

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 11, 2020

Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Alfred "Buster" McCoy, Commissioner Shirley Hines, Commissioner Mary Bray, and Commissioner Beth Neely-Hadley,
Staff Present: County Administrator Theron Gay, County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director Bill Gregory and County Attorney Nathan Lee

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Threadgill at 9:00 a.m.
INVOCATION – Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to adopt the Agenda with the following addition before Old Business: Information on the COVID 19 Virus provided by District 4 Health Representatives. All were in favor.

III. MINUTES

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to approve the Minutes of the February 25, 2020 Work Session at 4:30 pm. All were in favor. Motion was made by Shirley Hines and seconded by Mary Bray to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2020 Regular Meeting at 6:00 pm. All were in favor.

IV. MUNICIPAL COMMENTS

Greenville Mayor Glover asked for a timeline on the repairs to Hill Haven Road. She had received a call from GDOT and will need an alternative route if it is not completed before mid to the end of the year. Administrator Gay stated it should be completed by the end of the year.

V. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Sheriff Smith added an amendment to the previous paperwork he placed in each Commissioner's box. It gives information on how busy his office has been over the last years.

VI. DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Shawn Downs, Animal Shelter Director: reported the Animal Shelter was selling tickets to a play that was written by Jack Bagley from the Vindicator.

Cathy Johnson, Director of Building, Zoning and Community Development: stated the February report only had a valuation of \$833K due to the weather. The Code Enforcer position has been filled. Kim Stover was hired as the new Code Enforcement Officer and the department is looking toward accomplishing great things.

Bill Cawthorne, Public Works Consultant: reported the weather has made a huge impact over the last few weeks on County Roads. We are waiting on more gravel to be delivered. Eight more locations have been identified that need pipes replaced. Construction is moving along with the two Fire Stations.

Jane Fryer, Keep Meriwether Beautiful Director: provided a KMB report from the litter survey. The survey provides information on what has been done in the past and if it is making a difference. This year the group did not travel down dirt roads due to the condition of the dirt roads following the excessive rain. Ms. Fryer provided a report that showed the findings in each district. A call was received yesterday regarding a new source of litter. This litter comes from the back of large trucks who leave the landfill after dumping their trash. They do not cover the back of the truck which allows trash to blow out of the truck and on the road when they leave.

Ashley Harmon, 4-H Director: reported Summer Camp sign up started last week and so far over 40 students have signed up. The 4-H students are selling tomato plants and onions. April 17th is farm day at the Extension Office.

Alfons Pynenburg, Fire Chief: stated billing was up by \$12K in February compared to last year. There were 407 calls, 7 structure fires, 24 NVC's and 8 brush fires. Chief Pynenburg touched on an act of heroism that occurred last night.

Kudos were given to Calvin Pike who runs a Maintenance shop in LaGrange. Mr. Pike repaired a transmission within a 24-hour period so the County could put the ambulance back in service.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

None

Laurie Roberts, Meriwether County Department of Public Health Director and Amy Fenn, Assistant Director of Nursing at District 4 Public Health provided a report to the Board regarding the COVID 19 Virus. It is most important for people to wash their hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. People also need to stay home if sick and cover their mouths and nose if they cough or sneeze. There are two websites that were provided to the County for citizens to click on and view daily updates from the Department of Public Health Department and CDC. A telephone number for the call center was also provided.

There is much fear and worry from the public. The Department of Public Health and District 4 are trying to identify places to put people who tested positive and have been discharged with no place to go. Many cannot go home. There are hopes the virus will disappear when the weather warms.

Commissioner Neely-Hadley arrives.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to table the recommendations from the Recreation Advisory Committee on Recreation Advisory Committee Ordinance until the March 24, 2020 Work Session at 4:00 pm. All were in favor.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to accept the Grand Jury Presentments for the Special Term beginning February 18, 2020. All were in favor.

2. Motion was made by Beth Neely-Hadley and seconded by Shirley Hines to approve Section 5311 Public Transportation Service Agreement for the operation of Three Rivers Regional Transit System between Meriwether County Board of Commissioners and Three Rivers Regional Commission and pay the local portion invoice of \$5,500. All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Beth Neely Hadley to move the request for the City of Manchester to obtain approval for the City to grant an EIP loan for a new business at the Manchester Industrial Park to the April 8, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting at 9:00 am. All were in favor.

4. Motion was made by Beth Neely-Hadley and seconded by Shirley Hines to accept the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Manchester for the City of Manchester to allow the County to conduct the 2020 Municipal General Election for the City of Manchester. All were in favor.

5. Motion was made by Shirley Hines and seconded by Mary Bray to approve FY Budget Amendment #1 – the General Fund Budget for 2020 merit raises dated 01-01-2020. All were in favor.

X. REPORT FROM THE FINANCE DIRECTOR

Finance Director, Bill Gregory, provided the finance report. The general fund is strong. E-911 collections are better since it has been collected by the State and then distributed to the County. Mr. Gregory stated there should be funds remaining in SPLOST after it has expired and after payment of what we owe.

TSPLOST will begin in April and we should get the first check at the end of May. There was discussion of merchants being notified by DOR and Mr. Gregory would get more clarification from DOR. The County will send information with the Business License renewals. Mr. Gregory responded to Mayor Glover's question regarding the old SPLOST account that would be close out and money would be distributed between the County and Cities.

XI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Gay reported we needed to have another SPLOST Work Session of how the funds would be utilized. This Work Session would be set for April and we will devote the entire Work Session for SPLOST discussion. Administrator Gay presented the County portion of Leadership Meriwether this past Friday.

XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Shirley Hines: has received calls about roads and is concerned of road conditions in some areas that may affect citizens with health issues from getting the help they need. We need to look at how we will address this issue. We have no control over the rain and must look at how we address roads. Commissioner Hines wanted a plan of how we will pave roads. Administrator Gay stated the County would get emergency response to anyone who needed medical help. With 40" of rain it has caused many issues with roads and there was no way to prepare with that much rain.

Commissioner Mary Bray: has received many calls about road conditions and dirt bikes that are causing damage to County roads. Sheriff Smith addressed an incident that had just happened. Several teenage boys were mud riding and caused damage to a stuck Amazon truck and to the County road. Several have been arrested and more will be arrested. They will have to pay restitution to repair the road. Sheriff Smith asked the public to call 911 to report issues like this and the caller could remain anonymous.

Vice Chairman McCoy: discussed issues with the roads in the winter months and feels the calcification treatment may help. Administrator Gay stated the roads were so slick even one day of drying would help. Attorney Lee will look at the recommendation by Vice Chairman McCoy to add notice on the building permit that the County had no intention of paving the dirt road where they were building. Chairman Threadgill stated we need to look at the roads where people cannot get out and put them on top of the list for help.

Commissioner Beth Neely-Hadley: reported this Saturday the Warm Springs merchants are going green for St. Patrick's Day. Commissioner Neely-Hadley has been receiving many calls about roads. The push is on for the 2020 Census and citizens should start received their Census letters in the mail soon.

Chairman Bryan Threadgill: as a big animal advocate, Chairman Threadgill has worked with Shawn Downs from the Animal Shelter to set up a free microchip day for dogs in the County that are not chipped. Chairman Threadgill reached out to an anonymous Foundation and they offered to pay for this. A German Shepherd dog at the Shelter may be able to be trained and used as a service dog for a young girl who is a diabetic.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

There was need for an Executive Session for personnel, real estate and litigation.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to go into Executive Session at 10:29 a.m. to discuss personnel, real estate and litigation. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Beth Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy, to go out of Executive Session at 1:05 pm. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Shirley Hines to go back into Regular Session at 1:07 pm. All were in favor.

XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Threadgill read the Future Meetings and Announcements from the Agenda and stated the Work Session had been changed to 4:00 p.m. on 3-24-2020 rather than 4:30 pm.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to adjourn at 1:08 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: *Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners*
Attest: *Blenny Thomas, County Clerk*
Date: *April 8, 2020*