

**Lamar County Board of Commissioners
Regular Business Meeting
March 19th, 2024**

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

I. Call to Order

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

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

Everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Keith Battle of the Antioch Baptist Church gave the invocation.

III. Agenda Approval

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

IV. Minutes Approval

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

- i. Special Called Meeting-February 1st, 2024
- ii. Workshop Minutes-February 15th, 2024
- iii. Regular Business Meeting Minutes-February 20th, 2024

V. Ordinance 2024-02 Dutton-Court Rezoning

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-02 Dutton-Court Rezoning. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Open Records Officer-County Clerk

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the County Clerk, Carlette Davidson, as the Open Records Officer. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

County Attorney Mayfield explained that he was involved in a lawsuit as the Open Records Custodian and he had to be conflicted out. The Open Records Act states that every County, City, and School Board have one person as an Open Records Custodian. Attorney Mayfield

said it has no duties or responsibilities other than the person to whom someone sends an Open Records request. The purpose is, for the public's benefit, that you send it to that one person, and it is their job to find a home for it. County Attorney Mayfield said that he was sued personally in a recent lawsuit as the Open Records Custodian solely for the purpose of conflicting him out where he could not represent the County because he was representing himself. Therefore, he suggested the County Clerk be the Open Records Officer. Anything controversial will go to the County Attorney.

VII. Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement

Vice-Chair Gilles made a motion to approve the Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS). Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. County Administrator Townsend explained that this is a standard agreement updating contacts with G.E.M.A. in case of an emergency or a disaster. The agreement is for a period of five years.

VIII. Animal Shelter Budget

County Administrator Townsend presented a budget from Wright Woodall with Flint Building Construction. The total cost is \$746,334.00. The SPLOST IV fund has \$433,629.58. The Community Foundation has collected over \$190,000.00 in the last ten years. There has been a donation made of over \$100,000.00. An additional cost of \$22,704.42.00 is needed to match the total cost of \$746,334.00 for the construction of the Lamar County Animal Shelter.

Chairman Traylor explained that previously, there was an R.F.P. for the Lamar County Animal Shelter Construction. Originally the budget was 1.1 million dollars. Then, they put out an RFQ for the Animal Shelter Construction, and it was awarded to Flint Building Construction. This was a management-type agreement, and those vendors in the community who wanted to bid on it before and did not or who wanted to donate in-kind services could do it. They were able to drive the price down and are thankful to those individuals in the community who worked with them.

Vice-Gilles asked County Attorney Mayfield how they could be sure they would receive the donated funds from the Community Foundation. County Attorney Mayfield asked if there was a previous written agreement. Was there a written agreement between the Human Society and the Community Foundation, or was it between them and the government? Chairman Traylor said he did not know this answer but knew it was set aside for this purpose. County Attorney Mayfield said generally speaking, counties do not take donations. He said every dollar that the County receives is supposed to go into the General Fund and not be earmarked. He said at one time, it was decided that the Community Foundation and non-profits would collect the money outside of the County and give it directly to the builder. County Attorney Mayfield said he was not sure that a written agreement had ever been made to that effect. He said they could ask the Community Foundation, the Friends of the Animal Shelter or Fred Morris. Chairman Traylor said he knew the funds were held at the Central Georgia Community Foundation. Mr. Tom Wellner said any private donations would go through the

Community Foundation, and general donations would go to the Building Fund at the Central Georgia Community Foundation, and from there, the protocols would be set for building expenses. Mr. Wellner said the agreement dates back about ten years and is something the County contemplated from the beginning. They knew it would need public and private money, and the mechanism for the private money to be handled correctly was to create a fund at the Central Georgia Community Foundation.

Vice-Chairman Gilles asked for a copy of this agreement. Mr. Wellner said he could provide a copy and it is in the County records. He said there was a Resolution to establish the Animal Shelter Fund and a contract between the Board of Commissioners and the Central Georgia Community Foundation.

Commissioner Lovett said he knew many people in the community were passionate about the proposed animal shelter. The stance that he has taken over the last year has probably not been favorable. But he has a fiduciary responsibility to both those who can and cannot afford to be a part of this project. Commissioner Lovett requested to review the data one more time before they vote. He said the running average of animals through the shelter, both City and County, is .75 animals per day. This is 189 animals per year, and the County spends approximately \$230.00 per stray animal. Commissioner Lovett proposed using a 30-year depreciation for the building minus the more than generous donation from the community and adding another \$180,000.00 from the proposed annual budget from the General Fund because it is not covered under any S.P.L.O.S.T. Extrapolating the future animal shelter occupancy and using the historical data they will begin spending \$1,028.00 per animal. This is a 77 percent increase over what they spend today. There have been many ideas that would greatly reduce the cost and leave money to fund the spay and neuter program, but they are completely lacking from what has been presented. Commissioner Lovett encouraged the members of the Board of Commissioner to reconsider the support of the proposed expenditure and would be in agreement with a motion to table so cost reduction ideas could be further explored.

Vice-Chair Gilles made a motion to table the Animal Shelter budget until they can see the contract between the County and the Central Georgia Community Foundation. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion to table the Animal Shelter budget until the next meeting, and contracts can be reviewed. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Construction Task-Flint Construction

County Administrator Townsend explained that Wright Woodall had done R.F.P.'s as a general contractor. Therefore, he would like to do a task order if they have any projects so they can have Wright Woodall as a general contractor. He has the necessary Certificate of Liability with Commercial and Worker's Compensation Insurance. County Administrator Townsend presented the proposal for task order services. He explained that task orders would include fixing the Sheetrock at the Health Department due to a water hammer break, which caused water damage, and fixing the bricks at the Courthouse, which are causing water leaks and water damage.

Tiered Fee Structure		
<u>Project Values</u>	<u>Fee</u>	
	<u>Percentage</u>	

\$0 - \$50,000	15%	
\$50,001 - \$100,000	12.5%	
\$100,001 - \$250,000	10%	
\$250,001 - \$750,000	7.5%	
\$750,001 +	5%	
Hourly Rates		
<u>Position</u>	<u>Rate</u>	
Sr. Project Manager	\$62.50	
Project Manager	\$42.79	
Superintendent	\$37.50	
Assistant Superintendent	\$31.25	
Project Admin	\$25.00	
Carpenter	\$32.00	
CAD Designer	\$40.00	
Labor Burden Percentage		
31.25%		

Vice-Chair Gilles made a motion to approve Flint Building Construction as the Contractor for Task Orders of the County for a contract term of one year. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Administrator's Report

County Administrator Townsend reported the following:

- i. AmeriPro Health Report:
169 Transported, 86 Refusals, 28 Cancellations, Response Time:7:35
Mutual Aid Report Upson County 18 Pike 1 and Spalding 0
- ii. Expenditures for the Departments should be at 16.67 percent and are at 11.72 percent.
- iii. Reported that with the Cash Flow, the expenditures are running lower than revenue collections. The revenues are above the expenditures.
- iv. Reported that the Sheriff's Office cars were purchased out of the General Fund, and SPLOST IV has reimbursed the General Fund.
- v. Reported that the Animal Shelter budget was tabled.
- vi. Reported that they are preparing to release the R.F.P. for Phase II of SPLOST IV. Widen of Johnstonville and Van Buren Roads and to replace the guard rail in various locations.
- vii. Reported that there are leaks at the Courthouse. The consultant is working with the roofers because there was an oversight in the inspection where the air conditioners were overlooked. They were given a two to five-year window on the two other sections and requested that the bricks be sealed or patched. The Maintenance Director is meeting with a recommended contractor from Wright Woodall about the bricks.
- viii. Reported that in February \$129,158.22 was received for the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST).

- ix. Reported that in February \$226,588.46 was received for the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST IV).
- x. Reported that \$210,906.56 was received for the Transportation Special Local Option Sales Tax (T.S.P.L.O.S.T.).
- xi. Reported that a new plaque for the history of Lamar County has come in and will be placed at the Courthouse. He showed the plaque via Teams.

X. Public Comments

Elaine Hallada of 131 Steeple Chase addressed the Board. Mrs. Hallada read an email between herself and Chairman Traylor demanding accountability since she is his boss. The email was regarding the Solid Waste Authority (S.W.A.) and the timeline for when Lamar County will see the first reimbursement of payments totaling 2.5 million dollars a year since 2017. She said the S.W.A. has been in arrears for over 17 million dollars since the project failed to turn on in 2017. Mrs. Hallada said that monies were taken from two board members, Chairman Traylor and Commissioner Thrash, and inquired about when the funds would be returned to the County. The money could be used to pay for the forensic audit that the citizens of the County have asked about. Mrs. Hallada pointed out that the First Amendment, Freedom of Speech, allows her the right to petition the redress of grievances such as the S.W.A. diabolical is to protect herself, the citizen, from the Board of Commissioners, and the government. Mrs. Hallada requested to see accountability. Mrs. Hallada addressed the Workshop meeting and the discussion regarding the protocol of the Commissioner's meetings, specifically Elbert County, and allowing Public Comments. She presented their January 8th (Public Hearing and Regular Meeting) and February 12th (Public Hearing and Regular Meeting), which showed that Public Comments were allowed.

Cindy Bushby of 155 Redbone Run addressed the Board. Mrs. Bushby asked if the Waste to Energy was up and running. Did she miss the party or the ribbon-cutting ceremony? She said it was common knowledge that the Solid Waste Authority was being investigated by the F.B.I. and confirmed by Fox 5 News. Mrs. Bushby said trash can only be picked up if you are a taxpayer, so it does affect the taxpayer. She mentioned that the full-page ad in the Paper regarding the Solid Waste Authority (S.W.A.) was nothing more than a campaign ad for Commissioner Thrash paid for by the S.W.A.

Diane Perry of 101 Maple Drive addressed the Board. Mrs. Perry said she rode by the Courthouse, but the plaque was still not up. She asked if the reason was because they had not received the post that was shipped with the plaque. She contacted the Historical Society, and they requested a picture. She was told to use the marker pole that was previously shipped. She said this is an issue with her and that the County is not responding to citizens' requests or suggestions. Mrs. Perry apologized for not being at the Workshop due to being sick and in the hospital. She said she appreciated the discussion about keeping the minutes online. Mrs. Perry said she does not believe any one of them is out to harm anyone on the Board of Commissioners or put them down. They want them to do their job, respect their community, not talk down about them in public, and do what they say they are going to do. Mrs. Perry asked the Board to do what they said they were going to do: have quarterly meetings, put the post up for the plaque, host things, participate, and inform them about what was going on. They

appreciate they were voted on by the public to do the job, but they are disappointed because the job may be getting done, but they are not notified. Mrs. Perry said they put them in office and they need to keep an open communication. She said they do not need to put people down and talk about businesses being bankrupt.

Michael Floyd of 108 Rosewood Court addressed the Board. Mr. Floyd said accusing him of a crime means you had better have receipts. He said these are the words used by his County Commissioner on March 6th, right after she accused him of 2 different crimes: harassment and stalking. Mr. Floyd said she said that the crimes had been happening for years. Then she said that he was Mr. Boyd's media campaign person. Mr. Floyd asked that she produce the receipts that show he committed a crime or apologize. He said they are not going to keep lying about people when they do not have a basic understanding of the Constitution. Mr. Floyd said they have a competent Sheriff or Deputy who will gladly take her complaint and evidence of any crime he has committed. Mr. Floyd said there is none and he will give a cash reward to anyone that can provide any evidence that shows where he has been in the Milner Creek Apartments where she lives and said that this has never happened even since he has moved here. Mr. Floyd said he had only seen it from body camera footage. Mr. Floyd asked her to correct herself. He said he has been receiving death threats because of the lies from her supporters that could not find Lamar County if you circled it on a map. Mr. Floyd said to get it together because, with her lawsuit win-to-loss ratio, she will not win if he files one. He said to produce the receipts or apologize. Mr. Floyd said to swallow her ego; it's that simple and not hard. Mr. Floyd asked if he was asking for a lot. He said she has been put on notice and said she has been doing this while in her official capacity. Mr. Floyd said if they do not get a grip on this, they will pay him way before they put any money towards the animal shelter.

Donald Hartman of 507 Old Milner Road addressed the Board. Mr. Hartman discussed several traffic pattern concerns. One was regarding the turn lane in front of the Administration Building, having to double back to get to the new facility, and making the left-hand turn safer if you have to head southbound. The second was regarding old Atlanta Highway and merging onto the four lane on Hwy 41 North. Mr. Hartman said that the Solid Waste Authority (S.W.A.) now meets quarterly. The newspaper had an entire page from the Solid Waste Authority regarding where they stand. He said, unfortunately, some people use the term keyboard warrior, and he sees this as that being that. Mr. Hartman said if you are going to be transparent then be transparent. He said that writing a big article does not show him anything, and the comment about leachate not being hazardous is not true. Mr. Hartman requested that the Board of Commissioners give the citizens monthly updates, invite them to the building, and hold town hall meetings. Mr. Hartman said he spoke about the extra acreage at the Lamar County Solid Waste; with the building, there is an excess of 327 acres and asked about the plans for this. Mr. Hartman said he appreciates those who look after their well-being.

Dwight Fleming of 1011 Van Buren Road addressed the Board. Mr. Fleming said that the edges of the road on Johnstonville and Van Buren Road still have not been fixed; not one patch has been done, and it has been months since they started complaining about the potholes. He said people were running off the road, and one lady overcorrected, causing almost a head-on collision.

Bonnie Martin, 626 Piedmont Road, addressed the Board. Mrs. Martin said she appreciated the recognition for all of the hard work that Fred Morris had put towards the new animal shelter and naming the facility after him was really nice. Mrs. Martin appreciated Chairman Traylor's comment about the need for town hall meetings and looking forward to the first one when it is held. Mrs. Martin concerns were with the use of the Cedar Grove Landfill and the process for taking trash; sitting in line, proving who they are based on who is on the account, having only one scale for collections. She was also concerned with the excessive dumping on Perdue Road.

James Hyde, 116 White Oak Drive, addressed the Board. Mr. Hyde commended the Board of Commissioners for tabling the Animal Shelter budget and suggested they have a Town Hall meeting to come up with ideas to streamline it and make it more cost-effective for the County. Based on the numbers presented, he wants to investigate Incurring this debt against the County budget further. Mr. Hyde requested an update on the Conflict Counsel.

XI. Round Table

Commissioner Thrash said the Board of Commissioners had received a lot of comments on the renovation of the new gym and social media about the pickleball program. She said a lot of people are involved with this. Commissioner Thrash said the previous Board thought including pickleball in the new gym was a good idea. She said that Truman Boyle, who was in attendance at the meeting, was involved with the pickleball program. Commissioner Thrash said the kids are excited about the gym, which is a good thing.

XII. Adjournment

Vice Chair Gilles made a motion to adjourn the Regular Business Meeting at 7:54 p.m. to go into Executive Session for Litigation. Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Board of Commissioners came out of Executive Session at approximately 8:57 p.m. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to Adjourn the Regular Business Meeting, and Vice-Chair Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Ryran Traylor, Chairman

Ashley Gilles, Vice-Chair

Jarrod Fletcher, Commissioner

Jason Lovett, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk