

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION

August 15, 2020 - 9:30 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy, Shirley Hines, Mary Bray, and Beth Neely-Hadley

Commissioner Absent: Chairman Bryan Threadgill

Staff Present: County Administrator Theron Gay and County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Bill Cawthorne

Staff absent: Attorney Nathan Lee and Finance Director Bill Gregory

I. WELCOME – Vice-Chairman McCoy, 9:30 a.m.

II. NEW BUSINESS

1. Administrator Gay provided a Power Point presentation regarding T-SPLOST, SPLOST, and the Transportation Improvement Program. Administrator Gay explained the difference in T-SPLOST and SPLOST and stated T-SPLOST funds must be spent for transportation purposes only. There is an option for a Regional T-SPLOST as well but Administrator Gay did not recommend the County participate because of the recently passed local T-SPLOST and the need to show how these funds are being used. The projected income from SPLOST is estimated at \$10M and the projected amount from T-SPLOST is estimated at \$8.5M. The County can continue to collect SPLOST funds after a projected amount is met but with T-SPLOST, once the projected amount is met, collections will end regardless of the time period. Administrator Gay reviewed what has been collected during the current SPLOST and T-SPLOST. The County recently purchased a Gradall in the amount of \$254,554.1. The contracts for Owens Road and Hill Haven Road have been let. The cost for Owens Road is \$223K and the cost for Hill Haven Road is \$248,800. Funding for the Gradall and repairs to Owens Road and Hill Haven Road will come from T-SPLOST.

There was discussion of resurfacing and paving roads and the difference in the cost of each. A full depth reclamation (FDR) process was discussed including the approximate cost at \$400K per mile. There were questions on the longevity of the FDR process. The County has approximately 363 miles of paved roads and approximately 237 miles of dirt/gravel roads. Dust treatment application for one mile is approximately \$4,200. The criteria for evaluation was recommended as: No private roads, must be an existing County Road as of January 1, 2020, how many houses are served per mile or fraction thereof, including houses fronting on the road as well as houses on other intersecting roads that must use the road under consideration for ingress or egress. The criteria for Evaluation of Dirt/Gravel Roads for Paving were: one existing house for every 500 linear feet of road. This also sets necessary criteria for future water service/2 connections for every 1,000 linear feet, 60' of right of way minimum to receive future GDOT funding assistance, right of way needs to be existing or property owners willing to donate, to what extent utility relocations are required and the cost not to exceed 50% of paving cost, consider the condition and functionality of drainage structures and the replacement needs and projected costs, and consideration of minimum number of vehicle trips per day.

Bill Cawthorne, Public Works Consultant, reviewed a list of equipment for the Board to consider purchasing over a five-year period to replace existing equipment that is older and has high mileage. The greatest need in the near future is for a road tractor, lowboy trailer and dump trucks. A roller is something that can compact to roadbed when moisture is added. Administrator Gay stated this could be purchased using multiple funding sources. Mr. Gary Sargent, 40-year Public Works employee from Fulton County, who does the specifications on equipment, shared how Fulton County started leasing equipment rather than purchasing. The lease company maintains the equipment during the lease period and newer equipment is leased as old leases expire. Bill Cawthorne is working on a vehicle policy and pre-trip form to be turned in to the fleet supervisor. This can be accomplished using Excel. Operators will be held accountable.

Administrator Gay discussed developing a proactive inspection, repair, and replacement program for drainage structures in deteriorating condition or prone to failure in the near future. Funds from various sources will need to be budgeted each year for this program. Commissioner Hines wanted the County to precheck the culverts before a road is resurfaced. Administrator Gay stated the projections for the next five-years include \$5,526,000 for TSPLOST, \$4,200,000 for LMIG, and a \$3M LMIG match through SPLOST. SPLOST projections including the LMIG match for 2020-2025 is \$6,501,000. The TSPLOST projection for 2020-2025 including paving, resurfacing, culverts, and equipment is \$5,526,000. To date the TSPLOST revenue has been \$736,800 less expenditures for a Gradall \$254,500, Encumbered \$472,000 for Hill Haven/Owens Road leaving a balance of \$9,500. Commissioner Neely-Hadley wanted TSPLOST projects where people could see how their tax money has been spent. SPLOST may have to supplement TSPLOST on some of the projects. Commissioner Hines stated there are no other resources through grants for Public Works and once you see the numbers it puts things into perspective.

Commissioner Bray asked what percentage of SPLOST is for resurfacing. Administrator Gay stated 50%. Administrator Gay stated several ways to enhance funding are: GRTA Grant and Loan, GDOT assistance, and utilizing TSPLOST, SPLOST and general funds. Plans will be made to set up a meeting with GDOT who will help Counties who help themselves. There are also needs for vehicles and equipment in Public Safety, Public Works, and the Sheriff's Office. Other needs include Recreation, Water System Expansion, I.T., Building renovations and records management. Commissioner Neely-Hadley stated what she has heard today is to get dirt road projects rolling. Commissioner Hines handed out a presentation of a software system that would help create a comprehensive list of work performed on County Roads that could be easily accessed in the future and would also help with the planning and budgeting of road work including culverts and drainage structures.

Tracey Thigpen and Mike Womack spoke about trash along the roads. Mr. Womack and several others cleaned up along the side of the roads in May. There are 60-70 residents who use the roads where he lives. Ms. Thigpen, Mr. Sargent, and Mr. Womack all stated they wanted to help Meriwether County. Commissioner Hines spoke about addressing roads that need the most work and wanted a system in place to be consistent. We also need to build relationships and form partnerships. Administrator Gay stated he would bring the 2021 LMIG to the Board soon and will set up a meeting to address Luthersville Road. There was discussion of developing an application for dirt roads and the importance of having all landowners in favor of paving and providing the ROW to the County if needed. Mr. Womack mentioned to add information regarding utilities, satellite, and internet. Vice Chairman McCoy stated the County is looking at Broadband. Commissioner Bray stated she would like for the County to put the criteria on the website. Commissioner Bray stated we could start in some areas with dust control. Bill Cawthorne will contact the company and have them evaluate the roads for dust control. Commissioner Bray asked about Ellis Road and Bill Cawthorne stated he would look at that road.

Commissioner Hines spoke about Mt. Carmel Road and work that had been done in sections due to cost. Commissioner Neely-Hadley mentioned the condition of Harry Hardy Road. Asphalt was applied in 2014 and there have been several repairs to that road since then. It is important to have a good base. Administrator Gay stated if we pave with FDR 90 lbs., we can convert resurfacing money there and could do 3.6 miles of dirt road per year. Some of the roads are not that long. There was discussion of Mt. Pilgrim Road. Commissioner Neely-Hadley stated if we are going to try dust control we may have to rent or lease the roller. Vice Chairman McCoy stated he did not see how we can make a five-year project that is fluid.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

IV. CONCLUSION OF MEETING

The Work Session concluded at 12:13p.m.

V. FUTURE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Future Meetings were listed on the Agenda.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners
Attest: Beverly Thomas, County Clerk
Date: August 25, 2020