

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 22, 2022

This meeting was held in person and also by Zoom due to COVID-19

Commissioners Present: Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley, Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Commissioner Rosla Plant and Commissioner Alfred “Buster” McCoy

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Shirley Hines

Staff Present: County Administrator Michelle Irizarry, Deputy Clerk Allyson Stephens, and County Attorney Michael Hill

Staff Absent: County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director Bill Gregory, and Director of Special Projects Theron Gay

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION –Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – All

A motion was made to go into Executive Session to discuss Litigation at 6:01 p.m. by Vice Chairman Threadgill. This was seconded by Commissioner McCoy. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of Executive Session at 6:26 p.m. All were in favor. A motion was made to go back into Regular Session at 6:25 by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor. No action was taken in Executive Session.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to adopt the Agenda with the following change: Add under New Business 9. Set a Public Hearing for the Office of the Tax Commissioner to show cause for failure to produce documents as requested in the letter dated March 9, 2022. All were in favor.

V. REPORT FROM FINANCE DIRECTOR

County Administrator Michelle Irizarry presented the Finance Report in Finance Director, Bill Gregory’s absence. Administrator Irizarry stated that bank balances had been presented. Administrator Irizarry stated the Fire District O & M is down around approximately \$200,000 as well as the Fire Bond and has dropped significantly as this is all collections from property tax and last disbursement received for the Fire District or Fire Bond was December 30th of last year. Administrator Irizarry stated the rest of the bank balances look health for the time being, but there have been no estimated disbursements made for fire, there had been for property tax but not for fire. One other item, at the last meeting regarding RV expansion with Lake Meriwether, it was approved to move forward not to exceed \$30,000, however no funding source was identified. Administrator Irizarry stated staff would like to suggest funding from SPLOST as the project will pay for itself in two years, but a funding source needs to be identified. A motion was made to fund improvements at Lake Meriwether through the SPLOST funds by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill. All were in favor.

IV. CITIZEN COMMENT

None

VII. MINUTES

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to approve the Minutes of the March 9, 2022, 9:00 a.m. Meeting. All were in favor.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

None

IX. APPOINTMENTS

1. **Water and Sewerage, District 5 to fill an unexpired term that will end on 12-31-2024.**

Motion was made by Chairman Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to table the appointment to the Water and Sewerage Authority, District 5. All were in favor.

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request to allow Chairman to sign agreement with GDOT, CSX Railroad, and Meriwether County, PI# 0013960- CR285/Dan Stribling Road @ CSX #639372L 3.5 miles south of Gay related to future maintenance of bridge crossing.**

Administrator Irizarry stated this is an agreement for the department to pay 100% with an estimate of \$138,040 to replace a bridge along CR 285 Dan Stribling Road over the CSX transportation near the City of Woodbury, but the County needs to acknowledge by signing this they would be taking over the maintenance of the bridge crossing after the project construction is completed. A motion was made to approve the agreement by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill. All were in favor.

2. **Request to allow County Administrator to sign for Authorization for Repairs & Contract for Hire with Principle Restoration for the emergency water damage at the Meriwether County Health Department.**

Administrator Irizarry stated the as the Board is aware there was an emergency leak at the Health Department over the weekend and this agreement is to allow for remediation to begin and get water sources out and get it repaired. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to allow the County Administrator to sign for Authorization for Repairs and Contract for Hire with Principle Restoration. All were in favor.

3. **Request to allow Chairman to sign IdentityWorks Products and Services Form.**

Administrator Irizarry stated this agreement is related to the Cyber Attack in January and this is to notify any with triggering information. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to allow the Chair to sign the IdentityWorks Products and Services Form. All were in favor.

4. **Request to allow Chairman to sign MOU with Evidence Based Associates-Renewal**

Administrator Irizarry stated this is a renewal and was reviewed by legal, A change was made, and a new copy was provided. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to allow the Chair to sign the MOU with Evidence Based Associates. All were in favor.

5. Set Public Hearing for Zoning Case 2022-001 April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Carmen Diamond is requesting modifications to conditions placed on her business where property 26353 Roosevelt Highway, Luthersville was rezoned June 27, 2017, to LDR with a special use to allow Hobby Breeding of Dogs.

Chairman Neely-Hadley noted that different districts are mentioned and with redistricting there could be changes. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to set a Public Hearing for April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. for Case# 2022-001 Carmen Diamond as she is requesting modifications to conditions placed on her business where property 26353 Roosevelt Highway, Luthersville, GA was rezoned June 27, 2017, to LDR with a special use to allow Hobby Breeding of Dogs. All were in favor.

6. Set Public Hearing for Zoning Case 2022-002 April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Harmoni Towers, LLC is requesting zoning approval for construction of a new telecommunications compound at 4578 Imlac Road, Woodbury, GA on property owned by Cherri E. Powers and Elaine S. Powers.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to set a Public Hearing for April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. for Case# 2022-002 Harmoni Towers, LLC requesting zoning approval for construction of a new telecommunications compound at 4578 Imlac Road, Woodbury, GA on property owned by Cherri E. Powers and Elaine S. Powers. All were in favor.

7. Set Public Hearing for Zoning Case 2022-003 April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Steven Reynolds, on behalf of Joan Bowden Henry, requesting a conditional zoning to allow the use of an existing building for a retail firearms and repair shop at 27950 Roosevelt Highway, Luthersville, GA.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to set a Public Hearing for April 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. for Case# 2022-003 as Steven Reynolds, on behalf of Joan Bowden Henry is requesting conditional zoning to allow the use of an existing building for a retail firearms and repair shop at 27950 Roosevelt Highway, Luthersville GA. All were in favor.

8. Request from Reesa L. Clay to relocate pre-owned manufactured home to Meriwether County.

Administrator Irizarry stated that Ms. Reesa Clay is requesting to move a pre-owned manufactured home to her property. Ms. Clay's property meets the criteria of a manufactured home, however, Meriwether County Ordinances state that the home cannot be over 10-years of age. The home Ms. Clay is looking to purchase is 11-years old and was a custom build to meet ADA standards which Ms. Clay will need for a family member and home appears to be refurbished and is reported to be in excellent condition. Administrator Irizarry stated that staff recommendation is to allow relocation of the home after inspection of our Building officials to confirm the conditions. There are pictures included in your packet. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that this is in his district, and he makes a motion to accept the recommendation to allow the relocation after inspection of County personnel. Commissioner McCoy seconded the motion. All were in favor.

9. Set a Public Hearing for the Office of the Tax Commissioner to show cause for failure to produce documents as requested in the letter dated March 9, 2022.

A motion was made to set a Public Hearing for the Office of the Tax Commissioner to show cause for failure to produce documents as requested by the Board for Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy. All were in favor. Chairman Neely-Hadley advised staff to take care of the notification to the Tax Commissioner regarding the meeting.

XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Irizarry reported Harris County had graciously offered a free mobile rabies clinic to citizens on Saturdays with dates to be determined in coordination with local vets being closed on the Saturdays. The mobile clinic would like to set up in three locations: DFACS building in Greenville, Luthersville Elementary in Luthersville, and George E. Washington Elementary in Woodbury. This will be free to Meriwether County residents and will include free rabies, parvo, and distemper vaccinations as well as microchipping. No opposition from the Board and okay to proceed. Public Works is making repairs on Betty Dunn bridge and the bridge is closed. Administrator Irizarry stated that repairs are being done based on the bridge repair manual and will have to be approved by GDOT before reopening. Cane Creek Bridge is closed, and crews are investigating the cause and what repairs will need to be made. LMIG is in the process for Administration to complete and being put together to go out to bid and cities will be reached out to for interest in placing their projects on the bid. Administrator Irizarry stated that Brin Jones with Emergency Management had sent out information on tomorrow's weather. School has been moved to virtual as a cold front is moving in bringing the potential for strong storms all across Georgia. The storm prediction center has Georgia under a slight risk level 2 out of 5 for damaging winds and possible tornados if any severe storms between Wednesday morning through Wednesday Evening. The Manchester-Meriwether County Recreation Department will be hosting a Community Market on May 7th and May 8th and they are looking for vendors, a handout was provided. Administrator Irizarry stated that the bids came in from Water and Sewer at \$379,000 and if the Board recalls, staff came in and wanted to split that thinking it would be \$300,000, which is down from the original \$750,000, but the bids did come in higher than anticipated. As more information is obtained it will come before the Board to find additional funding needed. On the 2021 LMIG the surface treatment was bad, and this has been addressed with Piedmont Paving as it was a subcontractor. Administrator Irizarry stated this will be corrected when temperatures are consistently warmer during May or June and includes 6 to 8 roads. Administrator Irizarry stated there are I- beams where the White Oak Covered bridge was that are 3ft in width and 90ft in length that were obtained from GDOT and would like permission from the Board to surplus those and be bid out. A motion was made by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to allow the beams to be surpluses and bid out. All were in favor. Administrator Irizarry stated that building permits were up and looking forward to an exciting year ahead.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hines – Absent.

Commissioner Plant – reported that this weekend there will be an open house at High Cotton Antiques in Woodbury, along with the one-year anniversary of Resurrect Antiques and encouraged everyone to come out and support the vendors. Commissioner Plant stated she was part of a group that met recently in discussing getting back on track the AG fair project that was under previous administration and right now they are waiting to see what the general plan will be moving forward and is encouraging.

Commissioner McCoy – reported on events with the Recreation Department. He stated that opening day for baseball and softball will be on April 11, 2022, in Manchester. Commissioner McCoy stated that on April 9, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. Old School Wrestling will be at the Woodbury gym and is fun. Commissioner McCoy stated the gate at Lake Meriwether is back up and functioning with the large stop signs and he will get back with the County Administrator on the cameras. Commissioner McCoy stated the bathroom floors were repainted and it looks very nice. Regarding the RV expansion they are moving on the septic systems. He advised one will need to be done for the bath and one for the dump station with the only difference being the septic system for the dump station will only need about 200 ft of drain field and once all together progress will continue.

Vice Chairman Threadgill- No report at this time.

Chairman Neely-Hadley- reported that April 9th and April 10th is the Spring Fling in Warm Springs and is a big event for the merchants there. There is new construction going on at the site of the old Bulloch House in Warm Springs that has been a topic of conversation. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that someone from outside the area has purchased the property and will be building an event venue. She stated with all the rain there have been many road concerns and bridges and a lot of extra work and Costs to the county and hope they are on their way to being repaired.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

Attorney Michael Hill stated there was a need for Executive Session to discuss Litigation, Personnel, and Tax matters.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go into Executive Session at 6:46 p.m. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to go out of at 7:24 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to go back into Regular Session at 7:26 p.m. No action was taken in Executive Session.

XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Neely-Hadley announced Future Meetings and Notices prior to Executive Session.
Special Called Meeting March 29, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting April 13, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting April 26, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to adjourn at 7:26 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Meriwether County Board of Commissioners

Attest: Allyson L. Stephens

Date: April 13, 2022