

**MINUTES**  
**MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**August 9, 2023**  
**9:00 A.M.**

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Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Gene King, Commissioner Rosla Plant, and Commissioner Emmett Collins

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Adam Worsley

Staff Present: Interim County Administrator Theron Gay, County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Directors Bill Gregory and John Gorton, and County Attorney Nathan Lee

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bryan Threadgill called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**II. INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by Bill Gregory, Finance Director.

**III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

All

**IV. ADOPT AGENDA**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Rosla Plant to adopt the Agenda with the following changes. Remove under New Business: 7. Request for approval of contract with Civic Plus Agenda and Management System for County Administrative Office. All were in favor.

Following Executive Session, the Board added to the Agenda under New Business 7. Order and Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Meriwether County, Georgia

**V. PRESENTATIONS**

1. Chairman Threadgill and the Board confirmed the Proclamation recognizing Kentavious Caldwell-Pope, National Sports Hero from Meriwether County. A parade was held on Saturday in Greenville to recognize Mr. Caldwell-Pope.

2. Chairman Threadgill read the Proclamation to honor Ms. Maggie Norris on her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Ms. Norris was not able to attend the meeting. Vice Chairman King stated he will deliver the Proclamation to Ms. Norris and will also take a picture of Ms. Norris holding the Proclamation for the Newspaper.

3. Chairman Threadgill read the Proclamation to honor Ms. Georgia Lee Colton Snelling on her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Ms. Snelling was present at the meeting along with many of her family members. Pictures were taken and will be sent to the Newspaper.

**VI. FINANCE REPORT**

Finance Director, Bill Gregory, introduced John Gorton. Mr. Gorton started work on Monday and will serve as the Finance Director following the retirement of Bill Gregory. Everyone welcomed Mr. Gorton. Finance Director Gregory reported the General Fund was still strong and the Host Fees, Tipping Fees, LOST, SPLOST and TSPLOST current information could be found at the bottom of the Bank Balance report.

Ashley Harmon, from the Meriwether County Extension Office, introduced Jonathan Strickland. Mr. Strickland is the new County Agent and is a graduate of ABAC. He has a background in horticulture. The Board welcomed Mr. Strickland to Meriwether County.

## **VII. CITIZEN COMMENT**

1. John McFarland stated he was a resident of Meriwether County and that he had purchased a home that is 1.5 miles from the home where his mother was born and raised. Mr. McFarland lived and worked in Atlanta for 30 years. He also served 4 years in the Armed Services which took him to Asia. Later, Mr. McFarland moved to Meriwether County where he worked at Public Works for 3-years before retiring again. Mr. McFarland called Vice Chairman King and asked him to check on Bill Todd Road. Two days later a motor grader showed up and Public Works worked the road. Mr. McFarland reported they did an excellent job. Mr. McFarland stated he knows the weather has not been the best and stated the County and Country needs folks like this Board in higher offices. Vice Chairman King stated it is the workmanship of the entire Board and is a team effort. A voicemail was left for Public Works and Barry Lucas regarding this. Mr. McFarland stated he appreciates what Public Works is doing.

2. Marcel Womack, stated she was here with her husband, Mike. They have been residents of Meriwether County for over a decade and have met many people throughout the County. They are located in the heart of the Beulah Evans Road Project. Ms. Womack started a process 2.5 years ago to get Beulah Evans Road paved which has not been easy. It was a long and tedious process. Ms. Womack thanked former and present Board members along with Administration and all who assisted with this project.

3. Sue Ann Reid, Mt. Pilgrim Road, was not present but provided a letter to the Board which Chairman Threadgill read aloud. Ms. Reid was concerned that loggers had caused damage to Mt. Pilgrim Road after it had been paved. The County will look into this and look into having them pay for the repairs. Ms. Reid was also concerned about speeding cars on the road.

## **VIII. MINUTES**

1. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King to approve the Minutes of the July 12, 2023, 9:00 a.m. Regular Meeting. All were in favor.

2. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to approve the Minutes from the July 13, 2023, 4:00 p.m. Work Session. All were in favor.

## **IX. PUBLIC HEARING**

None

## **X. APPOINTMENTS**

1. Motion was made by Adam Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King to appoint Chairman Bryan Threadgill to the Region Six Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities Board. All were in favor. The current term expires on 6-30-2023 and is a three-year term.

2. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Adam Worsley to table the appointment to CAFI to fill an unexpired term. All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Emmett Collins and seconded by Chairman Threadgill to table the appointment to the Airport Authority, District 3. All were in favor.

## **XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## **XII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Will Derzis, Senior Manager from Mauldin & Jenkins reviewed the Meriwether County Annual Financial Report for the year ending September 30, 2022. This included a 30-page Auditor's Discussion and Analysis Financial & Compliance Audit Summary. Mr. Derzis reviewed the purpose of the Auditor's Discussion & Analysis, Government practice, read the names of the team members for the Audit, touched on the responsibilities that are expressed based on the Audit and stated they did not audit the financial statements of the MC Board of Health (a component unit of MC). Those financial statements were audited by another auditor whose report was furnished to Maulden Jenkins.

Mr. Derzis stated the County's basic financial statements include three components:

1) Government-wide financial statements, 2) Fund financial statements, and 3) Notes to the financial statements. Mr. Derzis reviewed each component. The total assets were approximately \$39,037,000 offset by liabilities of approximately \$5,493,000. The net position was approximately \$33,544,000 with about half invested in County assets.

The primary interest to the County is the General Fund which accounts for the majority of revenues received and funds expended in the operations of the County. General Fund resources for 2022 were made of Taxes- 71%, Licenses & permits- 2%, Fines and forfeitures- 4%, Charges and services- 8%, and Interest- <1%. The total General Fund revenues for the FY ending September 30, 2022 were approximately \$17,999,000. The revenues of the prior year were approximately \$17,173,000. General Fund Expenditures for 2022 were General Government- 27%, Judicial- 9%, Public Safety- 34%, Public Works- 21%, Health & Welfare- 2%, Culture & Recreation- 2%, Debt Service- 1%, Capital outlay- 1%, and Housing & Development- 3%. The County also maintains eight special revenue funds, 3 capital projects funds, and 1 governmental-type blended component unit, the Airport Authority.

The County maintains five custodial funds: the Tax Commissioner, Sheriff, Clerk of Courts, Probate Court, and Magistrate Court. Footnotes were listed and reviewed regarding the Fiduciary Funds.

The financial report package contains two compliance reports which are the Yellow Book Report and the Single Audit Report. Both were reviewed. There were no issues encountered and no difficulties with management relating to the performance of the audit. During the Audit of the County's basic financial statements as of and for the year ending September 30, 2022, there were adjusting journal entries that were posted to the County's funds. There were no passed adjustments or protentional incidents reported.

Mr. Derzis then touched on the items cited in the County's Financial Statements as Material Weaknesses which included the Segregation of Duties for the County, Water & Sewerage Authority, and Industrial Development Authority and the General Accounting Matters/Close out Procedures. The recommendations for improvements were minor and didn't rise as findings or deficiencies.

Mr. Derzis communicated the New Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Pronouncements. At the end of the report Mr. Derzis advised the County of the other services offered by Mauldin and Jenkins.

Chairman Threadgill thanked Mr. Derzis and staff and confirmed this was an overall good audit. There are some items to improve upon and recommendations were made available in the information provided in the audit package.

2. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Emmett Collins to set a Special Called meeting on August 11, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of interviewing for a County Administrator All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to set a Public Hearing for August 22, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. to set the 2023 Millage Rate. All were in favor.

4. Interim Administrator, Theron Gay, stated setting a date for the Board of Commissioners to hear the Public Hearings will allow the Building, Zoning and Community Development Department to advertise consistently since we have changed the Planning Commission Meeting to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. Motion was made by Emmett Collins and seconded by Vice Chairman Gene King to designate the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month as the day for conducting Public Hearings by the Board of Commissioners. All were in favor.

5. Interim Administrator, Theron Gay, stated the County sent out RFPs for plumbing repairs at the Jail and held a mandatory pre-bid meeting. No one showed up for the mandatory pre-bid meeting. Interim Administrator Gay asked the Board to move from an RFP and identify a few vendors, negotiate, and bring this back before the Board of Commissioners. Interim Administrator Gay and Bill Cawthorne will negotiate with qualified plumbers. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Emmett Collins to allow Theron Gay and Bill Cawthorne to identify a few vendors for plumbing, negotiate and bring back before the Board. All were in favor.

6. Deann Cruse, Tax Commissioner met with Greenville Mayor, Charlene Glover regarding the collection of taxes for the City of Greenville. Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Greenville, Meriwether County, and the Meriwether County Tax Commissioner regarding the Property Tax Collections. All were in favor.

7. *Following Executive Session, motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to add to the Agenda under New Business 7. Order and Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Meriwether County, Georgia. All were in favor.*

*Chairman Threadgill read an Order and Resolution in regard to a condemnation of a property in association with Beulah Evans Road improvement. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Emmett Collins to allow the Chairman to sign the Order and Resolution as stated. All were in favor.*

### **XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Interim Administrator, Theron Gay met with the Recreation Group in Luthersville, participated in the interview for Finance Director, met with Hogansville regarding Water & Sewer, had a second meeting with the City of Hogansville and Waste Management, met to look at an ambulance remount, met with the Election Board at the Pathways Building to review office space, attended the bid opening at Water & Sewer, attended the Water & Sewer meeting, met with an Engineer and Chairman of the Airport Authority about future projects, met with Department Heads and Constitutional Officers to discuss attracting applicants and personnel retentions (a report will be brought back before the Board), met with Sheriff Smith about office space, conducted a personnel hearing, met with engineers for a new Recreation Park on McLaughlin Road (will bring back a presentation to the Board), had a conference call with the

IDA regarding industrial projects, and wrote two RFP's for Water and Sewer professional services.

#### **XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Vice Chairman Gene King: addressed a situation of bicyclists riding on the roads and highways. Vice Chairman King stated bicyclists were welcome in Meriwether County but his concern was many of the bicyclists were not yielding or moving over for large trucks, cars or for trucks hauling livestock on the road especially in curves and areas with little vision. Many bicycle groups spread out across the entire side of the road which is very dangerous. This could cause a fatal accident when livestock haulers to have to slam on brakes which in turn could cause the livestock to fall or the bicyclist could be hit. Interim Administrator Gay stated this is a problem in other Counties as well. Some areas have signs that say, "Share the Road" and many times bicyclists don't share the road which has caused incidents of injury. Vice Chairman King wanted bicyclists to respect the road and move aside.

Vice Chairman King thanked the staff for their work.

Commissioner Emmett Collins: thanked the staff for doing a good job. Commissioner Collins thanked Sheriff Smith for helping on Coleman Creek Circle and wished that GDOT would provide more help on this road.

Commissioner Rosla Plant: stated her home, here in Greenville, was struck by lightning and burned on July 30<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Plant stated between E-911, the Fire Department, and everyone, it had been very humbling. Commissioner Plant stated Meriwether County has stood by and been there for her and her family on a very personal level. Commissioner Plant thanked everyone and said there was no way to repay everyone for what they had done. This not only included the willingness of the staff but also the willingness of the unpaid volunteers. Chairman Threadgill stated all were sorry for her loss.

Chairman Bryan Threadgill: reported he had received a call about a speeding issue on a hidden driveway on Cove Road and Pebble Brook Road. There continues to be a speeding issue for 10.3 miles on the Cove Road which is a very curvy road. Chairman Threadgill gave a description of the areas of concern on Pebble Brook Road and Cove Road. Some citizens, who live across the street from the restaurant, walk there for dinner on Thursday and Friday nights. Chairman Threadgill was concerned someone could be killed due to speeding vehicles. Chairman Threadgill spoke with Interim Administrator Gay about adding a three-way stop at Pebble Brook and Cove Road and provided a second stop sign on Cove Road in a different location in hopes it would help to slow down speeding vehicles. Interim Administrator Gay stated they could go back out and take a look at this and come up with a plan for a three-way stop and maybe some advanced warning signs. Chairman Threadgill stated he feels we need to add solar LED lights around the stop sign and on the stop ahead signs. This will help at night and during the day to bring recognition to the stop signs. Interim Administrator Gay will get the information together and bring it back before the Board.

#### **XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

County Attorney Nathan Lee stated there was good news that a former tenant's complaint to the Georgia Department of Transportation that the Airport Authority had wrongfully refused him a

lease. The County had to evict this individual for not being in compliance with the rules. GDOT thoroughly investigated this. Word was received last week that there was a finding of no wrongdoing regarding the Airport Authority. There was a need for Executive Session for potential Litigation and Personnel.

**XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Emmett Collins to go into Executive Session for Litigation and Personnel at 9:57 a.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to go out of Executive Session at 10:18 a.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Emmett Collins to go back into Regular Session at 10:19 a.m. All were in favor.

There was no action taken in Executive Session.

*See under New Business 7. Order and Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Meriwether County, Georgia.*

**XVII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES**

Chairman Bryan Threadgill announced future Meetings and Notices prior to Executive Session.

**XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Rosla Plant to adjourn at 10:23 a.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

Attest: Beverly Thomas, Clerk

Date: August 22, 2023