

**MINUTES**  
**MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
April 23, 2019

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

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Hines at 6:00 p.m.  
**INVOCATION** – Commissioner Mary Bray  
**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**II. ADOPT AGENDA**

Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to approve the April 23, 2019 Agenda with an addition under New Business: 9. Authorize County to send a letter to the City of Grantville to request a surplus vehicle for Meriwether County Animal Control. All were in favor.

**III. MINUTES**

Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Alfred McCoy to approve the Minutes from the April 10, 2019 Regular meeting at 9:00 a.m. All were in favor.

**IV. MUNICIPAL COMMENTS**

Lone Oak Mayor, Phillip Dow, stated they were getting ready for growth within the next few years. Three new homes have been built close to the Coweta County line. GMA is assisting in helping the City write their new Ordinances and the City Clerk has been in training to add their information to quick books. A letter was sent to the County by The Town of Lone Oak asking that the County donate the ballfield in Hogansville to Lone Oak to be used for recreation, fishing and walking trails.

**V. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

None

**VI. DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

Brin Jones, E-911 Director: All Departments worked well together during the weather on Friday that brought in heavy rain. The public was kept informed through Social Media. Chairman Hines thanked everyone for their hard work.

Tyrell Johnson, Public Works Director: echoed what Mr. Jones said. Public Works has placed barricades and road closed signs around the County in areas that have washed out roads or roads that are impassable. Someone has been removing the barricades and throwing them in the ditches which is very dangerous since they are warnings for drivers that the road is closed. Sewell Road will be evaluated tomorrow. Administrator Gay stated he received a letter of appreciation from a citizen for the Road Crew who worked on Baughan Road and Fern Road.

Cathy Johnson, Director of Planning, Zoning and Community Development: gave the March 2019 Construction Report. There were 13 Residential Construction permits with a valuation of \$2.6M.

Jane Fryer, Industrial Development Authority Director reminded everyone of the annual Keep Meriwether Beautiful Clean-up Day on April 27, 2019. Tire collections will continue through May 18, 2019. Signs were given to Board members to advertise the clean-up.

## **VII. PUBLIC HEARING**

None

## **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to table the discussion of Recreation until the next meeting. All were in favor. Commissioner Threadgill stated a full Board is not present this evening and he wanted to wait until all Board members were present.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

1. James Clark, Shaw Hankins Representative, reviewed the renewal rates and products for the 2019-2020 County Health Insurance. The recommendation was as follows: Continue the existing Health Insurance coverage through Cigna, move Dental coverage to Cigna in order to get the extra savings that come with the bundling health and dental, continue with United Healthcare for Vision, move basic Life Insurance, AD&D, Long and Short-Term Disability Insurance to Lincoln, continue with ESPYR for the EAP program, move the HRA plan to TASC, and have the County pay the Long Term Disability Insurance for all eligible employees.

Commissioner Threadgill asked about the Long-Term Disability Coverage and was told it covers 60% of the gross pay but would not cover employees who were on Workers Compensation. Also, a large percentage of employees don't use this. Because of this, the Board did not want to move forward with paying the Long-Term Disability Coverage for the employees. The Long-Term Disability coverage will be available for those who would like to have coverage. The employee would be responsible for paying the premiums if they select the coverage.

Administrator Gay recommended moving the Dental Insurance to Cigna to get the additional discount on the Health Insurance and consider Alternate #2 with Cigna to reduce cost. Also, to allow employees to pay for their elected Long-Term Disability coverage.

The cost of the policies are as follows:

Cigna Medical \$942,691, Cigna Dental \$74,469, United Healthcare Vision \$10,863, Basic Life Insurance \$9,737 with \$35,000 in coverage, Voluntary Term Life and AD&D \$1,611.80.

Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to accept the recommendation from Administrator Gay to go with the products as discussed including alternate 2 from Cigna and the exclusion of the County paid Long Term Disability coverage. All were in favor.

2. Camille DeLise, Catherine Sims and Michelle Sabol from Corporate Health Benefits presented the 2019-2020 Wellness Agreement to the Board. The program has been in effect since 2010 when the first screening was held. Ms. DeLise explained the program and discussed the process including the one on one visits with the health coach and the objective of focusing on risk reduction. Ms. Sims provided the statistics on the reduction of obesity and the decrease from pre-diabetes range. There have been 681 follow up coaching sessions and healthy challenges are held quarterly. A Wellness Team was formed and they meet bi-monthly. Ms. Sabol shared success stories of employees who have participated in the program. Commissioner Threadgill asked if there was documentation showing the plan saves the County money. Ms. DeLise referred the question to James Clark from Shaw Hankins since they would have those numbers. Information was provided by Shaw Hankins for the previous years and Meriwether County has been considered as the poster child for having a successful wellness program. Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to continue the Wellness Program with CHP. The motion was amended by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to approve the contract in the amount of \$43,560 for the Wellness Program with CHP and allow the Chairman to sign. All were in favor.

3. Carolyn McKinley, Beverly Ball, Noel Friend and Heather McClendon addressed the Board regarding the Summer Focus Program and the request to add the performing arts under the umbrella of the Summer Program. The Performing Arts program will introduce children to the arts and it will be built around drug awareness. Ms. Ball stated she has older adults who help and has also some of the former

students helping with the program. Ms. Ball provided all aspects of what has been offered to the participants which included field trips, projects, speakers, etc. Teen Maze will have a presentation on one of the days. Commissioner Threadgill noticed the Board of Education charged \$1,943 for building rent. Commissioner Threadgill wanted the County to see if the rent could be waived. Chairman Hines stated the funds were to cover the electric bill. The total cost for the programs is \$10,810.

Sheriff Smith has offered to allow D.A.T.E. funds to be used as long as it was centered around drug education. Motion was made by Mary Bray and seconded by Bryan Threadgill to approve the program funding in the amount of \$10,810. All were in favor.

4. Motion was made by Alfred McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to accept the Right of Way Easement for the Durand Fire Station. All were in favor.

5. Bill Gregory, Finance Director, stated quotes had been received to purchase 4 new trucks. The trucks would be for the following offices; Tax Assessor (1), Building and Zoning (1), Public Works (2). The best quote received was for \$24,832 for each vehicle. Mr. Gregory will need permission to go out for an RFQ for financing. Motion was made by Alfred McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to allow Mr. Gregory to go out for an RFP for financing of the four trucks. All were in favor.

6. Mr. Gregory, Finance Director, stated the Sheriff's Office has asked for seven trucks to be delivered on October 1, 2019. The total cost is \$173,824 with a financing rate of 3%. They will take equipment from existing vehicles and use it on the new trucks as allowed. The financing will come from Capital Improvement. The payments will begin in October 1, 2019. Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to allow the Sheriff's Office to purchase the seven new trucks that were discussed with payments beginning in the new budget year, October 1, 2019. All were in favor.

7. Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to approve the Resolution relating to State Cable and Video Service Franchises. All were in favor.

8. Bill Cawthorne met with someone concerned about the safety at the intersection of Harry Hardy and Winter Road. There have been several accidents at that location. Mr. Cawthorne stated an option to improve this intersection is to add a 3-way stop. Motion was made by Alfred McCoy and seconded by Mary Bray to approve a 3-way stop at the intersection of Harry Hardy Road and Winter Road. All were in favor.

9. The City of Grantville has a 2007 Honda Ridgeline truck they would like to donate to the Meriwether County Animal Shelter. We will need to make the request by letter. Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to send a letter to the City of Grantville requesting the donation of a 2007 Honda Ridgeline Truck to the Meriwether County Animal Shelter. All were in favor.

#### **X. REPORT FROM FINANCE DIRECTOR**

Finance Director Bill Gregory reported the property tax analysis percentage of collection was at 94.68% which is close to the 95% required by the Department of Revenue before the Tax Statements can be mailed. The General Fund is at \$3.7M and if the amount in the E-911 account is included the General Fund account would exceed \$4M. We still have \$800K coming from FEMA.

#### **XI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Administrator Gay thanked Brin Jones, Sheriff Smith, Tyrell Johnson, Bill Cawthorne and Bill Gregory for their work during the recent storm. Eight roads remain closed due to being washed out or compromised from the excessive rain fall and flooding. ACCG is gathering information from the Counties affected and getting estimates to see if there may be some additional help for these areas. The County has reached out to GDOT where a list of roads and estimates for repair was provided. ACCG is trying to get some funding assistance from the State. Some of the repairs can be done inhouse but others are too deep and wide for us to repair. Four roads mentioned, that needed additional assistance with repairs, are: Owens Road, Mt. Carmel Road, Hill Haven Road, and Hidden Lakes Road. Everyone is able to get to their homes at this time. Some of the other roads that were affected are: Clark Road, Keith Road, Finley-Cato Road, Hill Haven Road, Hidden Lakes Road, Mt. Carmel, Strickland Towns Road and Owens Road. There was discussion of the types of culverts and the size of the pipes that need to be used

for repairs or replacements. Administrator Gay was hoping for assistance in upgrading the size of the pipes and the need for box culverts. Chairman Hines wants information pushed out on social media regarding the repairs being made.

Administrator Gay stated GDOT has a Bridge replacement scheduled for Coleman Creek at Roosevelt Highway and they want us to help identify communities that will be affected. Administrator feels they will need to build a detour.

Administrator Gay reported he and Bill Gregory had met with all Cities regarding T-SPLOST and all have been supportive. We will have the County Attorney draft the Intergovernmental Agreement. We need to update the Sewerage Ordinance.

The Tire Grant Application has been extended to 5-18-19.

## **XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Bryan Threadgill: reported the local band, Aces of 8's, with County Employee Keith Braddy, will be playing at the Presidents Theater on Saturday April 27, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Commissioner Mary Bray: There was no report at this time.

Chairman Shirley Hines: There was no report at this time.

Commissioner McCoy: asked the citizens to be patient with the road situation. Commissioner McCoy received a call on Sunday from a Council Member asking if liquor could be sold on Easter Sunday. Commissioner McCoy found out the only days it cannot be sold is on Election Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Commissioner McCoy thanked everyone for their help with the Lake Meriwether project. We have sent a letter requesting an extension of an additional 45 days to the grant deadline. This will allow time to build an ADA platform for citizens to use for fishing. Trees will be taken down tomorrow in the parking area at the lake and ADA striping will be installed tomorrow.

## **XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

Attorney Hill stated an Executive Session was needed for litigation, personnel and real estate.

## **XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Helen Claussen was concerned that building permits and inspections were given for homes in her subdivision but new owners were not given information about the water shed. Ms. Claussen stated she has a 3-story home and described the water damage inside her home on the bottom floor following the heavy rains that caused the water shed lake to overflow. Ms. Claussen stated she has seen this 3-times and was told by a county employee to obtain legal action against the county. Ms. Claussen stated she has pictures showing the water damage and she invited all to come out and look for themselves. Chairman Hines asked how far the house was from the water. Ms. Claussen stated the County issued permits but they don't tell you the water shed lake runs over. Ms. Claussen's time for speaking had expired and the County asked if she would like to leave her paperwork for the County to review and return. Ms. Claussen did not want to leave the paperwork. Administrator Gay confirmed Ms. Claussen served as the builder of the home and will contact her by telephone to set up a time to meet.

Damon Rosser, member of the Zion Hill Primrose Area and employee of the Newnan Fire Department, stated many citizens had asked him about the status of the Primrose Fire Station. This has been a big issue in the community. Chairman Hines stated the Fire Station and Bonds were a plus for the County and we will build four more stations. Primrose was on the list. The one in Lone Oak was built first due to the commitment from the City of Lone Oak and the land did not require a lot of work.

Administrator Gay stated the County had not located a site yet. We have property that was donated in Woodbury from GDOT and a few other properties have been located. Soon, we will bring options for locations. The biggest challenge in Primrose is the County wants to have it where it will serve the most

people and have the most coverage and minimize dead zones. We are looking for a major transportation corridor. The County will provide information to show the distances in order to move forward with locations on property in Primrose.

**XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to go into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. to discuss Litigation, Personnel and Real Estate. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Alfred McCoy and seconded by Bryan Threadgill to go out of Executive Session at 9:13 p.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Alfred McCoy and seconded by Bryan Threadgill to go back into Regular Session at 9:15 p.m. All were in favor.

There was no action taken.

**XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Hines announced Future Meetings that were listed on the Agenda prior to Executive Session.

**XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Mary Bray to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: *Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners*

Attest: *Beverly A. Thomas*

Date: *May 8, 2019*