

Workshop Meeting
Lamar County Board of Commissioners
7/13/2023
12:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:30 p.m. on July 13th, 2023. Present for the meeting were Chairman Traylor Vice-Chair Thrash, Commissioner Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Gilles, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. The meeting was recorded and available via Zoom.

Chairman Traylor began the meeting by saying that he sat in on the bid process of the animal shelter and roofing bids and appreciated County Administrator Townsend and County Clerk Davidson for coordinating and putting it all together. Vice-Chair Thrash thanked County Administrator Townsend for the job he has put on the new Administration building and said that the job he has done is above and beyond and wanted to recognize him for all of the hard work that he had put into the project, including taking after hour phones calls.

Mowing and Trash Pickup

County Administrator Townsend went over the criteria it would take to add in-house roadside mowing to the 2024 budget listed below. The current mowing and trash pickup for three cuts is \$266,000.00. Vice-Chair Thrash noted Public Works Director Rigdon is having problems filling two open positions. They would be stuck with no grass cuttings if they were to eliminate the mowing contract and could not find anyone for this position. Commissioner Gilles suggested spraying the grass to stunt the growth, especially at the intersections. Vice-Chair Thrash suggested that they put the mowing and trash pickup out to bid. She said that the biggest complaint was the trash. The citizens pay taxes and want grass-cutting and trash pickup as part of the services. Chairman Traylor suggested that Public Works could supplement the mowing contract by cutting in between the contractor cutting. Public Works Director Rigdon joined the meeting via Zoom. He explained that the bush cutter had been down since COVID. Only one bush cutter can hit spots that people are complaining about. On Gordon Road, privet hedges hit people's cars as they exit their driveways. They have had issues with cutting low-hanging limbs as it takes six people to do the job, plus they need flaggers while they are working. Public Works Director Rigdon said that the trash on Fellowship Road and at Jordan Lumber, where truckers are throwing out personal trash.

Public Works Director Rigdon stated that in-house mowing would be a year-round project. When they had the mowing responsibility years ago, they did not make it around twice a year, and trash was not part of their job. He said he is understaffed; he started with 24 employees when he was hired and has 12 employees now. If they take over the mowing and trash pickup, they will have to hire four people. There is no one dedicated to drive the bush cutter because it will be a 40-hour-a-week job. They can run the bush cutter in the rain because it has a windshield with wipers and an air conditioner. Commissioner Lovett wanted Public Works Director Rigdon's opinion about the mowing and trash pickup to insource or outsource. Public Works Director Rigdon said to outsource. He explained that the grass cutting and the person running the bush cutter are separate. The bush cutter is slower and only cuts bushes. They need to hire someone to run the bush cutter. Public Works Director Rigdon suggested that they need to go ahead and put the mowing and trash pickup out to bid since the contract expires at the end of the year. They currently pay around \$266,000.00, and the bid could increase to around \$350,000.00. Public Works Director Rigdon said that he is working on spraying the intersections with a chemical that stunts the growth of the grass.

Bid Proposals

Received one bid from Flint Building for the animal shelter at \$1,146,539.00, one bid for the Sheriff's Office and the Jail from Flint Roofing for \$341,585.00, two bids from Flint Roofing for \$87,000.00 and RyCars Construction for \$150,000.00. He had six roofing vendors look at the Sheriff's Office and the Jail, and five vendors look at the Courthouse roof, and none of those vendors put in a bid. All the bids and specifications were on the Association of County Governments of Georgia (ACCG) website and the Georgia Procurement Registry. County Administrator Townsend is using a roofing consultant to assist with the roofing Request for Proposal (RFP). One of the things that hindered this was the liability insurance and the bond that was a specification in the RFP. The board discussed the process for rejecting the bids to start the bidding process. Vice-Chair Thrash suggested that they negotiate with RyCars Construction about doing both roofing bids. Chairman Traylor said they would need to find out if they could do this from the County Attorney. Chairman Traylor said they would need to reject the animal shelter bid if they wanted to handle the construction in-house. County Administrator Townsend said that if they handle the animal shelter in-house, they will need to hire a general contractor to oversee the job. Chairman Traylor said that things in the RFP will be modified with the animal shelter bid, which could save \$2,000.00, such as taking the drive-thru off the plans. There was a discussion about voting for the animal shelter bid in the workshop. The board ultimately decided to vote on the animal shelter in the Regular Business meeting.

Other Discussion

Commissioner Gilles addressed the water runoff on County roads. She said that the ditches need to be cut deeper to retain the water. There was a recent motorcycle wreck on or around Cauthen Road. She said that the Fire Truck slid coming into the rescue. There was mud and dirt everywhere. Commissioner Gilles said that the water was running off private property but would like Public Works to take care of the runoff of water on ditches in the roads in the County. Chairman Traylor pointed out that there was no liability to the County for the accident; this was just a matter of pointing out that they should be aware of water runoff on the County roads. Public Works Director stated that the gravel driveway that runs off the private property runs up a large hill, and the water runs off that driveway. Commissioner Gilles notes that when they move into the new Administration building, they will need to change the location address in the County Code of Law.

Commissioner Lovett wanted to follow up with the discussion about hiring a grant writer because he knows it will be a topic of discussion at the Regular Business meeting. County Clerk Davidson said she will take a Grant Writing class at the September Georgia County Clerk's conference. Chairman Traylor stated that they met with Mr. Marchman and Chairman Traylor, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson to discuss Lamar County's needs, including assistance with helping analyze a need or problem, look for solutions and funding sources, or facilitate collaboration. Commissioner Lovett stated that he wanted to go forward with looking for Grants and said that we have to know someone that knows where the grants are located. The Grant process will begin next year for FY 2024-2025. Commissioner Lovett stated that Meals on Wheels needs to be provided by the School System. Chairman Traylor said that he would speak to the School Superintendent. Commissioner Lovett requested that County Administrator Townsend move forward with purchasing the Senior Center bus via a loan.

Chairman Traylor suggested that the reallocation of the Victims of Crimes Act funds (VOCA) for the 2.5 percent split between the District Attorney (DA) and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) that was tabled in June be put back on the Regular Business meeting agenda for July. Commissioner Lovett suggested they give CASA the 2.5 percent and leave the DA's budget only because he received a 30

percent increase, and they have given more to that program than any other budget. Commissioner Lovett said that CASA discussed giving a refund back to the County, but because they are a good program, he agrees with giving them the 2.5 percent and the DA 2.5 percent. County Administrator Townsend said that this relates to around \$1,000.00 a year. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that the DA touches every victim in the County, and she thinks that 3.00 percent to the DA and 2.5 percent to CASA. Commissioner Lovett said that the CASA program directly impacts the kids in the community and is not funded by Monroe County. Since the Sheriff gave up the money, he disagrees with sending more money to the DA, which got the most significant increase in the budget, but he is willing for the DA to have 2.5 percent and CASA the other 2.5 percent of the 5 percent money.

Chairman Traylor called for a five-minute recess at approximately 1:30 p.m. and resumed the meeting at approximately 1:35 p.m.

Public Hearings

Planning and Community Development Director Buice addressed the board, stating that because there are four Public Hearings, the meeting would start at 6:00.

1) Kunst Freeman Road

The owner is buying the property, splitting it up, and has no use for a home. In order to cut out the existing home and sell it and the property, he wants to rezone it from Agricultural Residential to Residential (R-1). There were no recommendations.

2) Latimer Fredonia Road

The applicant owns the property behind the property that he wants to rezone. He is requesting to rezone the new two acres from Residential 3 to Highway Commercial to match the existing property's zoning. The Planning Commission meets at 6:00 p.m. tonight, so there are no recommendations, but added restrictions are anticipated because the property is near a dangerous intersection. The board suggested that they add the restriction of no tractor-trailer parking.

3) Strickland Van Buren

The applicant's daughter is moving home and wants to build across the street. They are requesting to rezone two acres of their 200 acres from Agricultural Residential to Residential 1. They did not want to rezone more than two acres because the father needed land for his cattle. The land is in conservation, but there is no breach when deeding land to a family member.

4) Shockley Ethridge Mill Road

The Addison's in April of 2022 came to the board and asked to rezone about 9 acres to 6 lots for one to two acres, and the board voted for them to rezone land to a minimum 2 acre lots with buffers between each parcel and a requirement of only stick built homes. The lot on the end sold, and the applicant is asking to remove the stick-built home restriction so their son can put it in a modular home. Vice-Chair Thrash stated that the restriction was the request of the neighbors, so she does not see the reason to go back and undo the restriction even though it is a different owner. Commissioner Lovett said he sets a high bar on what the previous board agreed upon, and future owners made plans based on the approved restrictions.

Planning and Community Development Director Buice updated the board on the complaints received from the truck parking lot on High Falls Road. The owner of the property passed away. The family has not probated the estate, and the son handles everything for his mother at a distance. The containers and the trucks belong to the estate, and he was unaware of the lot's condition. The son is working to get the property cleaned up.

Regular Business Meeting Review and Discussion

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Invocation- Pastor Allen Newman of Calvary Baptist Church
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Minutes Approval
 - i. Workshop Meeting-June 6th, 2023
 - ii. Public Hearing Minutes-June 20th, 2023
 - iii. Regular Business Meeting-June 20th, 2023
6. Reallocation of Victim Advocates Fund
7. Ordinance 2023-09 Kunst Freeman Road Rezoning from Agricultural Residential to Residential 1
8. Ordinance 2023-10 Latimer Fredonia Road Rezoning from Residential 3 to Highway Commercial
9. Ordinance 2023-11 Strickland Van Buren Road Rezoning 2 acres from Agricultural Residential to Residential
10. Ordinance 2023-12 Shockley Ethridge Mill Road -Remove Restriction of a Site Built Home so a Manufactured Home can be placed on the Property
11. Resolution 2023-09 Lowering of Speed Limit from 45 to 35 on Five Points Road from Hwy 41 North to Zebulon Road
12. Lamar County Bids
 - 1) Animal Shelter
 - 2) Courthouse Roof
 - 3) Sheriff's Office and Jail Roof
13. FY24 Three Rivers Regional Transit Agreement
The only change to the contract is that Three Rivers Regional Commission will take over the transit bus drivers from the third-party vendor.
14. Acceptance of Conveyance of Old Barnesville Armory Property
The board thanked Vice-Chair Thrash for her time in acquiring this property.
Chairman Traylor stated that acquiring this property would help to preserve the history.
15. Administrator's Report and Board Discussion
 - 1) Reported that revenues over expenses should be at 50 percent but is at 51.38 percent.

- 2) Reported that LMIG was paid out early, which affects the cash flow.
- 3) Reported that they may be able to get into the new Administration building by the end of the month, but it may be pushed out. Commissioner Gilles said she does not believe anyone is ready to move because they are savoring the windows. County Administrator Townsend said that the building only has two units. Chairman Traylor said the move for the Tax Commissioners' office got better, and the mindset that everyone currently has about their space will change once everyone gets into the new building. The first initial shock will be like moving to a new home. Vice-Chair Thrash said that some Departments are used to having their independence away from everyone, and now everyone will know what others are doing, and the biggest thing that everyone fears is change. Chairman Traylor said that the change to the Commissioners counter must be modified. County Administrator Townsend said that they need to raise it by six inches. Chairman Traylor said that the floors need to be raised.
- 4) The board discussed the pros of adding a time for Commissioners' Comments on the agenda
- 5) Vice-Chair Thrash said that the State has asked if the County will do the cost analysis on Rocks Springs Road. She said that the previous board voted on it, and it was around \$35,000.00, which 70 percent of the County will get back. She does not want to miss getting 70 percent of this construction project contribution. Vice-Chair Thrash said she would like EXP to go ahead and move forward and do the cost analysis. Then the GDOT can go ahead and begin the engineering and start construction.
- 6) Vice-Chair Thrash stated that the neighbors in the Panola Road area would like a 4-Way stop since Rocks Springs has built the new athletic facility. There is so much traffic it should slow things down. Her best friend lived there and requested that she mention it to Commissioner Lovett. Commissioner Lovett said that Rock Springs is a church and does not provide any more function than the smallest church on the other side of the town. He says that the good that a church does for the community is the good it does, and he does not measure that in the wealth of the community around it. If they set the precedence to widen a road because of a church, he does not know what the return is for those who go to another church. Vice-Chair Thrash said that they are not doing it for the church. They are doing it because it is one of the heaviest-traveled roads in the County. She said that you will be faced with Rocks Springs and High Falls Road not far down the road. They may need to address this as a part of this project and have them put in a roundabout. She said that on Sundays, 6000 people come through there. They are not doing it for the church. If it were a private business, we would be discussing impact fees and them doing their own analysis. Commissioner Lovett said that Rocks Spring Church is a large business and wants to ensure that the other constituents that go to small community churches are not paying the bill for this very large church. Commissioner Lovett said that his dad goes to Rock Springs Church. Vice-Chair Thrash said they would have to look at it if they put an amphitheater in District 3 and had 10,000 people attend and 7000 vehicles travel that road. They are doing this to ensure it is a safe travel and the roads can handle the traffic. Rock Springs wants to lower the speed limit and make it a school zone. Vice-Chair Thrash said they have to know how much money they will spend. She said that 30 percent of \$3,000,000.00 is a lot of money. Vice-Chair Thrash said that they put in the Ordinance that it was non-binding. Commissioner Lovett said that law enforcement needs to be there on Sunday, and the church's constituents drive the traffic. Vice-Chair Thrash said Rock Springs contracted with the City of Barnesville Police Department. County Clerk Davidson said the board voted on April 18th, 2023, via Resolution 2023-04 Engineering Study for Widening Rock Springs Road. Commissioner Gilles stated that her most significant problem is the issue with how much Rock Springs Road brings in taxes and how much taxes Turner Bridge Road brings in. You are sending trucks over to Turner Bridge all the time because the water is horrible, this road has been

needing repairs, and the washouts are enormous. It is dangerous for Fire Trucks and EMS vehicles to travel this road. Vice-Chair Thrash said that is why the constituents elected her to work towards getting the money to fix the road. Chairman Traylor stated that you have to look at the foundation of the road, like the rock underneath a portion of Crawford Road. They found it would cost \$2,000,000.00 to fix Crawford Road. Commissioner Gilles said that the neighbors of Turner Bridge Road do not want it paved; they want it to be drivable. Commissioner Lovett requested a cost analysis for Turner Bridge Road.

- 7) Vice-Chair Thrash stated that she and Commissioner Gilles have determined that the speed limit needs to be lowered because of the new subdivision on Five Points Road that is close to the road. She said they would like to lower the speed limit from 45 to 35 miles an hour from Hwy 41 North to Zebulon Road on Five Points Road. Everyone on the road in the subdivision section would like the speed limit lowered. County Administrator explained that a Resolution would need to be done first. It will then be sent to the Georgia Department of Transportation, and they send it to the Public Safety, who then sends it to the Sheriff. Chairman Traylor requested that the County Attorney draft a Resolution to lower the speed limit on Five Points Road from Hwy 41 North to Zebulon Road from 45 to 35 miles an hour.

16. Public Comment

17. Commissioners Comments

18. Round Table

19. Executive Session

- i. Real Estate

- ii. Litigation

- iii. Personnel

20. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion at approximately 3:31 p.m. Commissioner Lovett 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