

**Lamar County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Business Meeting  
November 14<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**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Pastor Allen Newman of Calvary Baptist Church Church gave the invocation.

**III. Agenda Approval**

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

**IV. Minutes Approval**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- i. Workshop Agenda-October 5th, 2023
- ii. Regular Business Meeting-October 17th, 2023
- iii. Budget Workshop Agenda-October 31st, 2023

**V. Rezoning Ordinances**

**Ordinance 2023-17 Rezoning from Agriculture-Residential to Residential 2-Christian Hardy High Falls Road (Tax Map 069, Parcel 005)** 2-

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-17 Rezoning from Agriculture-Residential to Residential 2-Christian Hardy High Falls Road (Tax Map 069, Parcel 005).

**Ordinance 2023-18 Rezoning from Residential 3 to Commercial 2 VFW Road (Tax Map 33, Parcel 71)**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-18 Rezoning from Residential 3 to Commercial 2 VFW Road (Tax Map 33, Parcel 71) with the following conditions: No Commercial Traffic on VFW Road and Tree Buffers must be placed along the Residential

Property. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Ordinance 2023-19 Rezoning from Manufacturing 1 to Agriculture-Residential-Greg Evans-545 Hwy 41 South (Tax Map 061, Parcel 014)**

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-19 Rezoning from Manufacturing 1 to Agriculture-Residential-Greg Evans-545 Hwy 41 South (Tax Map 061, Parcel 014) noting that this property is surrounded by Commercial property. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Combine the Planning Commission and Board of Appeals**

Planning and Community Development Director Buice said the Planning Commission is a joint commission. The Board of Appeals hears the County’s special exceptions and variances. They make recommendations on special exceptions, and they make final decisions on variances. The Planning Commission is a joint board that includes the City of Barnesville. They hear the County's rezonings, and they hear the City of Barnesville's rezonings, special exceptions, and variances. The City of Milner would also like to be included in the combining of the two boards.

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2023-20 Planning Commission Board combining Lamar County, the City of Barnesville, and the City of Milner. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Thrash made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2023-21 Board of Appeals which transfers all of the job duties from the Board of Appeals to the Combined Planning Commission. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VII. Speed Limit Change Skinners By-Pass from 45 to 35**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2023-21 lowering the speed limit on Skinners By-Pass Road from 45 to 35 miles an hour. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VIII. Barnesville-Lamar County Library-Re-appointment of Six Members to the Library Board of Trustees**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Pam Byran, Diane Harvey, Octavia Jackson, Linda Oliver, Tim Turner, and Tyler Young to the Library Board of Trustees for a term of two years beginning January 1, 2024, expiring on December 31, 2025. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**IX. Probate Court Scanning Project**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve a scanning/imaging project for the Probate Court. The quote from Kofile is for \$99,900.00 Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion unanimously.

**X. Alcohol License Renewals**

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve the FY 2024 Alcohol Licenses for the following businesses. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Anitaben Patel	A&S 2023 LLC DBA C & B Convenience Store	402 Fredonia Church Rd	Beer/Wine	\$1,000
Hugh Mangham	Deer Trail Country Club	1782 Hwy 341 South	Beer Pouring	\$750
Jennifer Hovis	Honeywood Gardens	894 Hwy 18 West	Beer/Wine Pouring	\$1,500
Ronald L. Horton	The Rendevouz Goodwood LLC	134 Crawford Road	Beer Pouring	\$750
Glen Vogel	VFW Post 6542 Commander	361 Old Hwy 41	Beer Pouring	\$750
Rujuta Patel	Arihant C Stores I, LLC dba TJ Outfitters	1054 Hwy 36 West	Beer/Wine Package	\$1,000
Stephanie Thomas	The Goth Gardener	356 Cook Rd	Farm/Winery	\$500

**XI. Personnel Policy Update-PTO and Holidays**

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve combining Sick and Vacation Time into a Paid Time Off Plan (PTO) that carries over into the following year. The PTO Plan will begin in FY2025. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chair Thrash made a motion to approve the addition of two floating Holiday. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. Commissioner Lovett opposed the motion. The motion was approved 3-1.

**XII. Administrator's Report**

County Administrator Townsend reported the following:

- i. AmeriPro Health Report:  
342 Transported, 101 Refusals, 46 Cancellations, Response Time: 8:12  
Mutual Aid Report  
28 Upson County 1 Pike County 1 Spalding County
- ii. Reported that the new County employee insurance is still at no cost to the full-time employees with NFP/Allstate healthcare coverage. There will be more communication between the provider and the employees to verify the baseline cost. A Health Education was given to the Employees on November 13, 2023. Open Enrollment is November 27, 2023, at the Administration office and November 29, 2023, at the Sheriff's Office.
- iii. Reported that SPLOST III Collections ended October 31, 2023, with the new distributions for SPLOST IV beginning in November 2023. The original budget amount is \$9,366,409.00. The actual collections were \$14,013,705.00. The payout for

SPLOST IV will go to the Town of Aldora in the amount of \$144,000.00, and the remaining collections will go to the City of Milner up to \$576,000.00. After these two collections are distributed, the County and the City of Barnesville will begin receiving their distributions.

- iv. Reported that revenues over expenditures for October should be at 83.33 percent and are at 77.04 percent.
- v. Reported that Property Tax came in during October and they usually come in during the First Month of November.
- vi. Reported on the new Administration building. They are waiting for the windows to come in for the Tax Commissioner's Office. They have started on the punch list and found the following: door frame, cabinet, and sheetrock issues. The project for opening the building is the first week of December.
- vii. Reported that a temporary permit has been issued for the gym. They are waiting for a Life Safety Plan to be completed and submitted to the State.
- viii. Reported that the Roofing project for the Sheriff's Office and the Jail is underway. Once it is complete, they will begin working on the Courthouse.
- ix. Reported that the Local Options Sales Tax (LOST) distribution for October was \$138,898.45.
- x. Reported that the Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) distribution for May was \$243,757.92.
- xi. Reported that the Transportation Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (TSPLOST) for April was \$220,989.06.

Chairman Traylor and Commissioner Lovett thanked County Administrator Townsend for completing the gym.

### **XIII. Public Comments**

Rick Stephenson, 184 Jones Road, addressed the board. Mr. Stephenson was concerned that he had not received a new voter registration card since his voting precinct had changed. He said that there are three employees in the Board of Elections that could send out these cards. Mr. Stephens said that he knows it has been in the paper and on Facebook, but there are not a million voters in Lamar County, and there is no reason not to send out new voter registration cards.

Dwight Fleming of 1011 Van Buren Road addressed the board. Mr. Fleming said while riding down Van Buren and Johnstonville roads, he saw places where the pavement was breaking off. They put the Microsurfacing on top of the dirt in some places. Then a white line was painted on top of that. People are riding the white line, which is already breaking off in those places. The other day, a lady went off the road at one of the spots that had been breaking up and whipped it back hard to get on the road. If another vehicle had been coming, there would have been a nice big lawsuit because she would have nailed the other vehicle in the other lane. He said that the issues were supposed to be fixed when the road was resurfaced, but they were not. They paved over gaps on the side of the road and they are still there.

Elaine Hallada of 131 Steeple Chase addressed the board. Mrs. Hallada congratulated them on the new gym. She said that she understood that grants are being applied for and said that was positive news for the County. Mrs. Hallada said that when she started coming to the Board of Commissioners meetings, no time limit was set on Public Comments. She said she noticed the Public Comment sign on the table and wondered how long it had been there. Mrs. Hallada said that a three minute time rule has been set by this current Commission and said that as they work and serve for the people of the County, the citizens should vote for the reasonable time allowed for Public Comment and what the Public Comment should consist of. Mrs. Hallada said she attended a Solid Waste Authority meeting last week and wondered how many lawyers the Solid Waste Authority needs. She said that Mr. John Richards was in attendance and was described as the legal counsel for the Solid Waste Authority. Mrs. Hallada said she was wondering if this means that County Attorney Mayfield will be representing the citizens from now on especially as they begin the investigation of the Solid Waste Authority. She said that there is a Solid Waste Authority meeting scheduled for Air permitting on November 27, 2023, and she was told that the format for the meeting would be published. Mrs. Hallada said there is nothing in the Herald Gazette as of today about the meeting for the Solid Waste Authority and wants to know when, where, and how this information will be provided to the public. Mrs. Hallada said that next month, the Board of Commissioners will vote for the Lamar County Solid Waste Authority forensic audit, and a positive vote of all Commissioners will ensure that the concerned citizen's questions are being taken seriously.

Cindy Bushby of 155 Redbone Run addressed the board. Mrs. Bushby said she attended the Solid Waste Authority meeting last week and was told an agenda would be posted. She said that she had not seen it and was still waiting to see it.

Beth Pierce of 186 Pleasant Road addressed the board. She read the statement below.

“Whereas, Nancy Thrash, serving as County Commissioner for District 4, engaged in conduct unbecoming of a public servant, such as interjection in matters that involve law enforcement and violation of public trust;

Whereas, such conduct, is at odds with the values and standards expected of elected officials within the Republican Party and those serving the public in Lamar County;

Whereas, these actions have unjustly tarnished the reputation of Lamar County, its government, and the Republican Party of Lamar County;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Lamar County Republican Party hereby censures County Commissioner Nancy Thrash for conduct that is detrimental to the principles of the Republican Party, the integrity of the elected office, and the welfare of the citizens of Lamar County.

Be it further resolved that the Lamar County Republican Party calls for a full investigation into the actions of Commissioner Nancy Thrash to ensure accountability and the maintenance of public trust.

Be it finally resolved that the Lamar County Republican Party reaffirms its commitment to ethical governance and shall take all necessary steps to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future, thereby restoring the confidence of the citizens of Lamar County in their elected officials and in the Republican Party.”

#### **XIV. Round Table**

Chairman Traylor said they are going into the Thanksgiving Holiday season, and the community does a phenomenal job with the Hallmark version of the “Lightning of the Christmas Tree.” He requested that everyone bring their kids and grandkids because it is a family-friendly event. Chairman Traylor reiterated that the Lamar County employees will not be required to pay anything for the County insurance. Chairman Traylor said in reference to the timers for Public Comments. He said that when former Chairman Traylor was in office, he had a timer on his phone so there has always been a timer for Public Comments. He said that the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) makes recommendations but the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners controls the meetings and the recommendations for the timer comes from the Chairman. Chairman Traylor said that overall, he wants everyone to appreciate the fact that they live in a great County. He hears conversations at the grocery store, and you want to say, "Hey, there is the land in Pike County, there is the land in Monroe County," but there is a reason that people live in Lamar County. Chairman Traylor said that his family chose to live in Lamar County. He grew up here and knows that many of the people in the meeting grew up in Lamar County or have chosen to live here. He said their goal is to improve the quality of everything they do, including the roads. Chairman Traylor said that Public Works Director Rigdon has worked hard but they will do something different next time. Their recommendation to do the Microsurfacing came from a consultant, and they were trying their best to spread the little money they had as far as possible. He said they realized there were better ways to pave the roads than this because prepping needed to happen first. Chairman Traylor said that his son desires to live in Lamar County for the rest of his life, and he does, too, and he wants this place to be the best that it is. He said he believes he is echoing this for all of the Commissioners.

#### **XV Adjournment**

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to adjourn the Regular Business meeting at approximately 7:44 p.m. Vice-Chair Thrash 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

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Jarrod Fletcher, Commissioner

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Jason Lovett, Commissioner

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Ashley Gilles, Commissioner

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