he thought that Public Comment is Public Comment, so he did not think anything should be stricken from the record. Commissioner Lovett and Commissioner Gilles opposed the motion. Chairman Traylor broke the tie by opposing the motion to remove the comment about the contact at the Governor's Office from the record. The motion carried 2-3 in favor of opposition. Vice-Chair Thrash said to let the record reflect that she did ask for the person's name so they could address the issue.

## **XVI. Round Table**

Commissioner Fletcher said that the past weekend with the community celebrating Juneteenth was a success. There were lots of activities for the young people and adults. It was a learning opportunity, and commended those that played a part in the celebration.

Commissioner Gilles wished a Happy Anniversary to Commissioner Fletcher.

Chairman Traylor thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting regardless of the side of the issue or concern that they may stand on. This is an opportunity for them to come out and learn and hear what is going on in the community and encouraged them to go back and share the information with their neighbors over a cup of coffee. He said it was nice to hear comments and ideas, but it is also great to have solutions and not wait until the meeting to let the board know about an issue so that they can add some clarification for it. Chairman Traylor said that he sits back in the meetings, and when he was a District Commissioner, he always tried to give public ideas or thoughts, but he stopped doing it. Chairman Traylor said he grew up in Lamar

County sitting on his grandmother's porch on Jackson Street. He said that his grandmother was a third-generation midwife, and Sheriff Waller used to talk about how his grandmother delivered him. She had a big smile, her name was Nanny, and a lot of people knew her. Chairman Traylor said that people, black or white, used to come and sit on her porch to hear her laugh, and she loved wrestling. Nanny always said that wrestling was not real, and one day she had him get an enquirer because she loved to read it. Chairman Traylor said he told her that the stuff she was reading could not be real, and she responded that it was not real it was entertainment. Chairman Traylor said that sometimes in life, they allow sources of social media or something that has been written online or something that someone says to you that should be just entertainment; we allow it to be factual and true. Chairman Traylor said that they live in a great community, and it is obvious because people and businesses are coming to Lamar County. He said that when they talk about the community, talk about positive things because this is a great place to live. Chairman Traylor says a Councilman always says Barnesville is the "World's Greatest City." He said that Lamar County is the "World's Greatest County" and said he appreciated everyone for being there and asked for everyone to have a great week and weekend and to be blessed.

**XVII. Adjournment**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to adjourn the Regular Business meeting at approximately 8:12 p.m. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Ryran Traylor, Chairman

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Nancy Thrash, Vice-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jarrod Fletcher, Commissioner

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Jason Lovett, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ashley Gilles, Commissioner

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