

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Commissioner Meeting Minutes
May 17th, 2011
7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Matthews called the meeting to order at approximately 7:03 p.m. Present for the meeting was Chairman Matthews, Commissioner Horton, Commissioner Glass, Commissioner Thrash, Financial Analyst Davidson and Attorney Scott Mayfield. Absent for the meeting was Vice-Chairman Jimmy Hearn.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by everyone. Aaron Watson from the First Assembly of God gave the invocation.

III. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Matthews requested that the agenda be amended to add under the Tornado Disaster clean up the Open Bid for RFP Package No. 2011-01. Commissioner Horton made the motion to amend the agenda and Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

IV. Discussions

A. Fire and Ambulance Fee Waiver Requests

Chairman Matthews called on Kent Kingsley of Milner, GA to address his request for a fire and ambulance fee waiver. Mr. Kingsley addressed the commissioners about his wife's property in which she inherited several tracks of land from his deceased father in law. The property that he is requesting for exemption is two parcels of land on opposite sides of Weldon Lake Road. Mr. Kingsley stated that he and his wife were going to join the parcels that are in the conservation program. However, he spoke to the Tax Assessors office about 2 years ago and the tax assessor's office told them there was no reason to do this as there was no benefit. Therefore they took the tax assessors advice and did not combine the parcels. With this being said, Mr. Kingsley stated they were being penalized for taking the county's advice and that the parcels be exempt from the fire and ambulance fee. Another request was from Horace Griffin for exemption of a second residence located at 679 McCollum Road. His appeal is based on the fact that the house is not livable and he is only using the house for storage. However the tax assessor's office determined the storage house does have lights and water

and the structure is livable. Chairman Matthews stated that they need to address matters of property issues beyond their control and if they do the fire and ambulance fee in the future these issues need to be addressed. Commissioner Thrash stated the fee system is too complicated and it needs to be simplified. She further stated that there was so much focus on reaching the dollar amount that they didn't make the fees simple enough. Chairman Matthews stated they didn't realize that there were so many different types of parcels. He stated this has led to a lot of unintended consequences. He stated that they have learned that if they do move forward with the fees for 2011 they will be based on structure only and not raw land. Chairman Matthews called for a motion on the request. Commissioner Glass made the motion to deny the request based on the history of other denials that they have enforced already as it was based on the size of the lots and not the joining of the lots. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. Commissioner Thrash opposed the motion. The motion passed 2-1. Commissioner Glass made the motion to deny the request of Horace Griffin. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Permit Fees- Pole Barns

Commissioner Thrash made a motion to reduce the permit fees to build a pole barn from \$25.00 a sq. ft. to \$5.00 a sq. ft. which would make the fees around \$ 50.00 to \$100.00 instead for \$400 to \$600.00 to build a pole barn. According to Wimpy Vaughn, Code Enforcer with the Building and Zoning Department, there are two inspections which include a footing and a final inspection. Commissioner Thrash made a motion to reduce the charge for the pole barn permit fee and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

C. Agenda Deadline

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to change the official closing of the County Commissioners' meeting agendas from the two week deadline to noon Friday prior to the Tuesday night meeting. Commissioner Thrash made the motion to change the official closing time and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

D. Board Appointments

Chairman Matthews stated that in the absence of Commissioner Hearn they would table the Senior Center appointment. Chairman Matthews called for a motion to re-appoint Robert E. Taylor to the Lamar County Department of Family and Children Service Board (DHS) for a term of four more years. Commissioner Thrash made the motion to approve the re-appointment and Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

E. Tornado Disaster

Commissioner Glass gave an update on the tornado disaster clean up. He stated that he has been working with the public assistance. He stated there has been a great response on the private and the volunteer assistance side of the cleanup efforts. This past weekend there were around 350 to 450 people involved in the *Great Day of Service* assisting with the tornado clean up. He stated that there have been an overwhelming number of blessings of donations handled by Pastor Grant and the Nazarene Church. Commissioner Glass stated that FEMA has been open at the Service Center every day until 6:00 p.m. on Thursday. The RFP package was established for removal of debris from the right of way of 3 different zones in Lamar County. The RFP package was established for reimbursement purposes according to FEMA's requirements. The timeline for reimbursement is 6 months from the date of the event. Another activity that FEMA can possibly reimburse the county for is any damage to property such as the damage to the guard rail on the bridge on Atlanta Street. Commissioner Glass stated that we can anticipate another RFP being established for leaners, hangers and stumps. These are things in the right of way that jeopardize the safety of the public or the county's property. The final RFP will be for the grinding of all the vegetative debris. These RFP's will go through the normal advertisement process.

F. Code Red Emergency Notification System

Commissioner Thrash addressed the board about the possibility of purchasing a reverse 911 system for the county that would alert the citizens via a phone call during inclement weather or about a missing person. The cost to the county would be around \$3750.00 and \$7500.00 after the first year. There is a Communication Improvement Grant offered through ACCG in which the county has 1 year to apply for the grant. This is a warning system that every citizen would have the opportunity to sign up for. Commissioner Glass stated that this system would be cheaper than expanding the Hazard Mitigation Plan which is the county siren coverage. This system would cost over \$100,000 to upgrade. Commissioner Thrash stated that the grant information should be made available in the next couple of weeks and there is also a FEMA/GEMA match to assist with covering the funds for this system. Commissioner Thrash volunteered to look into this further once the FEMA/GEMA match is made available.

G. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to approve the regular business meeting minutes dated April 19th, 2011 and the special called meeting minutes dated May 4th, 2011 and the workshop meeting minutes dated May 4th, 2011. Commissioner Horton motioned to approve the minutes and Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

V. Public Comments

Beverly Eskridge of Holmes Street, Barnesville gave a monthly report from the Human Society. She shared with the commissioners that the Human Society recently spayed and neutered 22 dogs and cats. The Human Society has 3 Hemingway kittens and 1 German short haired pointer available for adoption. The human society recently participated in several festivals including Pet Adoption at the Cherry Blossom Festival in Macon, GA, Dog and Pony show in Zebulon, Ga. and the National Pet Adoption weekend. Ms. Eskridge stated that she has been in contact with Commissioner Glass about the animals affected by the tornado disaster and that extra time is being given at the pound before animals are euthanized so that people have time to claim their missing animals. The pound also has a website for the available animals that have come in since the tornado disaster. She reported that the human society is working to get extra food donated from Pet Smart for those animals affected by the tornado disaster. Also, if private citizens need assistance they can contact the Human Society.

VI. Permit Fee Waivers for Tornado Disaster

Chairman Matthews came back to the tornado disaster recovery discussion and reported that in the Special Called Meeting dated May 4th, 2011 the commissioners had passed a motion to waive the permit fees for all those affected by the tornado disaster until the regular business meeting. Commissioner Glass made a motion to continue the fee waiver and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. There was applause from the crowd.

VII. Open Bids

Chairman Matthews opened the bid process for review. See the attached bids for more information. Commissioner Glass gave everyone present some background information on the intent of the bid. FEMA regulations demanded the basis of the bid be either by weight or volume. The decision was made to go with the weight basis as there are scales available at the Solid Waste Authority at no charge to the county. The primary factor that should be stated in the bid was how much it would cost to remove the debris from the right of way per ton throughout the damaged areas in the county. There were 3 work zones setup for this purpose. Each bidder was required to give a unit price per ton and a mobilization dollar amount per job. Chairman Matthews distributed the bids to the commissioners present for review. Commissioner Glass made a motion to approve Fitzhugh Tree Service, the second lowest bidder, for the RFP bid 2011-01. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

XIII. Round Table

Commissioner Horton thanked everyone for their services rendered.

Commissioner Glass gave his sympathies to everyone affected by the tornado disaster. He stated he was amazed by the community's turnout and their willingness to pull together with time, money and other things. He praised the volunteers, and everyone for the hard work they did during the tornado disaster over the past weeks. He also attributed the community's donations to the people affected by the tornado disaster and the people involved not looking for a handout as to the reason for the low turnout at the Disaster Recovery Center.

Commissioner Thrash thanked everyone for coming together during the tornado disaster. She also praised Pastor Grant and the Nazarene Church for opening their church to volunteers and their donations as well as a place to store all of the donations. She thanked Pastor Grant for his hard work during the tornado disaster.

Chairman Matthews concurred with all of the commissioners and praised everyone for their hard work. Chairman Matthews gave praise to James Rigdon for his hard work and Commissioner Glass for his patience during this time of local disaster.

XIV. Adjournment

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:29 p.m. Commissioner Horton made the motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Commissioner Thrash. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jay Matthews, Chairman

Jimmy Hearn, Vice-Chairman

Bennie Horton, Member

Charles Glass, Member

Nancy M. Thrash-Member

Attest:

Carlette Davidson, Financial Analyst