

**MINUTES**  
**MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**January 26, 2021**

**This meeting was held by Zoom due to COVID-19 for the public with Board Members and County Staff attending in Person**

Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy, Commissioner Shirley Hines, Commissioner Rosla Plant and Commissioner Beth Neely-Hadley  
Staff Present: County Administrator Theron Gay, Deputy County Clerk Allyson Stephens, Finance Director Bill Gregory, and County Attorney Michael Hill.  
Staff Absent: County Clerk Beverly Thomas

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Threadgill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.  
**INVOCATION** – Commissioner Neely-Hadley  
**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**II. ADOPT AGENDA**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Beth Neely-Hadley to adopt the Agenda and add under New Business - 5. Discuss Intergovernmental Agreement between Meriwether County and the City of Luthersville to perform building permitting for the City. 6. Accept the resignation of a member of the Board of Assessors with a term ending December 31, 2021. 7. Discuss removal of fees assessed in error on property owned by IDA on County Line Road. 8. Discuss the appointment of an IDA member. 9. Schedule work session in March for zoning discussion. All were in favor.

**III MINUTES**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to approve the Minutes of the January 13, 2021 Regular Meeting at 9:00 a.m. changing under Vice Chairman McCoy's comments that the entry to the covered bridge should be from 10ft in height to 9ft in height not width. All were in favor.

**IV. MUNICIPAL COMMENTS**

None

**V. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS COMMENTS**

None

**VI. DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

None

**VII. PUBLIC HEARING**

Case# 01-2021 – abandonment of a small section of County Line Road from SR 54 to Meriwether Park Drive. A motion was made to go into public hearing by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy at 6:04 p.m. All were in favor. Administrator Gay advised there is a small section of County Line Road about 590 linear ft that is not utilized and should have reverted back to the property owner when County Line Road was relocated. Administrator Gay states that the Board needs to determine if the .297-acre tract has ceased to serve a public purpose. He recommended abandonment and execution of a quit claim deed to the property owner. There were no public comments. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to go out of Public Hearing at 6:06 p.m. all were in favor. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to abandon the section of County Line Road and issue a Quit Claim Deed to Mac Reynolds. All were in favor.

Case# 02-2021 Discussion of allowable lot sizes in various zoning districts. A motion was made by Beth Neely-Hadley and seconded by Shirley Hines to go into Public Hearing at 6:07 p.m. All were in favor. Administrator Gay stated there would need to be discussion on the allowable lot sizes in the various zoning districts and if these regulations apply only to subdivision development. He stated there have been issues in the past where there were 55 homes built on a subdivision street off of a dirt road. Administrator Gay stated that decisions would need to be made on what the Board would want to allow as far as zoning districts. He stated road impact would have to be taken into account and we could look at previous regulations and compare to the current regulations. Commissioner Hines felt she needed to research the topic to become more informed. Commissioner Neely-Hadley would also like more time to research and would like to see drawings and maps. A motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Beth Neely-Hadley to go out of public hearing at 6:20 p.m. All were in Favor.

A motion was made by Beth Neely-Hadley and seconded by Rosla Plant to set up a Work Session on the allowable lot sizes in different zoning districts in March. All were in favor.

### **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Beth Neely-Hadley to table the District 3 appointment to the Planning Commissioner. All were in favor.
2. Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Shirley Hines to re-appoint Carolyn Ledbetter to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board for the City of Woodbury. All were in favor.
3. Motion was made by Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to table the appointment for District 4 to the Water and Sewerage Authority. All were in favor.

### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Placemaking Collaborative- Mrs. Carolyn McKinley with the Chamber of Commerce introduced Stephanie Russell and Cindy Ipson. Mrs. Russell is with the Georgia Municipal Association. She is the Manager of Economic Development. Mrs. McKinley advised this was an opportunity available to Meriwether County. Mrs. Cindy Ipson recommended Meriwether County to be the first county to benefit from the pilot program. This is a grass roots approach to Economic and Community Development with emphasis on inclusion and diversity according to Mrs. McKinley. All seven mayors have expressed interest in signing on to become a part of this program. Mrs. Russell explained the Placemaking Collaborative Program was started in 2018. According to Mrs. Russell this program provides the agencies with education and assistance on projects. Mrs. Russell stated there would be diverse teams and include all demographics. Teams will have a community representative makeup. According to Mrs. Russell they will focus on special projects. Mrs. McKinley stated that she would not want to do anything without the support of the Board. Commissioner Hines asked about any marketing costs. Mrs. Russell advised that there would be some costs for marketing but very minimal. As far as retreats and travel, per Mrs. Russell that has been limited due to COVID-19. A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to support the program and move forward. All were in favor.
2. Discussion of Lease vs. Purchase, of new copy machines- Finance Director, Bill Gregory stated there were at total of 8 copy machines that would be coming off lease in March. He advised they originally thought purchasing new ones would be better, however after looking at costs, he advised he would recommend a rollover to another 5-year continuance on the lease. Commissioner Neely-Hadley made a motion to continue with a 5-year lease. Vice Chairman McCoy seconded the motion. All were in favor.
3. Request to purchase equipment 8 SCBAs, 16 Air Bottles, 64 SCBA face pieces with 64 protective masks- Chief Alan Smith stated in order to get equipment for the Fire Department standardized and distributed throughout the county. Chief Smith explained that several of the SCBA's are expired and need to be replaced. He explained that 16 Air Bottles needed to be replaced and that there is only a 10-year life span. He explained that there are 160 bottles that are out of date and need to be surpluses. Chairman Threadgill asked Chief Smith how many full-time personnel were on staff. Chief Smith stated right now

there are 18 full-time fire fighters. He explained there were 22 cross-trained employees. Chief Smith advised the volunteer fire fighter count has increased to 98 members. Commissioner Hines wanted to know if there was a cycle that could be established to avoid having to purchase constantly. Commissioner Hines also mentioned the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant through FEMA. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Hines to purchase 8 SCBAs, 16 Air Bottles, 64 SCBA replacement face pieces with 64 protective masks using funds from SPLOST 2020 in the amount of \$81,248.80. All were in favor.

4. Request to purchase equipment required by GA Firefighter Standards and Training to equip the new first out pumper- Chief Smith stated that he is requesting \$71,251.92 to outfit the new pumper to GA Firefighter Standards. A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to approve \$71,2521.92 from 2020 SPLOST to outfit the pumper for certification. A second was made by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.

5. Intergovernmental Agreement between Meriwether County and the City of Luthersville for development plan review, permitting, and inspection services. Chairman Threadgill stated he had spoken with Mayor Cuttie from Luthersville and permitting needed to be included in the agreement and the County would accept fees for services according to the County Fee Schedule. A motion was made to accept the Intergovernmental Agreement by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Hines. All were in favor.

6. Accept resignation of Board of Assessors member with term ending 12-31-2021- Chairman Threadgill stated he received a letter of resignation from Debbie Nelson to resign from the Board of Assessors. This position is a County at Large position. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to accept the resignation All were in favor.

7. Discussion of removal of fees on property on County Line Road- Administrator Gay stated the IDA is selling property along the creek off County Line Road that is not marketable, except to the adjoining owners. The property is in the County's name and serves as an easement. The property should not be accruing taxes as it is an exempt County property. Administrator Gay requested a letter be sent to the Tax Commissioner to show this was in error and taxes should not have been assessed. A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to send a letter to the Tax Commissioner requesting a correction and removal of taxes and fees. This was seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.

8. Discussion of appointment to IDA Board- Chairman Threadgill stated it was brought to his attention there may have been an illegal vote from a seated commissioner. According to Chairman Threadgill a seated commissioner cannot motion or second a motion to appoint themselves to a board or authority. Attorney Michael Hill stated he would research and check into this. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to allow Glover & Davis to research the appointment and see it was done legally. All were in favor.

9. Schedule Work Session to discuss Zoning- A motion was made by Commissioner Neel-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to add scheduling a work session to the February or March agenda. All were in favor.

#### **X. REPORT FROM FINANCE DIRECTOR**

Finance Director Bill Gregory stated the bank balances and general fund were strong. He advised that per un-audited reports through 9-30-2020, we had a great year. He stated the county still had 75% of their budget remaining and we are exactly where we need to be at this time of year. Finance Director Gregory advised no funds had been received from the Tax Commissioner's office as of yet, but he was advised it would be soon.

#### **XI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Administrator Gay stated he had been involved in conducting personnel interviews. He stated that a COVID Liability Waiver Sign needed to be posted on all entrances of county buildings. Administrator Gay advised that he is aware of 6 economic development prospects and possibly another that he has been

advised that he is aware of 6 economic prospects and possibly another that he has been working with. He also advised he has been able to do a lot of catching up on day-to-day activities.

**XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Shirley Hines: None.

Commissioner Rosla Plant: None.

Commissioner Neely-Hadley: None.

Vice Chairman McCoy: Stated he is receiving the same complaints on dirt roads and also receiving calls regarding speeding on Luthersville Road. Vice Chairman McCoy stated he is going to attend a meeting regarding Luthersville Road as paving will soon start on the road it will need addressed.

Chairman Bryan Threadgill: Stated there was an issue with Red Oak Covered Bridge. He advised 2-3 beams were damaged from an oversized truck passing through. In response to this the bridge entrance was lowered. Chairman Threadgill stated after the bridge was lowered an additional 11 beams were broken. This was possibly due to vandalism. Chairman Threadgill stated as of now there are 13 damaged beams that need repair and the bridge has been closed to the public until repair. He advised this bridge is cherished in Meriwether County and needs to be preserved.

**XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

County Attorney Michael Hill had nothing to report but stated there was a need for executive session to discuss personnel and litigation.

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to go into Executive Session at 7:16 pm to discuss Personnel and Litigation. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to go out of Executive Session at 7:50 pm. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Shirley Hines to go back into Regular Session at 7:52 pm. All were in favor.

There was no action taken.

**XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES**

Chairman Threadgill announced future meetings.

**XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Rosla Plan and seconded by Beth Neely-Hadley to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 pm. All were in favor.

Approved by: *Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners*

Attest: *Allyson G. Stephens, Deputy Clerk*

Date: *February 10, 2021*