

**MINUTES**  
**MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**July 26, 2022**

**6:00 P.M.**

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

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Commissioners Present: Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley, Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Commissioner Shirley Hines, Commissioner Rosla Plant and Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy

Staff Present: County Administrator Michelle Irizarry (attended via Zoom), County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director Bill Gregory, Attorney Michael Hill

Staff Absent: Director of Special Projects Theron Gay

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Beth-Neely Hadley

**II. INVOCATION**

Chairman Beth-Neely Hadley

**III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

All

**IV. ADOPT AGENDA**

Commissioner Hines asked the Board to add discussion of Coyote Circle to the Agenda under New Business. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to adopt the Agenda with the following addition under New Business 6. Discussion of Coyote Circle. All were in favor.

**V. FINANCE REPORT**

Finance Director, Bill Gregory, stated the General Fund was down \$3M, which is typical this time of year, and there are two more months remaining in this fiscal year. The County should receive the State Insurance money around October 15, 2022. The County is expecting to receive \$900K. We received the second tranche from the US Treasury on ARP.

**VI. CITIZEN COMMENT**

None

**VII. MINUTES**

Motion was made by Shirley Hines and seconded by Rosla Plant to approve the Minutes from the July 13, 2022, 9:00 a.m. Regular Meeting. Voting in favor were Shirley Hines, Rosla Plant, Chairman Neely-Hadley, and Alfred McCoy. Vice Chairman Threadgill abstained.

**VIII. PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**IX. APPOINTMENTS**

1. Motion was made by Chairman Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to table the appointment to the Library Board. All were in favor.

**X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Public Transportation Service Agreement between Three Rivers and Meriwether County**

Administrator Irizarry stated last year this was up to \$11K and this year it has substantially increased to \$25,900. They did supplement a lot with ARP funds. Ridership was down due to COVID. Another reason for the increase is the retention of employees, and fuel prices. Mr. Gregory stated in the past 4-5 years we have not had to pay any additional cost. There is a chance we will not have to pay anything but a chance we may have to pay between \$0 and \$25,900K.

Tommy Kennedy, Three Rivers Regional Commission Transit Program Director, provided information regarding the new Public Transportation Service Agreement between Three Rivers and Meriwether County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Kennedy stated the language in the contract is the same as last year, but there is a difference in the dollar amount. The cost has not increased in several years and the new cost will be \$25,900K. The last two years Three Rivers has put the dollar amount in the contract but has not needed to collect. Three Rivers is looking to obtain money from other sources. Three Rivers reviewed each County and their usage then divided up the cost according to usage. All of the Counties were re-balanced. The County's maximum amount would be \$25,900 and would not go over that amount. Three Rivers is looking for other funding and looking at the DHS contracts. Because of COVID funding received during the last two years, they did not ask for any additional funds. Most of the citizens in Meriwether County use the transportation system to transport from Senior Centers, Disability Centers and typically transport within Meriwether County although they occasionally make trips outside the County. A lot of seniors use the transportation service to get to medical appointments, shopping, work, etc. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Shirley Hines to approve the Section 5311 Public Transportation Service Agreement with Three Rivers Regional Transit System and allow the Chairman to sign. All were in favor. The Agreement will terminate on June 30, 2023 unless terminated earlier under other provisions of this Agreement.

**2. Set Public Hearing for a Rezoning matter**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Rosla Plant to set a Public Hearing for August 23, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. to hear a Special Use Request for an RV Park. All were in favor. The proposed RV Park would be located at the end of Macedonia Road and have approximately 150 spaces. The Planning Commission will hear the request on August 8, 2022.

**3. County supplement for Superior Court Judges**

Bill Gregory, Finance Director, stated the County currently supplements the Superior Court Judges in our County with \$264 per month. In accordance with House Bill 1444, the County's portion has increased to \$291.67 per month effective July 1, 2022. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Rosla Plant to accept the County supplement as dictated by the State for our Superior Court Judges. All were in favor.

**4. Health Department Moisture Test Results and Recommendation**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to table the Health Department Moisture Test Results and Recommendations until the next meeting. All were in favor.

**5. VCS-Tax Web Upgrade proposal from Aumentum**

Bill Gregory, Finance Director, stated the Meriwether County Tax Commissioners Office has their software system through Manatron which is owned by Harris. It has not been upgraded in ten years and it is believed to be the old DOS base. Deann Cruse, Tax Commissioner, has asked to allow an upgrade for a one-time amount of \$14,352. There is an annual fee for maintenance that comes with this but they are already paying that so we will not have to increase the budget for that. The second option that Harris gave was to host the server. After speaking with Skip Richmond, IT Director, we can do that, and we feel like we are as secure as the cloud would be and if we host the server ourselves we will save a \$4K one-time fee. Skip Richmond, IT Director stated he will be presenting servers in a few weeks, and we are as secure as we can get. Staying in house takes more of the target off of use because we are not in the cloud at some big company. Mr. Gregory recommended the upgrade at a one-time cost of \$14,352 and to fund through SPLOST. Tax Commissioner Cruse stated this is the program they use now, and it is the best one for her office. She spoke with Windgap and the cost for their service is a lot more. Windgap is only offering 7 years of back data and she would have to pay extra for any additional data that is needed. Tax Commissioner Cruse reported staying with VCS/Aumentum would be the best solution. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Shirley Hines to allow a one-time upgrade of \$14,352 and use SPLOST funds. All were in favor.

**6. Discussion of Coyote Circle**

Commissioner Hines stated she had discussed Coyote Circle with the Board before, and after looking at the road again it needs to be resurfaced this year. Hawks Nest Drive, which is down the road from Coyote Circle, is scheduled to be resurfaced this year. There had been discussion about Forrest Road and taking Weaver Parks Road and King Road off to do Forrest Road. Following that discussion, we realized in doing that we still would not have enough money to do the 3-section patching and would have to add an additional \$50K to cover that. Commissioner Hines stated previously, during Bill's discussion, we asked if there was money available in SPLOST or TSPLOST. He said there was funding for that. Commissioner Hines wanted to take care of Coyote Circle, since we were willing

to do that part of Forrest Road and since we have taken that road off. The condition of the road is unsafe, and it has literally gone back to dirt. Motion was made by Shirley Hines to request a change order to resurface Coyote Circle this year when Piedmont Paving is doing Hawks Nest Drive. Chairman Neely-Hadley seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked if this was for resurfacing or a full depth reclamation. Commissioner Hines stated when Bill Cawthorne gave the Board a briefing at the last meeting he said it was a full depth reclamation. Commissioner Hines stated this is a very short road and he said it would cost \$48K for the full depth reclamation. Commissioner McCoy asked if this was a rider on the current LMIG and Chairman Neely-Hadley stated it was on the current LMIG and we had said we would move that amount when we were talking about Forrest Road since we are doing something different with that road. We will go for the emergency funds for Forrest Road. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated when he spoke to Bill Cawthorne today, one reason Hawks Nest Drive has not been done was because with it being a full depth reclamation, there is a one truck load dedicated amount of materials available per day, and they needed three truck loads in one day to do the full depth so we may run into the same situation here. Commissioner Hines stated even if that were the case, she would still like to have it on there.

Commissioner Hines then asked County Attorney Michael Hill if a Board votes on something and you go into the next year with another Board, is the new Board obligated to do what the previous Board voted on? Attorney Hill stated in most cases the Board is not obligated. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated the current Board can always come back in a few weeks if they wanted to and change it. Commissioner Hines stated she just wanted to make sure of this because in the discussion last week we said wait to do Coyote Circle when we get ready to do Beulah Evans Road. We were hoping to start Beulah Evans Road this year but still don't have all the signatures. That may be another year or longer. If it costs \$48K this year it will cost more next year due to the condition of the road. Commissioner Hines again stated she was concerned of safety and the school buses. If we were willing to put \$50K toward Forrest Road, it is the same amount if we are able to go ahead with Coyote Circle this year. This is not taking away from anything we already have and is just an add on.

Commissioner Plant rode out to see the road yesterday and had not been down Beulah Evans Road in a while. When your turn on Coyote Circle there is one house and many lots for sale, Quail Drive has 14 houses and a mailbox. From Quail Drive you turn onto Rocker Road and there are 11 houses. All of those streets are in similar condition and all date back to when the subdivision was started. Commissioner Plant stated in her opinion, Coyote Circle is not worse than Quail Drive or Rocker Road and they needed to be addressed as well. If we are trying to address that with Beulah Evans on a paving list, why not wait because of the same section of road on Coyote Circle. Marcelle Womack provided the length of Coyote Circle at 640'. There is one house on Coyote Circle and Commissioner Plant was disturbed that Commissioner Hines stated there are over 200 homes in this subdivision which there are not, and a statement was made by Commissioner Hines that she was not aware of the LMIG list that included Weaver Parks Road. Weaver Parks has been on LMIG since November 10, 2021. Had there been a problem, it should have been addressed when the LMIG was submitted. Commissioner Plant stated it was very offensive to her that statements are being made that it is personal when a business decision is made and that it was put on social media. The things that are

being said is very unfair to the Board members. Commissioner Plant asked Ms. Womack how many of the lots did she have listed for sale. Ms. Womack replied that she did not have any for sale. Commissioner Plant stated she had been told Ms. Womack had lots for sale and wanted to make sure for the record. Ms. Womack stated there are two lots on Coyote Circle for sale by Mr. Hall who is with a different real estate company than the one Ms. Womack is with. Commissioner Plant thanked Ms. Womack for providing that information and did not want to cast any disparity on anyone because of a financial decision that was made. The LMIG list was submitted in November and there was plenty of time to make changes on LMIG. Ms. Womack stated she has not said anything negative on social media and can show the Board the project page for Beulah Evans Road. There has not been one thing that she put on social media that was negative and has said thank you for everything that the Board is doing. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated he knew Ms. Womack had not said anything negative and knows she does not have any lots out there for sale.

Commissioner Hines stated that she was making sure that data and quotes were correct. That entire subdivision has approximately 200 people then stated she would count every house if needed. Commissioner Hines stated her main concern right now is Coyote Circle really does need this and is in really bad shape. The Board had decided to use \$50K toward Forrest Road, and she was not asking for anything any different than they were willing to do for Forrest Road and is just asking for this road. Yes, all the roads in that area need to be taken care of. All of them are bad and this one is in the worst shape. Commissioner Hines understands that Weaver Parks Road has already been surfaced, we stated earlier there is one house on that road. When you turn off it goes into Beaver Lake Road where there were approximately six homes, and it goes into a dirt road. On the dirt road there are three to four homes on one side and maybe four homes on the other side and that runs into Mt. Carmel Road, and it is on a dirt road. Either way, all the roads in Meriwether County needs to be resurfaced and taken care of. Commissioner Hines stated the majority of the questions and concerns she receives from citizens are about their roads. A road to Commissioner Hines is safety. Coyote Circle, even though, Quail Drive and Rocker Road also need it, that section of the road is going to cost us more later on. If we are doing things for economic purposes, that road should definitely be done this year when they do Hawks Nest Drive.

Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she was not for changing the LMIG because everyone had voted on that, and it was being done. The Board had agreed to add the \$50K and does not have any problem with doing that as long as it was not taking away from something else that had already been voted on for LMIG. Weaver Parks had already been resurfaced and that is an amount the Board had agreed to do.

Vice Chairman Threadgill asked which roads were connected to Coyote Circle.

Commissioner Hines stated they are paved put are in bad shape too. To get there you must go to Beulah Evans, a dirt road, and turn onto Coyote Circle to get to Quail Drive and Rocker Road. You have to get on Coyote Circle to get to those roads. A few years ago, the Board closed Acer Road so most people have to go to Beulah Evans Road or Barron Road. Those are the only other options to go in and out. The section where Beulah Evans Road and Barron Road has gotten so bad it is holding water because of the ditches and that is where the school buses come in. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated they are all there on Beulah Evans Road and she feels once the County does Beulah Evans Road, the

other roads will probably be done. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated if we do Coyote Circle off of a dirt road, that we are going to pave once everything is in place, then we have two other roads inside that are in as bad of shape as Coyote Circle. Commissioner Hines stated they are not in as bad shape as Coyote Circle, and we would get one done before it costs anymore. If we are doing this based on economics and it is going to cost \$48K now, and with the condition of the road, a year from now it will probably cost more than that and for safety reasons the road is in bad shape. The road is 640' in length and is the shortest road that we would have to do a full depth reclamation. Voting in favor was Shirley Hines, Chairman Neely-Hadley, and Alfred McCoy. Those opposed were Rosla Plant and Vice Chairman Threadgill. The motion passed.

## **XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Administrator Irizarry reminded everyone, that during our last meeting, in relation to number 4, under New Business, there was a change order for the Health Department for repairs, and restoration that was approved up to \$20K. We need to identify a funding source for the record. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated the Board had approved up to \$25K and that would be coming through the General Fund. Mr. Gregory stated if there are any other change orders we can pay from the General Fund and wait until October for payments. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Shirley Hines to use the General Fund as the funding source. All were in favor.

Mr. Gregory stated the Board had not designated a funding source for Coyote Road. There was discussion of what funding source was previously discussed and what funds would have been used for Forrest Road. Motion was made by Shirley Hines to use the same funding source that was first designated for Forest Road for Coyote Circle. Mr. Gregory stated the Board needs to state if it will be SPLOST or T-SPLOST. Mr. Gregory felt that Bill Cawthorne and Theron Gay's recommendation was a combination of those two SPLOST accounts. Mr. Gregory asked the Board to designate SPLOST as the funding source. Commissioner Hines amended her motion to use SPLOST funds as the funding source for Coyote Circle. Chairman Neely-Hadley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Administrator Irizarry stated on the LMIG 2022, we had worked the following roads: McClain Road, John B. Alford Road, Hugley Road, Lake Meriwether Dam, Weaver Parks Road, and King Road. They have been resurfaced but not yet striped. The two remaining roads are Hawks Nest Road and Luthersville Road. They will not be started until late summer due to the cement shortage and only being able to get one truck of cement at a time. This will push back Coyote Circle since it is also a full depth reclamation.

Regarding the LMIG from 2021, Epps Brothers, the subcontractor, is on Imlac Road today. That will leave Fowler Street, Gold Street, Graham Road, Summer Lane, Spring Street, Lake Drive and Timber Ridge Road to complete. These roads will need to be striped. Commissioner Hines asked when Joshua Lane would be striped. It has been resurfaced but not striped. Administrator Irizarry will look into that.

ACCG met with Judge Rasnick, Valerie Chambers, HR Director, and the ACCG Intern that served in the Probate Office. The interviews and evaluation went well.

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Back to School Bash is scheduled for July 30, 2022 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. This will be held at Manchester Middle School and Greenville Middle School. There will be free school supplies, food, family activities, family resources and more.

### **XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**Commissioner Hines** – The Enrichment Service that is based out of Columbus is bringing the Pre-K program to Meriwether County and Luthersville. They were here this past Saturday for enrollment. They are also looking to hire teachers here in Meriwether County. They hired three people on the spot while here.

**Commissioner Plant** – nothing at this time

**Chairman Neely-Hadley** – There was a Special Called Meeting today at 4:00. The County and Cities came together in agreement with the renegotiation of the Local Option Sales Tax. That is something that has to be done every ten-years. Many Counties are having to go to mediation and there is a shortage of mediators to do this. Chairman Neely-Hadley was thankful to the people who represented the Cities and to Mr. Gay and all others who brought this together. It will go before Manchester City Council on August 8<sup>th</sup> and before our Board on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Vice Chairman Threadgill** – nothing at this time

**Commissioner McCoy** – nothing at this time.

### **XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

Stated an Executive Session was not needed.

### **XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

### **XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES**

Future Meetings and Notices were announced from the Agenda.

### **XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Alfred McCoy to adjourn at 6:38 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

Attest: Benedict Thomas, County Clerk

Date: August 10, 2022