

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Commissioner Meeting Minutes
January 18th, 2011
7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Matthews called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by everyone. In the absence of Rev. Franklin Gibson, Commissioner Horton gave the invocation.

III. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Matthews requested that the agenda be amended with the motion to table the county administrator, remove the senior citizens committee, add the board of health, remove the tax equalization board, as it is grand jury appointed, and table the tax assessor's board until a later meeting. Commissioner Horton made the motion to amend the agenda and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

IV. Public Hearing

The public hearing was for the consideration of resolution 2010-01 for the re-zoning of 8.55 acres from C-2 (Highway-Commercial) to A-R (Agricultural-Residential) owned by Cary E. Bankson. Dan Gunter, Planning & Zoning Director was present to give the board more information on the resolution and to answer any questions from the board. Chairman Matthews asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this zoning ordinance amendment. No one spoke for or against. Commissioner Horton made a motion to grant the request and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The Motion passed 4-0. Chairman Matthews closed the public hearing.

V. Board Appointments

Chairman Matthews opened the discussion for the annual Board Appointments. Commissioner Hearn motioned to re-appoint Smith, Welch and Brittain as the County Attorney. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Glass motioned to re-appoint Robyn Underwood as the County's Independent Auditor and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Glass motioned to re-elect County Physician Woodall, Wilson and Manley as the County Physician. Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Horton motioned to elect Chairman Jay Matthews to the Solid Waste Authority.

Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion and the motion passed 3-0 with Commissioner Thrash abstaining due to the fact she serves on the Solid Waste Board. Commissioner Hearn motioned to appoint Commissioner Glass to the Industrial Development Authority and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 with Commissioner Glass abstaining from the vote. Commissioner Glass motioned for Commissioner Hearn to serve as the Vice-Chairman for the 2011 fiscal year. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Hearn motioned that Dean Gore be re-appointed to the Board of appeals and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Thrash motioned that Missy Kendrick be re-appointed to serve on the Griffin Tech College Board and Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Thrash motioned for Commissioner Horton to serve on the Board of Health and Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

VII. Resolution 2011/26 County Legislative Coordinator

Chairman Matthews read the resolution 2011/26 for County Legislative Coordinator and called for a motion of appointment. Commissioner Horton motioned to appoint Commissioner Thrash and Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 with Commissioner Thrash abstaining from the vote.

VIII. Amend Animal Burial Ordinance: Chapter 2-4

Chairman Matthews proposed that there be changes to the policy of burying animals in the county. The Chairman moved the ordinance be given its first reading. The Chairman explained the reasons behind dismantling the county burial of animals as costly and time consuming to the public works department. The farmer's in Lamar County have means of burying the animals.

IX. Approval of Minutes

Chairman called the motion to approve the Special Called Minutes of December 14th and 17th, 2010, the regular meeting of December 21st, 2010 and the workshop minute meetings of January 5th, 2011. Commissioner Glass motioned to approve and Commissioner Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

X. Fire and Ambulance

Commissioner Glass gave a presentation in regards to the proposed changes to the fire and ambulance fees. Break out of the changes include the following:

- Commercial and industrial fees are changed to break at 15,000 square feet.
- Commercial less than 15,000 sq. ft. will be \$100 for ambulance and \$100 for fire.

- Greater than 15,000 sq. ft. will be \$500 for ambulance and \$250 for fire.
- Industrial less than 15,000 sq. ft. will be \$600 for ambulance and \$300 for fire.
- Greater than 15,000 sq. ft. will be \$1200 for ambulance and \$600 for fire.
- No parcel will see an increase with these changes, many will see a decrease.

Allowable Exemptions

1. Disabled vets that are 100% disabled and receiving homestead exemptions for their disability will have their fees waived for both fire and ambulance.
2. Churches and schools are exempt from fees for 2010.
3. People that have a dwelling in another county but a small part of their parcel runs into Lamar County will be exempt from fees (this ties into their 911 service coming from another county).
4. Property owners that feel they qualify for one or more exemptions, or that want to combine vacant lots less than 1 acre must complete a simple form (available on the web or at the office) and turn it in.

Commissioner Horton stated that we should explain how the fees affect the budget. Commissioner Glass interjected we could publish a letter of explanation along with fire and ambulance frequently asked questions (FAQ's) posted on the Board of Commissioners website. Also, hardcopies could be made available at the Board of Commissioners' office and the Public Library.

Commissioner Horton made the motion to approve the fire and ambulance proposal. Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0.

XI. Public Comments

Stan Hambrick a local business owner thanked Commissioner Thrash for not adopting the budget as is and for stopping all other billing. He further thanked her for wanting to pay back the debt. He stated that he would like to see local's used for construction work and that he would like for travel expenses to be limited for the Board of Commissioners.

Rick Morrell of 123 Stafford Avenue spoke on behalf of former county employee Gretchen Ellerby. He is concerned about the negative press given to her as opposed to the former County Administrator that was terminated. He further stated that it is wrong to complain and along with youth in the community would like to help the county and stated that they would be attending future meetings.

Various citizens and commissioners thanked all who participated in the work caused by the winter storm the prior week. These areas included Chief Steve Andrews and the Fire Department, EMT, and the Public Works department. A round of applause from the commissioners and the citizens present was given to

James Rigdon for his many hours of devoted time and efforts. Commissioner Thrash also thanked EMA director, Billy Campbell for his hard work during the winter storm. Chairman Matthews also mentioned that he heard a reimbursement might be issued from the EMA to the county for the work done during the winter storm.

XIII. Presentation of Plaque

Vice-Chairman Horton welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Glass and presented former Commissioner George Brown with an engraved plaque in commemoration for serving as the Commissioner on behalf of District 2 over the past 8 years. Vice-Chairman Horton thanked him for his loyalty and service.

XII. Round Table

Commissioner Glass thanked everyone for their support. Commissioner Hearn stated that he would continue to work hard to meet the budget challenges. Commissioner Thrash welcomed Commissioner Glass and thanked Missy Kendrick for her hard work in bringing the new Power Plant to the county. Chairman Matthews also welcomed Commissioner Glass and stated that the new Power Plant would add to the tax base and create new jobs opportunities for the locals of the county.

XII. Adjournment and Executive Session

Chairman Matthews called for a motion to go into executive session to discuss litigation and personnel at approximately 7:52 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thrash and passed unanimously. The Chairman and the Commissioners returned from executive session and adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

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