

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 8, 2023
9:00 A.M.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Gene King, Commissioner Rosla Plant, Commissioner Emmett Collins, and Commissioner Adam Worsley
Staff Present: County Administrator Michelle Irizarry, County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director Bill Gregory, and Attorney Nathan Lee

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bryan Threadgill called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Carter Barrow, Pastor of First Baptist Church in Manchester

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King to adopt the agenda. All were in favor.

V. PRESENTATIONS

None

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Bill Gregory, Finance Director, provided the Bank Balance Report and stated he had received a check in the amount of \$115K from EMS Billing. This is approximately \$30K - \$40K more than usual.

VII. CITIZEN COMMENT

Susan Pritchett, from Quercus Farms, reported the condition of Flat Shoals Road which is bad due to so much truck traffic. There are many potholes. Even though there are signs, truckers continue to use this road. The weight limit is 5 tons and Ms. Pritchett feels some of the semi-trucks and tanker trucks that have been seen using this road weigh much more, which causes concerns regarding the weight on the bridge. Ms. Pritchett suggested Meriwether County should call Pike County and work with them on adding additional large No-Truck signs that include the fines that will be imposed for those not obeying the law.

VIII. MINUTES

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Emmett Collins to approve the Minutes from the February 28, 2023, 6:00 p.m. meeting. All were in favor.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING

None

X. APPOINTMENTS

None

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Bill Cawthorne read the list of roads that are on the 2023 LMIG list. Mr. Cawthorne stated this is the list that would go out for bid and he and Allyson were working on the bid package. The list provided by Mr. Cawthorne during the meeting was the most up to date list that had just been completed. Newton Street, Short Street, and Long Road were added to the new list. Those roads are all together like a subdivision and are off of Chalybeate Hwy. The estimated amount was \$2,120,797. Vice Chairman King asked about the timeline. Mr. Cawthorne stated they should finish the bid packages in a week or two and then it would go on the Georgia Procurement site/GDOT site and depending on the date we list for bids to be returned, it would probably be the end of the month or the first of April. We would then open the bids and see what the contractor's bid prices are. Vice Chairman King stated with this many roads and areas, would there be one contract for all of the roads or would it be multiple contracts where a lot of work could be done at one time. Mr. Cawthorne stated, typically when bids go out, the contractors will submit bid packages back to us and sometimes they may include three or four roads and sometimes they will only include one. It depends on how busy the contractors are. Commissioner Collins asked what the difference was between Stovall Road having .94 miles at a cost of \$117K and Luthersville Road having 1.25 miles at a cost of \$682K. Chairman Threadgill stated Luthersville Road would be a full depth reclamation. Mr. Cawthorne stated he had marked and measured the base failure areas on Stovall Road to determine how much of the road needed to be patched. After the patching is done, they would do the overlay. On Luthersville Road, they would do the following: widen road one-foot, complete 8" full depth reclamation (which is a soil/cement mixture), add a 2.5" binder, add 1.5" of top, then build the shoulder and do the striping. Chairman Threadgill stated the base on Luthersville Road is gone. Commissioner Collins asked about a warranty. Mr. Cawthorne stated they usually they have a one-year warranty. Mr. Cawthorne stated Stovall Road has very little patching involved with an amount of approximately \$15K and the remainder of the cost would be for resurfacing. This was all based on the 2022 bids that we received last year. Commissioner Plant asked about the difference between Forrest Road and Luthersville Road. We are adding a safety overlay on Forrest to buy time. Forrest Road is as long as Luthersville Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated at some point we will have to do a full-depth reclamation on Forrest Road at an estimated cost of over \$3M for the project which includes all of Forrest Road from Allie Road to the City limits of Lone Oak. Commissioner Plant stated we have similar situations in the County with other roads. Mr. Cawthorne stated those sections of Forrest Road were dangerous and this was just a safety overlay until we could finish Luthersville Road and some other projects, then we would come back to Forrest Road. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to accept the 2023 LMIG list. All were in favor.

2. Bill Cawthorne spoke with Jay Johnson, from Principle Construction, regarding the sealing and caulking of the Court House Clock/Bell Tower area. In the initial stages of this project, it was bid out to two professional water proofing companies. Mr. Johnson is working to get that information to Mr. Cawthorne. Mr. Johnson bid this in the initial stage and then we went into another phase where we had to do the roof leaders and line the drain pipes. The sealing and caulking of the Court House Clock/Bell Tower were added to the next phase. Commissioner

Plant stated she wanted to refresh everyone's memory. When we had the problem with the water leakage at the Courthouse last year and we put it out for bid. The bids came in and they were all over the chart. One of those bids was over \$1M and another was less than \$500K. It was then brought to the Boards attention there were three types of roofs to deal with. At that time, they had to zero in on how to address the leakage from the roof. Commissioner Plant stated the first phase was addressing the gutters that were filled with debris and closed off. Mr. Cawthorne stated Principle had a company called Edifice Consulting and they were looking at replacing the entire roof and what was most necessary at the time. Then we looked at the roof drains, they had been sealed off for years so it began to leak around the caulk where they were sealed. Caulk only has about a ten-year life. When the drains started to leak again we found out they had holes in them. We did not know if it was from the fire from years ago or what caused this. When the water bypassed all the sealants and ran down the pipes it caused water to run into the Courthouse. That became the first priority in that project. They came up with a specialized pipeline. They went in and opened all the drain lines and lined the pipes which stopped the leaks. They found about two feet of brick and scaffolding material that was in one of the drains. Water from this drain ran to the restroom at the Sheriff's office. They cleared and repaired that drain. For about three-four months after this we did not have any leaks at the Courthouse. We had a storm with heavy blowing rain, and it started to leak in the Bell Tower. The Bell Tower has copper flashing where the water ran through to the atrium, which may have been leaking for a while, then it dripped into the Courtroom. That was considered the next phase. This next phase proposal was to repair the Clock Tower and the Dome so that it will not leak in the atrium. That work would be done by a professional water-proofing roof company. Mr. Cawthorne believes if we can get this done and sealed, we would be at the end of this project. The first phase cost was \$169,938. Chairman Threadgill asked if the next phase work in the amount of \$210K would be warrantied. Mr. Cawthorne stated he would need to get that information since it was not identified in the paperwork. Mr. Cawthorne will also bring back the other water proofing bids that were received by Principle Construction. Commissioner Plant confirmed Phase Three would address the internal areas such as ceiling tiles, etc. Mr. Cawthorne stated that is not part of the \$200K. Mr. Cawthorne stated the reason the bid is so expensive is due to having lead-based paint on the exterior part. Mr. Cawthorne stated yes, the interior would be the next phase. Commissioner Worsley asked if we were working on quotes for the interior. The County has contacted the insurance company and the adjuster has been out and he took pictures. At one time they were approving \$10K for the interior repairs but we have not moved forward with the interior repairs because the roof is still leaking. Commissioner Worsley wanted the County to go ahead and get quotes on the interior repairs so that when they finished the exterior they could start on the interior. Mr. Cawthorne was asked to get warranty information to see what it would cover since we will be spending over \$380K on this with no guarantee. There was discussion of what the Insurance may or may not cover at this point. Mr. Cawthorne stated the \$210K cost was only for the exterior. There was discussion of moving forward but the Board wanted to know about the warranty first. Motion was made by Emmett Collins and seconded by Chairman Threadgill to table this until the March 28, 2023, Meeting. All were in favor. Chairman Threadgill stated if the information comes in before the next meeting the Board could call a Special Called Meeting.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Patty Threadgill, Elections Superintendent, stated this is a Municipal Election year and a

lot of Municipalities will be contacting the County about conducting their elections. Because of that, there is a need for an Intergovernmental Agreement that agreement must go through the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Threadgill had drafted an Intergovernmental Agreement for the City of Greenville and they are the only Municipality we have conducted qualifying for except for an emergency situation once before with Warm Spring. Nathen Lee, County Attorney, has reviewed this and it is the same contract we had in 2021. The motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to move forward with this agreement.

2. Chairman Threadgill read the first request for a road closing then asked Administrator Irizarry how many Public Hearings we had set up. Administrator Irizarry stated we have three road closures for the Public Hearing on March 28, 2023. This would add an additional four unless the Board wants to have a Special Called Meeting. Chairman Threadgill asked if we expect any to be controversial. Administrator Irizarry stated there is one they may have some controversy. Commissioner Plant asked what our options were on a Special Called Meeting. Administrator Irizarry stated all that she was aware of is that we have to legally advertise for at least 15 days. Attorney Lee stated that was for zoning. Attorney Lee stated a Special Called Meeting must have at least 24-hour notice. With a Public Hearing for zoning, you must advertise it for no less than 15 days and no more than 45 days. Chairman Threadgill preferred to move forward with the Public Hearings since the citizens had already requested this and since we have an obligation to meet for these.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Emmett Collins to set a Public Hearing on March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for Case# 2023-001- Fortified Telecom Services – request to rezone 4.73 acres from LDR-to-LDR Special Use for the use of a cell tower. The parcel is known as tax map 164-003. All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Emmett Collins and seconded by Adam Worsley to set a Public Hearing on March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for Case# 2023-002 Brandon Esteppe - request to rezone 2.00 acres from LDR to NHC for the use of Homebase Tree Service business. The parcel is known as tax map 118 013. All were in favor.

4. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Emmett Collins to set a Public Hearing on March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for Case # 2023-003 Charles Hudson – request to sell wine and beer. The parcel is 1.97 acres and known as tax map 133 038 01. All were in favor.

5. Motion was made by Emmett Collins and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King to set a Public Hearing on March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for Case # 2023-004 Sandra and Jamie Tigner – request to rezone 2.0 acres from RD to RD Special Use for the use of a family cemetery. The parcel is known as tax map 035 030 004. All were in favor.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Irizarry – reported she had worked with the Fire Chief yesterday to apply for Congressionally directed spending through Senator Osoff's office. We have applied for extra money regarding apparatus and hope to hear back soon. A meeting will be set up with the City of Manchester regarding Recreation and Animal Control. This is to make sure we are all on the same page as far as the County and City goes. We are working with the design firm on the final design for Greenville Park. We finally received a quote for the equipment that was lost from the tower on Forrest Road during the tornado. We have submitted that claim to the insurance company and we can file the difference with FEMA. We received a GEMA EMPG Grant in the amount of \$8,437. That will decrease 20% next year due to GEMA's funding.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Emmett Collins: Thanked the employees and staff for doing such a great job. Calls are still coming in about roads. Maybe when it dries up some we can get started on fixing all these dirt roads.

Commissioner Rosla Plant: reported the St. Mary's College students will be here next week working on a Habitat for Humanity house in Manchester. This year they are a little bit behind on the construction of the house. The American Legion Post 186 is selling raffle tickets for \$10 per ticket for a chance to win an AR-15 gun. Those who are interested in purchasing a ticket can see any member of Post 186. This will be awarded during the Cotton Fair. The Republican Party will meet this Saturday morning in Woodbury. There will be a Spring Fling this weekend in the City of Woodbury.

Vice Chairman Gene King: reported he has received calls and emails thanking him for getting things done. Vice Chairman King stated he wanted to pass this along because it is the staff and road department that is getting out there and getting the work accomplished. Vice Chairman King want to pass this along to them because they deserve all the credit.

Commissioner Adam Worsley: Thanked everyone for doing a good job.

Chairman Bryan Threadgill: Nothing at this time.

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

No reports but advised of the need for an Executive Session to discuss Litigation, Personnel, and Real Estate.

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Adam Worsley to go into Executive Session at 9:32 a.m. to discuss Litigation, Real Estate, and Personnel. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Adam Worsley to go out of Executive Session at 10:43 a.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to go back into Regular Session at 10:55 a.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Adam Worsley to allow merit increases for employees at Public Works, Fire and EMS within the current budget per Department Head and County Administrator approval. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Adam Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King for all new hires to sign a contract for training reimbursement purposes. All were in favor.

Chairman Threadgill stated the Board would need to amend the previous votes that were taken under New Business 2, 3, 4, and 5. The Public Hearings that were set for March 28, 2023, will need to be moved to April 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

2. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to move the Public Hearing for Case# 2023-001 from March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. to April 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. The request was from Fortified Telecom Services to rezone 4.73 acres from LDR to LDR Special Use for the use of a cell tower, the parcel is known as tax map 164-003. All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman King to move the Public Hearing for Case# 2023-002 from March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. to April 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. This request was from Brandon Esteppe to rezone 2.00 acres from LDR to NHC for the use of Homebase Tree Service business, the parcel is known as tax map 118 013. All were in favor.

4. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman King to move the Public Hearing for Case # 2023-003 from March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. to April 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. This request was from Charles Hudson to sell wine and beer, the parcel is 1.97 acres and is known as tax map 133 038 01. All were in favor.

5. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to move the Public Hearing for Case # 2023-004 from March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. to April 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. This request was from Sandra and Jamie Tigner to rezone 2.0 acres from RD to RD Special Use for the use of a family cemetery. The parcel is known as tax map 035 030 004. All were in favor.

XVII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Threadgill made the announcement of Meetings and Notices prior to Executive Session.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Emmett Collins to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 a.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

Attest: Beverly Thomas, County Clerk

Date: March 28, 2023