

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Commissioner Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2014
7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jay Matthews called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Present for the meeting was Vice-Chairman Charles Glass, Commissioner Bennie Horton, Commissioner Van Baker, Commissioner Nancy Thrash, County Administrator Robert Zellner, Human Resource Officer Susan Helms and County Attorney Scott Mayfield.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

The pledge of allegiance was said by everyone.

III. Invocation

Clifford Barber gave the invocation.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Matthews made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Minutes Approval

Chairman Matthews asked that a motion be made to approve the February 18, 2014 regular business meeting minutes. Commissioner Horton made a motion. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Proclamations

i. Child Abuse Month

Commissioner Thrash stated April is child abuse prevention month. She read the proclamation declaring April 2014 as Child Abuse Prevention Month for Lamar County. Commissioner Glass made a motion to accept the proclamation. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. National Donate Life Month

Chairman Matthews reported he received a letter from Life Link of Georgia requesting April be proclaimed National Donate Life Month. Chairman Matthews stated that in Georgia 4,279 people are waiting on a second chance at life. In the United States 121,752 men, women, and children are on the organ transplant waiting list. Eighteen people in the state will die because a much needed organ will not become available in time. The need for organ donors is more critical than ever. Chairman Matthews asked for a motion to proclaim April 2014 as Donate Life Month for Lamar County. Commissioner Horton made a motion to accept the proclamation. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. New Business

i. Purchase of New Furniture for E911 Dispatch Office

Sheriff White presented two quotes for purchase of new furniture and new computer system for the E911 dispatch office. Sheriff White stated that currently the E911 dispatch personnel are the first personnel the citizens come in contact with when entering the Sheriff Dept. Dispatchers also answer calls to the administration offices at the Sheriff's Dept. E911 will be moved down the hall encumbering two offices with removal of the wall between the offices. Sheriff White stated the wiring will need to be replaced in the old dispatch center. The warrant division will move into the old dispatch office and service the citizens and answer administration calls. E911 personnel will answer 911 calls, radio traffic from Fire Dept., ambulance personnel, Milner P.D., Gordon P.D., Barnesville P.D., and the Sheriff's Office. The first quote is for the purchase of new furniture, excluding new chairs, for E911 personnel. The quote includes four work stations and new file cabinets. The furniture is on state contract and will be purchased at state contract pricing. The second price quote is for purchase of new computers for E911. Dispatch is currently on a digital system that does not function well with Demand Star control stations. Sheriff White stated they are looking at upgrading to two HP computer systems that install Motorola software. Sheriff White stated he had obtained only one price quote for the new computer system. Chairman Matthews stated funds are designated through E911 funds. Sheriff White agreed and stated he is seeking approval from the Commissioners saying that this is something worthy of spending the money on. Commissioner Baker requested Sheriff White obtain prices of new chairs for E911 personnel. Commissioner Thrash asked if E911 personnel were secure. Sheriff White answered E911 dispatch will be just as secure as they are now. He added there are two automatic lock doors between the jail and the current dispatch office. The front door is locked at 6:00 p.m. restricting entrance to the building. After 6:00 p.m. citizens have to be allowed entrance into the Sheriff's office by jail personnel. Chairman Matthews asked for a motion to proceed with the purchase

of new furniture. Commissioner Baker made a motion to proceed with the state contract at a price of \$15,463.53. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Sheriff White asked for approval to bring the quote for the new computer system for E911 dispatch to next month's Commissioners' meeting.

Sheriff White reported the deputies have distributed over 1,300 Code Red Weather Alert pamphlets to Lamar County citizens when answering a call since they began a month ago. There are now over 10,000 members signed up so it is working.

Chairman Matthews asked Sheriff White how the Firearms Academy is doing. Sheriff White stated the Firearms Academy has been a great success. He encourages all citizens to sign up. It is free. The only requirement is you provide your own weapon and bullets. Citizens are taught the law of owning a firearm and firearm basics. It is a great course. Sheriff White stated the next course will be in May.

VIII. Public Comments

Beverly Eskridge of 138 Holmes Street, Barnesville gave an update on behalf of the Humane Society. She said Joyce Farmer had taken 13 animals, 3 cats and 10 dogs, to Ft. Valley today for adoption. The Society had also had some animals spayed and/or neutered today. Joyce will be taking dogs for adoption to PetSmart this Saturday, May 19. Mrs. Eskridge stated dogs are taken more than cats since cats don't do as well in stressful situations.

Sandra Puckett of 638 Yatesville Road, Barnesville, former graduate of 2013 Leadership Lamar and presently on the 2014 steering committee for Leadership Lamar, is acting team captain for the recently formed Neighborhood Watch Program for Yatesville Road area. She complimented Public Works for the hard work and improvements that have been made on Yatesville Road. Ms. Puckett had previously asked the Commissioners' office for a report generated from the speed tracker placed on Yatesville Road. She shared the report with the commissioners asking for clarification of the numbers shown on the report. Barnesville Police Dept. set one up on the beginning of Yatesville Road and the county has a tracker placed on the lower end toward Upson County. Her data was actually obtained from the Barnesville system. It takes two weeks to obtain data. Lamar County has not had its system in operation long enough to obtain data. Ms. Puckett was concerned about the number of cars traveling at a speed exceeding 10+ miles per hour over the speed limit of 45 mph. Chairman Matthews stated that in talking with Sheriff White previously, some of the alleged speeders could be deputies responding to calls. Commissioner Baker stated these systems give you a range of between 1 mph to 10 mph over the speed limit. Commissioner Baker went on to say that clearly there were a lot of speeders.

Ms. Puckett submitted photographs of water standing in the road in several areas of Yatesville Road. Her question to the Commissioners is “When is re-surfacing in the future of Yatesville Road”? Chairman Matthews stated the county gets enough money from the state to surface about two miles a year. Ms. Puckett made a comparison to Crawford Road with Crawford Road being scheduled to be resurfaced later this year. She requested something be done about the standing water on Yatesville Road. Chairman Matthews said the county can clip the shoulders to help prevent the water from standing. Commissioner Baker commented we have had unusual 3” and 5” downpours recently. Commissioner Matthews assured Ms. Puckett that attention will be given to Yatesville Road to solve the problem of standing water.

Billy Kitchings of 485 Old Milner Road, Barnesville commented there is activity going on where he lives all night long, referring to the traffic coming up and down the road with all the businesses located in the area. He stated there is an area on Grove Street near the maintenance barn where it is almost a ditch all the way across the road. County Administrator Zellner stated water lines and large culverts have recently been replaced on Grove Street. There are several places that need asphalt. James Rigdon, Public Works Director, is working on getting a contract to have the asphalt replaced. Mr. Kitchings also commented there needs to be an arm installed where the railroad track runs in front of the lumber mill. He complained of the train blowing its whistle between the hours of 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. and speeders being on the road day and night. He commented on the debris being along the road where people are hauling their trash to the landfill nearby. Commissioner Thrash told Mr. Kitchings to call her the next time he sees trash along the road and she will contact Jeremy Roberts of the Sheriff’s Dept. who is heading the program where inmates remove trash from the sides of the road.

IX. Round Table

Commissioner Glass reported he met with FEMA today stating federal law prohibits them from reimbursing on a time and material contract 72 hours past the initial emergency phase. He stated the county has worked out all it can do to get its reimbursement. The county will need to identify leaners, hangers, and dangerous trees. Commissioner Glass commented the Forestry Service gave the county some useful data to use as an estimate to base our reimbursement on. He stated the county is ready to proceed with getting the contract finalized and turned over to FEMA. Chairman Matthews thanked Commissioner Glass for his work on getting the county’s reimbursement.

Commissioner Baker gave an update on the study for a county animal shelter. He stated there have been several meetings with good turnout and everything was very positive. There were comments from several citizens about their fear of the county raising property taxes to fund the shelter. He informed the citizens there are no plans to raise county taxes to fund the shelter. Commissioner Baker stated they

then had another meeting of approximately 18 volunteers interested in helping with this project. Mark Hocking, a retired veterinarian and owner of South Forty Kennels, has volunteered to help. Mark has done this before in Maryland where he helped build a county facility. Commissioner Baker stated Mr. Hocking helped design a drawing of the proposed facility. There is a tentative site for the shelter and a meeting has been had with an architect who quoted a price of \$1,000 to render a plan to put out for bid. The \$1,000 fee will be paid by donations. No county funds will be used. A meeting with the county attorney will be scheduled to discuss the structure of the facility. Commissioner Baker said hopefully by the May Board of Commissioners meeting a recommendation will be had to move forward or not. Chairman Matthews commented a lot of work has been done since the plan was presented in January. Supporters present were applauded. The floor was opened for any supporter who wished to comment. Fred Morris spoke in support of the facility.

Billy Kitchings praised the Lamar County soccer team for their recent region win. Mr. Kitchings went on to say that Lamar County high school is doing great things. Audience applauded.

Commissioner Thrash reported that she, Commissioner Horton and Administrator Zellner were honored to attend ACCG's 100th celebration held in Savannah. She stated all 159 counties in the state were represented at the roll call. Commissioner Thrash commented ACCG does a lot for the counties in the state of Georgia. She stated the county will be receiving a picture taken of its courthouse.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to adjourn the Regular Business Meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jay Matthews, Chairman

Charles Glass, Vice-Chairman

Bennie Horton, Commissioner

Van Baker, Commissioner

Nancy M. Thrash, Commissioner

Attest:

Susan Helms, Human Resource Officer