

**LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Regular Commissioner Meeting Minutes**  
**April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Matthews called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Present for the meeting was Chairman Matthews, Vice-Chairman Thrash, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Glass, Commissioner Hearn, County Administrator Zellner, Financial Analyst Davidson and Attorney Mayfield.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by everyone. Building and Zoning Director, Dan Gunter gave the invocation.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Matthews welcomed everyone and requested that the agenda be amended with the addition of a proclamation and presentation from Lisa Sayers. Commissioner Hearn made the motion to approve the agenda with the addition and Vice-Chairman Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**IV. Discussions**

**a) Minutes Approval.**

Chairman Matthews called for the approval of the following minutes.

- a) March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012 –Special Called Meeting
- b) March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012-Public Hearing Called Meeting
- c) March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012-Regular Board Meeting

Commissioner Horton made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**b) Presentation**

Lisa Sayers acknowledged those that had done special work towards the passage of Senate Bill 110 including the Representatives from Monroe, Bibb, Twiggs who all supported Lamar Local Officials and in particular Vice-Chairman Nancy Thrash and Lamar County Regional Solid Waste Manager, Johnny Poore.

Sears further represented local citizens John Sexton, Gwen Moore and Cecil Fountain from Macon who worked hard to prevent the passage of the House Bill 110. She also said that the Towaliga Watershed Association, North Lamar County Citizens Association and the Brushy Creek Association wanted to recognize Vice-Chairman Thrash and Solid Waste Manager Johnny Poore for their services that went above and beyond in the call of their duty in regard to their educated efforts and success in stopping the passage of SB 110. When presenting the award to Vice-Chairman Thrash and Director Poore she showed how the background photography was of the Towaligia River and in this it looked like a pristine and a beautiful fresh water coral reef.

Johnny Poore gave an overview of Senate Bill 110. He stated that the passage of the bill would have removed the only protection from ground water recharge areas that would prevent lands fills from being built or expanded and it was the only environmentally sensitive area in the State of Georgia that would have allowed landfills to be expanded. It was a move initiated by those that bought these landfills in the counties with their goal being to expand them. This move would have been bad for ground water recharge areas and it would have opened up environmentally sensitive areas to landfills all across the State of Georgia.

**c) Proclamation and Special Presentation**

- i. Vice-Chairman Thrash presented U'landa Barkley and her staff a Proclamation declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- ii. Emergency Management Director Billy Campbell introduced Barry Gooden, a Warning Coordination Meteorologist from the Peachtree Center Weather Service. He started his presentation by thanking the Chairman and the Commissioners for the job that they have done and the services they have provided to the Emergency Management Department. He explained that a Storm Ready Community is program that started in 1998 in Oklahoma. Each applicant basically has things that they have to consider and do in the event of bad weather. This helps the communications systems, 911, so that they can receive information from the National Weather Service allowing them to respond to the citizens of Lamar County. This in turn enables them to take the necessary precautions when bad weather is coming and so that they can know how to be prepared. Currently there are 57 counties that are Storm Ready.
- iii. Ed Westbrook field area coordinator for the Georgia Emergency Management Agency spoke on being Storm Ready. Lamar County is the fifth county to receive the designation of being Storm Ready in his district. Lamar County is the first county in Westbrook's district to receive this designation. Westbrook spoke about the hard work that has been done to be Storm Ready and the care that the Chairman and the Commissioners have provided including Billy Campbell and

Becky Martin for their dedication to making Lamar County storm ready.

**d) Ordinance 2012-03**

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to approve Ordinance 2012-03 amending the Zoning Ordinance of Lamar County, Georgia. This was a wording change to the Home Occupations Zoning Ordinance. Commissioner Horton made a motion to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of Ordinance 2012-03 for the purpose of amending certain text revisions to the Zoning Ordinance. Vice-Chairman Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**e) Ordinance 2012-04**

County Administrator Zellner read the Ordinance 2012-04 Emergency Management that replaces the current Ordinance due to the State mandated changes in procedures that are to be followed during an emergency situation. Commissioner Horton made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of Ordinance 2012-04 and Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**f) Ordinance 2012-05**

County Administrator Zellner read Ordinance 2012-05 which dissolves the Senior Center Advisory Board from being under the County Commissioners authority. Commissioner Glass made a motion to pass Ordinance 2012-05 and Vice-Chairman Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**g) Resolution 2012-06**

Building and Zoning director Gunter explained Resolution 2012-06 John M. Mitchell Jr. Rezoning of five (5) acres from Agricultural-Residential to Office-Residential in which the first reading was passed on March 2012 at the regular Commissioner's business meeting. Vice-Chairman Thrash made a motion to pass the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Ordinance 2012-06 and Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**h) City Pond and Wilmot Road**

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to table the discussion on City Pond and Wilmot Road. Commissioner Horton made a motion to table the discussion and Vice-Chairman Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**i) Transportation Service Agreement Contract Year 2013**

County Administrator Zellner explained the contract in regards to the budget for Fiscal Year 2013. Zellner stated that the contract will be \$8900.00 for FY 2013. Vice-Chairman Thrash asked that they get information on who is being transported. Vice-Chairman Thrash said that she realizes some of the physically disabled people are using this transportation but she would really like to see how many citizens and which citizens are being transported. Vice-Chairman Thrash would like to know if Lamar County is getting their bang for their buck. Chairman Matthews read a snapshot paragraph in which it states that Lamar County Vans are used to transport people to and from work, those that are in need of routine medical care and to transport the elderly and disabled. He continued to read that there are approximately 500 passenger trips per month. He further stated that the statistics from Fiscal Year 2011 show that 33 percent trips were provided to senior citizens, 54 percent were trips that were employment related and 3 percent of the trips were used for recreation. Vice-Chairman Thrash stated that she would get with Three Rivers in regards to these services being provided to Lamar County. Commissioner Hearn stated that only about five thousand dollars was used in the FY 2011 budget and that whatever is not used is turned back into the County. Chairman Matthews called for a motion to approve the Transportation Service Agreement Contract for 2013. Commissioner Hearn made a motion to approve and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**j) Surplus Property**

Chairman Matthews presented a list of Surplus items from the Tax Commissioner office. Chairman Matthews called for a motion to surplus the items. Commissioner Glass made a motion to surplus the list of items presented and Vice-Chairman Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Attached to the minutes is a list of surplus items.

**k) Award of the EWP Grant Contract**

County Administrator Zellner stated that three bids were received as follows.

- i. ERS out of Jackson, Mississippi.-- \$100,000.00
- ii. Tree Toppers from Americus, Georgia--\$ 36,105.00
- iii. Ricci Linn Jones from Barnesville, Georgia--\$ 98,700.00

Part of this bid includes In-Kind Services which would include the equipment, the hauling and disposing of the debris. Tree Toppers came in with \$28,750.00 with us hauling the debris and Jones came in at \$58,500 with us hauling the debris. ERS did not break out the bid.

County Administrator Zellner stated the equipment that Tree Toppers uses is a bucket truck, a skidder and chain saw. They would go down into the clearing

area and attach the saw and the limbs to cables and drag it to the road. Zellner also explained that they will be parked on the side of the road. Zeller stated that Tree Toppers did not give any explanation as to how they would address fences. Zellner said that this would be detrimental to the property owners as the County has to get permission from the owners to access the property. Tree Toppers indicated that there was only 1 property owner with a fence but Jones indicated that there were several owners with barbed wire fences. Jones stated that this would be another issue that the County would have to address if they didn't fix the fences.

Commissioner Hearn stated that Tree Toppers worked with the County during the Tornado Disaster and that there were no problems. Commissioner Hearn pointed out the fact that Tree Toppers is \$30,000.00 cheaper. Commissioner Hearn and Commissioner Glass both agreed that they would like to go with a local company but \$36,000.00 cheaper is a substantial difference.

Commissioner Glass explained that we would also apply for reimbursement from the NRCS and that we are then responsible for fifteen percent of the cost.

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to approve the bid. Commissioner Glass made a motion to accept the low bid from Tree Toppers for \$28,745.00 and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

## **V. Public Comments**

- a) Bud Queen of 1387 Boxankle Road, Forsyth, Georgia addressed the Commissioners with a report on Friends of High Falls. He stated that they have opened a bank account and started spending money in the park. They have had one work detail and one cleanup detail. He stated that a lot of money is generated from the park and that it amounts to a total of about forty three million dollars. He stated that Lamar County does get its share and that he has seen a lot of Lamar County tags in the parking lot. He stated that over seven hundred thousand visitors have come through the park. High Falls Parks is the second largest usage park in the State of Georgia. The funds that are generated throughout the park go back to the State to help maintain other parks in the areas. Queen stated that the purpose of the Friends Program is to generate money for the High Falls State Park. They work hard to provide the maintenance and the upkeep of the park. They also continue to seek participation from the local community. Queen explained that when they put in volunteer hours they get \$2.00 dollar per hour up to \$3000.00 a year. There are several methods of receiving money such as selling a Friends Fund Package in which they get money back from the State. They also take donations from businesses around the community. They are going to have their first and only public meeting Friday, April 27, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. located at the main pavilion in High Fall State Park. Information in regards to this event will be listed in all of the local papers. Currently, they are looking for specific people

- who do specific tasks such as carpenters, plumbers, electrician, carpenters, and master gardeners. Queen also requested that donations in regards to these services would be appreciated. Queen encouraged the Chairman and the Commissioners to bring their family, friends and neighbors and let them know the park is available to them.
- b) Beverly Eskridge of 138 Holmes Street Barnesville, Georgia addressed the Chairman and the Commissioners with an update on the Human Society. She gave a yearly report for 2011 stating that 192 animals had been transported by Joyce and Karen Farmer to be spayed and neutered. Beverly applauded those that responsibly cared for their pet and encouraged those that could not to take them to the local pound. Another major accomplishment in 2011 was that they had adopted out 82 animals. Most of the adoptions were from the State of Georgia. A lot of the pets are taken to Pet Smart in Macon, Georgia for adoption. They have also had much success with listing pets for adoption on PetFinder. Recently, two dogs were adopted by citizens from Florida and several other animals were also adopted from Florida. Eskridge encouraged everyone to visit success stories under the website [www.blchs.org](http://www.blchs.org). Eskridge stated that currently there are 29 dogs and several cats up for adoption. Farmer has transported 58 animals for adoption this year alone. Eskridge stated that they are determined to make a difference for the unwanted pets in Lamar County Georgia. Eskridge said she welcomes anyone that would like to join them in their mission and donations.
- c) Dottie Eldridge of 151 Georgia Avenue Barnesville, Georgia addressed the Commissioners stating that Dolly Goodpuppy Society is a canine rescue non-profit organization supported by donations and fundraisers. She wanted to let everyone know that the Atlanta Humane Society continues to provide spayed and neutering. The clinic does provide limitations which states that you can have two animals per person and the dog has to be less than 65 pounds. They do not accept feral cats, aggressive dogs and they cannot be pregnant or nursing. The cost is \$20.00 per person including a rabies shot and a micro chip. This service is available on a quarterly basis for anyone. There have been 138 dogs taken in and of those dogs 78 were adopted out. Fifty one of those dogs were transported out to non-kill shelters. Currently there have been 22 dogs adopted and 20 dogs have been transported out. They have two fund raisers every year. One in April and one in October. Eldridge stated that she appreciated everyone's support.

#### **IV. Round Table**

Commissioner Glass stated that he had two things. One being that there was an informational town hall meeting at the Civic Center on Thursday night at 7:00 p.m. for the T-SPLOST and that there would be a second meeting on May 24, 2012. The second thing was that he would like to see more people signed up for CODE RED. Currently there have only been 1800 phone numbers sign up on the CODE RED database and that a lot more citizens need to be signed up for this program since the County is paying for this service.

Vice-Chairman Thrash thanked everyone for the Special Presentation and she stated that she was in awe of Johnny Poore when she watched him work with his intelligence and his background. Vice-Chairman Thrash stated that sometimes she thinks that when our legislatures at the Capitol don't think of us it's not intentionally that they are doing things but it's a good thing when they see us and that they know that we are behind their backs saying don't do this that this is how it's going to affect us. Vice-Chairman Thrash stated that this is essence of what we did. She went on to say she appreciated all the hard work that they all did on this. Chairman Matthews concurred likewise.

**V. Executive Session and Adjournment**

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to go into executive session at approximately 8:00 p.m. to discuss Real Estate. Chairman Matthews stated that they did not need to go into executive session and called for a motion to Adjourn. Vice-Chairman Thrash made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Jay Matthews, Chairman

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Nancy Thrash, Vice-Chairman

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Bennie Horton, Member

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Charles Glass, Member

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Jimmy Hearn-Member

Attest:

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Robert Zellner, County Administrator