

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Workshop Meeting Minutes
May 4th, 2011
10:00 A.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Jimmy Hearn called the workshop to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. Present for the meeting were Vice Chairman Jimmy Hearn, Commissioner Bennie Horton, Commissioner Charles Glass, Carlette Davidson, Cheryl Idol, and Jennifer Day

II. BUDGET UPDATE

Financial Analyst Davidson reported on 25% of the annual budget to first quarter actuals for both revenues and expenditures. In the first quarter the actual year to date revenues are under expenditures by \$625,225.54. The actuals for Fire & EMS fees show \$101,948.00 in the first quarter year to date for 2010 collections. There have been no 2011 fees collected or assessed. The County Property Fees are collected in November and December attributing to the low first quarter year to date revenue of \$641,285.00. On the expenditure side of the chart, the Taxes and Benefits are showing a high expenditure as this relates to the retirement pension payment coming in around February with an amount of \$185,000. Also, the jail operations expenses are currently over the 25% of the annual budget due to higher medical and prisoner meal expenses. Commissioner Glass asked about the fine/forfeitures and why the revenues are running behind and Administrative Analyst Day guessed that it is due to fines, fees and traffic tickets that are not being paid. Commissioner Glass stated that we should look at historical data to determine the reason why the fees are trended low for first quarter. He further stated that it may be normal for first quarter to be behind. There was discussion in regards to the revenues being under expenditures due to the fact that property taxes are not collected until November and December and the premium tax of around \$444,000 is not collected until October. Commissioner Glass reported that we are not really over budget on the Fire and EMS expenditures as we have to pay a month in advance and we paid December which hit in January. Commissioner Thrash stated that she spoke to the Sheriff and the majority of the medical costs have to do with the juveniles. All of the juveniles except about 4 have been sent back. She stated that housing the juveniles has actually cost the department money. Commissioner Hearn reported that if we stay on the trend we are on now and we continue with 3 more quarters we will be \$200,000 under budget. Analyst Davidson reported that she and Cheryl Idol are working on some budget amendments and should have something ready to report within the next 10 days.

Commissioner Thrash wanted to know if the department heads had turned in their budgets and Analyst Day reported that she currently only has about half of them even though the deadline has passed. Analyst Day reported that she has the next 3 weeks to get the budget worksheets ready and have them to the Commissioners by the 23rd of May.

Public Works director James Rigdon reported that he currently has turned in over 100 hours of overtime. Mr. Rigdon reported that what concerns him most is the amount of fuel that they are burning that they may not get reimbursed for. There was discussion that this falls into the

maintenance category therefore they are not reimbursable. Mr. Rigdon stated that he burned over 500 gallons of fuel over the last week causing his fuel budget overage. Commissioner Glass stated that everything including fuel should be documented so that they can turn it into FEMA for possible reimbursement. Commissioner Glass further stated that everything would have to be paid for and then requests for reimbursement will be turned in to FEMA. All paperwork will be kept in a folder and housed in Commissioner Glass's office.

Commissioner Thrash requested that the commissioners look at the Superior Court first quarter budget. Analyst Day reported that Towaligia court hasn't received their money as they get quarterly payments and this the reason for the low expenditures so this figure would change in the near future. Commissioner Thrash inquired about the public safety revenues and Analyst Day stated that this is everything from the Sheriff's Department as most of it comes from the inmate board fees from other counties and any state reimbursements received plus the VOCA grant that we haven't received yet. Commissioner Thrash stated that this is red flagging her and wanted to know if we really are down on the revenues. There was discussion about the decline in the meal budget since we are no longer housing out of county inmates. Commissioner Thrash requested we continue to monitor the meal budget.

Commissioner Thrash stated that she hopes that medical rates will be reduced to Medicare rates as this will help to offset the budget. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that all constitutional officers are watching their budgets in regards to what they can control. This excludes Natural Gas and Fuel.

Public Works director James Rigdon reported on the security of his fuel supply. Currently there is only a paper log and any department can get fuel. Mr. Rigdon stated that he usually gets 4000 gallons of diesel and gas every 3 1/2 months. At night the pumps are locked but during the day anyone can get gas. Commissioner Thrash stated that there needs to be some kind of monitoring system for Public Works. Analyst Day stated that if the landfill reports their fuel usage, Ms. Milner will invoice them and Analyst Day will do a Journal Entry to the Public Works line item for the budget. Commissioner Thrash instructed Mr. Rigdon to get new locks for the system to assist with security control for his fuel. Mr. Rigdon stated he would speak to his supplier about possibly upgrading to a new system with a better security system.

Commissioner Thrash summarized some of the budget discussion.

- Mr. Rigdon will implement new security measures for the Public Works fuel tanks.
- Analyst Day will monitor Jail Operations including the meal budget.
- Commissioner Glass will speak to all of the Department Heads in regards to turning in their budget packets.
- May 23rd the workbooks will be distributed to all of the commissioners.

III. FIRE/AMBULANCE FEES

Commissioner Glass reported that we are working on the database to determine who has currently paid the fire and ambulance fee. This should be complete by the middle of the month. Once this has been determined, the plan is to send a letter to those who have not paid. We are also working with the Tax Commissioner to track down the names and addresses for those cards

that were returned mail. The Tax Commissioner uses the department of motor vehicles (DMV) to track down the citizens who have returned mail. Commissioner Thrash and Commissioner Horton agreed that we should not send out letters for anyone affected by the tornado disaster. Commissioner Glass stated we don't want to take legal action until we send out a letter of proposed action. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that all of the 2010 fees will be handled by the Board of Commissioners office. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that if the fees can't work smoother he does not want to go forward with the fee system even though he knows it's the fairest way for the citizens. Commissioner Glass agreed that if we could find a more simple way to impose the fee we could possibly do it. The fire and ambulance would need to be limited to 3 categories to possibly make this work. Commissioner Thrash stated that we need to simplify the exemptions. Commissioner Thrash stated that the fire fees were implemented as a service fee for everyone. If you don't do it you are putting the burden on the property owners. Commissioner Horton stated that the constituents don't see it this way. Commissioner Thrash stated that they did a poor job explaining the fire and ambulance fee. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that if we have the same history as the 2010 fire and ambulance fees we are going to have a problem. If we put on the Tax Commissioners office or we hire more office staff to handle the fire and ambulance we are still going to have more problems. Commissioner Horton says he believes his constituents want an increase in millage rate rather than the fire and ambulance fee. Commissioner Thrash stated that property owners cannot afford to pay a 2 mill increase as it will force them out of their homes. If we go with the millage rate and the people who rent do not pay the burden is back on the home owner. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that the Internal Auditor and Financial Analyst will have some numbers to show what we are going to have to have in the budget to offset the fire and ambulance fees. Commissioner Thrash stated that we should set the categories and the fees then determine the amount of revenue we are going to get from the fire and ambulance and then cut expenditures to balance the budget. Commissioner Hearn stated that we have cut everything we can except for benefits and personnel. Commissioner Thrash stated we need to get serious about entitlements and get people back to work. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that we will table the discussion until we can get some numbers for the fire and ambulance fee. Commissioner Glass proposed categories but until there is a clear definition he does not see 2011 fire and ambulance fee collections. Commissioner Glass agreed with Commissioner Thrash that the real answer is to cut the budget to meet the revenues. Commissioner Glass proposed that they have some ideas for this for the May meeting. Vice-Chairman Hearn stated that they could speak to Tax Commissioner about enforcing the fees if they put the 2011 fees on the tax bills.

IV. COUNTY WEBSITE

The funds for a request for an intern ran out and we only had 1 applicant for the job and they could not start until June or July. The one applicant from the high school did not work out. Rhonda Toon with Gordon College is also looking into finding someone. If we can find someone with the skills to create a website that person could use it to build their portfolio for a job in the future. However, the students and schools are focusing on end of year and graduation. The scope of work is defined but we really need someone to do it for free. There was more discussion that they find someone in the community who builds websites and would willingly volunteer their time to help create or modify the county website.

V. PHONE LINE AUDIT

Commissioner Thrash wanted to know when the last time a phone audit for land lines had been done. Analyst Day stated that last year the administrative building got a rid of 24 lines leaving us with just a pool of numbers with extensions. This allowed us to save money. Mr. Rigdon with Public Works had all his phones cut off and they only use links. Commissioner Thrash suggested that Analyst Day send out an email to all of the department heads asking for all of their phone numbers so that she could match them to Analyst Day's number. Vice-Chairman Hearn asked about the Admin's current system and Analyst Day stated that currently we have 3 incoming phone lines plus the line pool. We pick up on line one but line 2 is auto attendant. If you make an outgoing phone line it pulls from the phone pool. Commissioner Glass wanted to know how many people using Southern Link actually have a number attached to their phone number. Analyst Day stated that she would need to check on that but as long as they are using push to talk it doesn't cost us any extra money.

VI. CONTRACTORS

Commissioner Thrash stated that there needs to be a separate line item for the contractors. She requested that we get with Cheryl Idol in regards to what line item to use. Commissioner Thrash wanted to know who is over the contractors. Prior to the 70 hours it did not matter but now that the 70 hours has passed the documentation has to be done and all contractors go through Chairman Matthews.

VI. ROUND TABLE

Commissioner Glass stated that he was extremely impressed with everyone in the county and especially the Public Work Department. He further praised the ladies in the office and all of the departments helping out and joining in to help out. He stated he was amazed at all of the volunteers and how well everything was coordinated.

Commissioner Horton stated that it was his first disaster that he had been involved in. Proud to be in a community that comes together in and outside of the community. He was amazed at our law officers and the job they did. Also, the ladies in the office and the job they have done. Public Works Director James Rigdon was concerned about the invoices and the price gouging. Vice-Chairman Hearn referred him to Chairman Matthews for approval.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairman Hearn called for a motion to adjourn at approximately 11:30 a.m. Commissioner Glass made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion

passed unanimously. The Vice-Chairman and the Commissioners returned out of executive session at approximately 12:00 p.m. and adjourned the meeting.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jay Matthews, Chairman

Bennie Horton, Vice-Chairman

Jimmy Hearn, Member

Charles Glass, Member

Nancy M. Thrash, Member

Attest:

County Clerk