

Lamar County Commissioners Meeting
July 27, 2010
6:30 P.M.

The Lamar County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Lamar, State of Georgia, held a commissioners meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2010. Present for the meeting were Chairman Jay Matthews, Vice-Chairman Bennie Horton, Commissioner George R. Brown, Commissioner Nancy M. Thrash, and Commissioner Jimmy Hearn. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jay Matthews.

The pledge of allegiance was said by everyone. The invocation was said by Mr. Clifford Barber.

Commissioner George R. Brown made a motion to amend the agenda to change the meeting night to the third Tuesday. Commissioner Bennie Horton seconded the motion. The motion was a unanimous decision. Commissioner George R. Brown made a motion to close the agenda with the amended motion. Commissioner Nancy M. Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous decision.

The public hearing began with the chairman stating that we need to find more revenues to meet the services for the county. The Commissioners need input from the citizens to talk to the Commissioners. The public hearing began with the names being called by County Administrator Wayne Patterson. The sign up sheet is herewith a part of these minutes. There was a lot of input from the citizens wanting to keep their services from being cut by the commissioners. These persons represented the UGA and 4-H, DFACS, Health and Human Services, and Three Rivers Commission Public Transportation. Some citizens represented themselves with concern about the taxes, downsizing the government, furlough days, going back to the buggy days with dirt roads like it used to be, transparency, decreasing the school board millage rate, and more budget cuts.

The Commissioners discussion began with Vice-Chairman Bennie Horton stating that he was not in favor of cutting services, but he is in favor of raising the millage rate by two mills to generate enough revenue to operate the county. Commissioner George R. Brown stated that he was not in favor of cutting services but, he is in favor of raising the millage rate by two mills because we are barely treading waters. The millage rate should have gone up

two or three years ago. Commissioner Jimmy Hearn stated that we have met with Department heads and Constitutional officers asking them to cut their budgets by ten percent and there is nothing else to cut. He said that he has received more phone calls in the last three days than he has in the last three years, and Lamar County has the lowest millage rate of all the surrounding counties. He is in favor of raising the millage rate because we need the services. Commissioner Nancy M. Thrash said that whenever the government is having trouble it always wants to reach in the taxpayers pockets and we need to cut everywhere we can. When asked by Chairman Matthews where else can we cut she mentioned that we have decided to increase the deductible and co pay, but is unaware of the savings that will bring to the county. There was a lot of discussion on raising the millage rate before the commissioners decided to put the millage rate increase to a motion.

Commissioner George R. Brown made a motion to increase the millage rate two mills from 8.942 to 10.942. Commissioner Bennie Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed with Vice-Chairman Bennie Horton, Commissioner George R. Brown, and Commissioner Jimmy Hearn in favor of the increase of two mills. Commissioner Nancy M. Thrash was opposed and voted no. Chairman Matthews wants the record to reflect that he is in support of raising the millage rate by two mills. This increase will cost the homeowner approximately \$80.00 if they live in a \$100,000.00 home, and will approximately generate \$941,126.81 in revenue to the county.

Chairman Matthews asked that all of the resolutions be delayed until the next commissioners meeting in August.

Commissioner Bennie Horton made a motion to approve a letter of credit in the amount of \$950,000 to meet expenses and payroll for the next three months.. Commissioner Jimmy Hearn seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous decision.

Commissioner George R. Brown made a motion to amend the commissioners meeting date to the third Tuesday of each month. Commissioner Nancy M. Thrash seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous decision. It was discussed that this date change needs to be an ordinance with a first and second reading.

Public Comments

Chairman Matthews stated that they have not met with the school board. Mrs. Kitchens was curious to ask if the other agencies that were on the chopping block will they still be cut. She was told that they will cut where they can without affecting the services.

Former Chairman Kent Kingsley questioned the deficit. He stated that it is not a revenue problem but a spending problem for us to have to borrow a line of credit. Vice Chairman Bennie Horton addressed his concern and stated that when he was chairman they borrowed a line of credit then to operate. The former chairman disagreed.

Former Chairman Bobby Burnette wanted to know if the sales taxes were being paid by everyone. This question was addressed to County Administrator Wayne Patterson. Mr. Patterson stated that he was not aware of where to check into this information. Mr. Burnette stated that it can be found under the Department of Community Affairs website. Mr Burnette also stated that when he was chairman they didn't have to borrow from a line of credit but one time and repaid it within thirty days. Chairman Matthews stated that when he came aboard the general fund account was overdrawn by \$200,000.00 and vendors were owed \$600,000.00 and that is borrowing from someone's back.

Mr. John Hamrick, Chairman of the Tax Assessors Board complimented the Commissioners with the job that they have to do and for trying to do what is right. He said that the Commissioners have the county's interest at heart. He said that he will start attending the school board meetings.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner George R. Brown made a motion at 8:35 p.m. for the meeting to adjourn. Commissioner Bennie Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous decision.

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

JAY MATTHEWS, CHAIRMAN

BENNIE HORTON, VICE-CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

WAYNE PATTERSON
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

GEORGE R. BROWN, MEMBER

JIMMY HEARN, MEMBER

NANCY M. THRASH, MEMBER