

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Mid-Year Review Minutes
July 17th, 2024
9:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Traylor called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Present for the meeting were Vice-Chair Gilles Commissioner Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson.

II. Mid-Year Review

County Administrator Townsend gave a mid-year review for the General View of the 2024 Budget as Follows:

- a) Reported that the TAVT has increased by 4.9 percent compared to last year.
- b) Reported the LOST collections are higher than the forecasted trends by 3.8 percent.
- c) Reported that the County received approximately \$32,000.00 in interest from a Certificate of Deposit (CD).
- d) Reported that the County's Liability Insurance increased by \$28,631.00.
- e) Reported that significant cuts could not be made in the expenditures because Payroll is 56.2 percent of the County budget.
- f) Reported that the Contracts are at 19.8 percent, the Outflow is 6.9 percent and Capital Outlay is 3 percent which leaves Supplies at 9.9 percent of the County Budget.
- g) Reported that the County expenditures are running around 50.1 percent of the County Budget but there are still issues with the Courthouse Roof, Brick and Elections for transportation of equipment. The estimated cost for this is a total of \$249,046.00 with \$10,000.00 of that amount allotted to Elections.
- h) Reported the revenues collected for the Drug Abuse Treatment (DATE) fund, which pays for the Accountability Court, are lower than the projected budget and may have to be increased to balance the budget of \$12,460.00, with the average monthly collection being \$1,063.00.
- i) Reported that the E-911 Fund budget is projected to be balanced with revenues equaling expenditures totaling \$486,302, which includes \$132,938.00 subsidized from the General Fund.
- j) Reported that \$4,500.00 was budgeted for the Law Library Fund.
- k) Reported the Capital Project Funds are running higher: SPLOST, TSPLOST, and LMIG/TSPLOST. Reported that an RFP will be put out in November for Phase II and III. The Board of Commissioners will need to vote in December on High Falls, Chappell Mill and Rock Springs Road since the funding is coming in from the State. The plan is start on this in the Year 2025. Reported that LMIG/TSPLOST funds will be put into CD's so he can collect nine months' worth of interest. Commissioner Thrash noted that waiting on Rocks Springs Road could result in an increase in the budget. County Administrator Townsend reported that they are waiting on EXP to complete the engineering study. He said doing the widening on Johnsonville and Van Buren Road has affected the budget because the bids came in higher than forecasted. Chairman Traylor requested an ETA from EXP because GDOT is asking about this.

- l) Reported that he is working with a program to help with the budget and will begin software training next week so he can look at different scenarios.
- m) Presented a Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year 2025. If the Board is planning on staying at the current millage rate there has to be three Public Hearings. It has to go to the Legal Organ by July 30th, 2024 because the County's digest and millage rate is due to the Georgia Department of Revenue for approval by August 29th, 2024. There has to be two Public Hearings in the daytime and one Public Hearing at night.
- n) Reviewed Department Expenditures over the last six months. Explained that most of them are running right at around 50 percent with some running lower and higher. Risk Management had the highest with a 106.2 percent increase. State Forestry was next with a 98.4 percent increase. Debt Service has a 49.6 percent increase.
- o) Discussed changing the Fiscal Year from January to December to July to June. Federal Budget is October to September. Finance Director Johnston stated that if they change from a Calendar Year Budget to a Fiscal Year Budget there will be two full audits that they will be charged for. Commissioner Lovett pointed out that it would only be a onetime charge. County Administrator Townsend pointed out that if they change it, they will need to do a budget for 18 months but there will only be taxes for that 18 months; you cannot collect it twice. If you do a six month then you have most of the bills at the beginning of the year. He pointed out they have built up the fund balance to help them get to July. He said if they could get to July without using the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) this is something he would like to see happen.
- p) Presented Trends for the General Government. The Projected Expenditures is \$13,999,217.24. Adding the Courthouse Roof; \$203,245.92, Brick Roof Coating; \$30,800.00, Solid Waste Audit; \$5,000.00, Board of Elections; \$10,000.00 leaves a total Projected Revenue of \$14,248,263.16.
Several Scenarios include:
Projected Revenue of \$14,116,144.98 with a millage rate rollback of 9.819 leaves a balance of \$-132,118.18; Projected Revenue of \$14,314,785.98 with a current millage rate of 10.092 leaves a balance of \$66,522.82 and a Projected Revenue of \$14,678,596.98 going to a half millage rate increase of 10.592 leaves a balance of \$430,333.82.
- q) Presented a PT32 Form provided by the Tax Assessor. Reported that the Tax Assessor did not go up on the values this year and the only thing added to the digest is new homes. Houses were re-evaluated but they did not go up on the sales ratio so they still will be around 36 to 37.
- r) Reviewed the millage rates from 2006-2024, going from current 10.092 to rollback rate of 9.804. The difference between the current versus the 3 percent Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) over 19 years is -5.857 with the current 10.092 millage rate and with the rollback rate of 9.804 the difference is -6.145. The projected millage rate for 2024 with a millage rate of 9.819 and a net digest of \$789,914,501 and a 3 percent Cola is 17.941.
- s) Presented a list of 2024 budgeted revenues for all line items with a total balance of \$15,501,742.00 with an emphasis on Prior Year Property being \$639,588.71.
- t) Presented trends for all of the revenues from 2017 to 2024.

III. Department Briefings

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Brad White addressed the board.

- a) Reported that from 2010-2011 they went through tough times and the economy is concerning because they used to have to terminate employees to cover their budget. Sheriff White said he does not want to be in a position where he has to furlough or lay off employees.
- b) Reported that he is over budget for vehicle repairs.
- c) Removed the purchase of Vehicles from Sheriff's Office budget of \$128,00.00 and moved it to SPLOST budget.
- d) Reported they are fully staffed
- e) Reported they are replacing the carpet at the Sheriff's Office in about 7 offices.
- f) Reported the roof is doing good.
- g) Reported they had to replace a pipe at the CID building twice and it cost \$7,000.00 to replace the first one and they have not received the bill for the newest one.
- h) Reported that no upgrades or maintenance has been done in the Magistrate Court. All of the judges want the Sheriff's Office to pay for it and this is not in his budget.
- i) Requested to add 6 more office in the CID building.
- j) Reported that he has cars with high mileage. Several years ago, they went from purchasing cars with high mileage to purchasing brand new cars. Reported that using Drug Funds from forfeitures from the Court is harder than it used to be. Reported they are putting the purchase of cars into SPLOST.
- k) Reported that he knows nothing about animal control when it comes to manning the Animal Shelter and said it will take time to learn all the policies and codes. He said that the Animal Shelter is the Commissioners budget even though they will manage and run it. Chairman Traylor stated the Lamar County Animal Shelter has a State of the Art Facility. Sheriff White said hopefully they can find adoptive homes because he does not like killing animals.
- l) Commissioner Thrash stated that she had security issues that she needed to discuss with Sheriff White.
- m) Reported that he has a backpack that turns into a bullet proof vest that the Commissioners could use for protection.
- n) Requested that County Administrator Townsend put on the agenda someone who can look at the pipes at the CID center and find out why they keep busting. Reported that all of the pipes have been replaced under the jail. Reported they do not have the issues with inmates flushing blankets down the toilets and flooding the cells due to not having the high number of inmates.
- o) Commissioner Lovett thanked Sheriff White for sending inmates to help with Election Equipment.
- p) Reported that they changed Commissary companies at the Sheriff's Office from Kimbel's Commissary dues to them going nationwide and causing issues. They changed to a small business company out of Rome Georgia called HardTime Products. They sale everything from trash bags to inmate beds to Commissary.

Probate Court

Probate Judge Kathy Martin addressed the Board.

- a) Reported an increase in stamps and postage. A letter has to be sent to those that miss their court date.
- b) Reported an increase in training; University of Georgia has increased fee.

- c) Reported she has no control over the Public Defender listed in her budget. Adam Nagel handles that and allows them to put the fees for fines and probation back if found guilty and they give the money back at the end of the year.
- d) Reported that they need forms that they have to purchase.
- e) Reported that their phones and computers were down for a day and a half due to a lawn mower cutting the line and they had to run a new line. Ring Central is now on her personnel phone if the phone goes down.
- f) Reported that she is having trouble with the water issue around the window. When it rains it comes in behind their desk, in the front office, and in her office in the back of it.
- g) Requested that since the Courthouse is an old building they take care of what they have.
- h) Reported her scanning project is finished. Once she receives the files her software company will put them in their system. It will be in their cloud.
- i) Reported that she has great employees, “take care of her girls” and would like to keep them. Reported that Machel Penn comes in on Saturday’s to enter in citations because there is so much work to do during the week.

Elections

Elections Supervisor Chairman Bill Christopher (Mr. Christopher) addressed the board. Board of Election members Mike Perry, Elaine Williams, Denise Groll attended the meeting.

- a) Reported there is enough money in the budget to take care of elections for the rest of the year.
- b) Discussed the logistics of hiring someone to take care of hauling equipment during elections. Requested to add around \$10,000.00 for logistics to their budget for the remaining six months. Next year they will add the \$10,000.00 again to the budget.
- c) Reported that next year they will have three elections: A primary in May for the Public Service Commission District 2, if there is a runoff it will be held in June, the General Election for the Public Service Commission that is still Statewide, a Countywide election, then the Election in November will be for the Public Service Commission and the Municipal Elections. The turnout is expected to be low for the election so the cost for the election will be high.
- d) Reported that the last election was expensive due to the low turnout of voters. The run-off cost was around \$90.00 a vote and should have been \$25.00 a vote if it was a good election. Reported that in the past a City Election cost \$200.00 a vote.
- e) Reported that new State Law allows them to determine how many voting machines they are comfortable putting out during an election resulting in the need for less equipment.
- f) Reported that there will be a Presidential Audit where every ballot has to be hand counted. It will take three to four teams and two days of work.
- g) Reported that there have been approximately 3000 voters added since 2020.
- h) Reported that during this past Early Voting there were less than 200 people.
- i) Reported there is a strong push for Voting by Mail and there is concern because of the postal system issues.
- j) Reported he likes the setup in the new building because people can see what they are doing.
- k) Commissioner Fletcher inquired about using the College People company for moving the equipment. Mr. Christopher said there is an issue with having a 30 day notice in advance and having to bid on the jobs and they would have to sign an actual contract. Mr. Christopher said they are actually a geek quad type of company.

- l) Mr. Perry addressed the board saying that a temporary service would cost around \$27.00 to \$29.00 per hour for one employee which also includes drug testing and insurance. The method of payment is by credit card and you have to fill out a credit application.
- m) Requested to have Wired Technology set up a new phone, computer and copier.
- n) Requested to have a portable conference table.
- o) Reported that they would need to decide how long Mr. Walker stays on board as their security person.
- p) Requested to have a large shredder added to the 2025 budget.
- q) Requested a new laptop or computer for Ann Keadle.

Tax Commissioner

Tax Commissioner Andrea Anthony addressed the Board. Tax Assessor Elect Amanda Gamez attended the meeting.

- a) Requested to hire a part-time employee now so that they could be trained then promote the part-time employee to full-time and hire another part-time employee.
- b) Reported that the Drive-Thru is open.
- c) Reported that they eventually will be able to use the side door and there will be additional Tax Commissioner parking.
- d) Commissioner Thrash thanked Tax Commissioner Anthony for doing a phenomenal job.

Public Works Department

Public Works Director James Rigdon addressed the Board.

- a) Reported that a dump truck caught on fire and Zachary Walker was able to pull over and jump out before it exploded into fire. The dump truck is a total loss and Mr. Walker is very blessed.
- b) Reported an increase in fuel.
- c) Reported spending \$169,000.00 on Turner Bridge Road minus the rock which was a cost of around \$69,000.00 (received from Vulcan)
- d) Reported that hiring employees is an issue. Recently hired three and two of them showed up.
- e) Reported that he attended the APWA conference and learned that employees in other counties are starting to return to work. Commissioner Thrash said that you cannot expect a man to come to work for \$14.00 an hour. She said many of the Public Works Department employees are on food stamps. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that they increased salaries a couple of years ago but so did Spalding, Fayette, Pike and other counties. Commissioner Thrash pointed out that you cannot expect an employee to work in 100 degree weather for \$14.00 an hour. Public Works Director Rigdon stated that they will need to pay experience workers, those with a CDL license, a higher wage. He said it is hard to pay someone a higher wage who has no experience. They offered one guy \$26.00 an hour and he got another job paying \$30.00 an hour. Reported he has a long-time employee who commutes from Brooks, Georgia.
- f) Requested to implement a new call list with two guys on call. They need the employee on call to be able to drive a County Vehicle home in case they are called out after hours.
- g) Requested to repair or replace the spare red dump truck because the motor blew up. It is a 97 model with 210,000 miles.

- h) Reported that he and other employees were having issues with the County insurance and the co-pays and deductibles.

Maintenance

Maintenance Director Jim Beverly addressed the Board.

- a.) Reported that the biggest item on his list is the Courthouse Roof. He said that Certified Roofing wanted a schedule to start. County Administrator Townsend stated that he had several other bids to review first.
- b.) Reported that the bricks around the edge of the Courthouse are seeping water.
- c.) Reported two spots on the roof are in need of repair.
- d.) Reported that the City of Barnesville is requiring backflows be performed on every building every year. To save on cost he will be attending a backflow training at Rite Way Plumbing on August 11th, 2024 in Griffin, Georgia.
- e.) Reported they assisted with moving the Board of Elections to the new building last week.
- f.) Requested to get a new trailer out of this year's budget so they can move the lawnmowers out of the rain.
- g.) Reported that the new Department of Health inspector, Eric Cooper, goes by the book and has been very hard on people. The Senior Center was cited for a plumbing change in the kitchen under the sink and they are also required to get a new sink. They also had 15 points subtracted from their inspection due to a dumpster not being closed. Chairman Traylor pointed out that he is citing people for septic tank issues.
- h.) Requested to have a new truck because they have been using one of the Public Works trucks.
- i.) Requested to have new lawn mower.
- j.) Requested to raise the salary of one of his maintenance employees because he has moved to Macon, Georgia and he does not want to lose him. He is currently having to drive back and forth to work and the cost of fuel is high.

Planning and Community Development

Planning and Community Development Director Anita Buice addressed the Board.

- a.) Reported that there has been a drop in building and single dwelling permits revenue. People are remodeling instead of building. Reported that permits for new houses are bringing in the difference to offset the missed revenue.
- b.) Reported that there are no new major subdivisions.
- c.) Reported that there are subdivisions that have not been completely built out and the work has not started. There could be 150 new houses .
- d.) Reported there have been 390 new site built homes in the past three years.
- e.) Reported the number of manufactured homes have increased.
- f.) Reported there have been to date 330 business licenses in the County both incorporated and unincorporated. Reported that letters have been sent to those that have not renewed their business license.
- g.) Reported there has been 28 rezonings to date.
- h.) Reported there would be a need for a Public Hearing to remove a Special Exception for Solar Panels that were abandoned. The couple closing on the property does not need this

Special Exception since it is just pastureland. The Public Hearing is to revert the property back to the original zoning.

- i.) Reported there had been 40 to 50 open Code Enforcement Cases.
- j.) Reported that Mark Barr works part-time and concentrates his time on code enforcement
- k.) Reported that Estate Properties are the most difficult and if the estate is not probated there is not a lot they can do about it. Those situations will need an attorney.
- l.) Reported there could be a large development in the next two years.
- m.) Requested to have a small SUV because her car cannot handle going to most of the properties she has to inspect; sometimes they are muddy. Sometimes she drives the County Truck but most of the time Mark Barr uses it.
- n.) Reported that she plans to host the Zoning 101 training next year.

Tax Assessor

Tax Assessor Jeannie Haddock addressed the Board.

- a.) Reported that people are remodeling houses rather than building new ones.
- b.) Reported that the sales have not dropped and the values are still there.
- c.) Requested an increase for training.
- d.) Requested an increase in fuel for the next six months.
- e.) Discussed raising values. In 2018 the digest was \$562,388.269.00 and every year it has gone up by \$35,000,000.00. Between 2021 and 2022 they went up \$136,000,000.00 and between 2022 and 2023 they went up \$132,000,000.00. They went up around \$34,000,000.00. From 2018 to 2024 the digest has gone up by \$353,551,510.00. If they use the current millage rate that is an additional \$5,000,000.00.
- f.) The State says you may re-eval every three years but it will say shall re-eval every three years. Will keep Norman and Associates to do the re-evals which will cost \$56,000.00 a year.
- g.) Reported they had 111 appeals this year and 20 of those were commercial. They did go up on commercial. They may go up next year on values but not this year. They may see a slight drop in utilities.
- h.) There is a Senate Bill 346 where a house is listed at \$380,000.00 and they pay \$370,000.00. The next year they will be taxed at \$370,000.00 and this is going away.
- i.) Discussed the arial flight that found 10 to 15 houses resulting in missed permits. They compared the 2022 arial flight to the 2024 arial flight and they found some discrepancies. It is easy to find a house in a subdivision. Sometimes, things have falling through the cracks so they have a new procedure in place to help with this.
- j.) Reported there are 390 new homes.
- k.) Discussed people living in travel trailers and the Tax Commissioner not being able to renew a license without a permanent address.
- l.) Reported that Lacey Merritt is working on her Level 2 Tax Assessor training with the goal being for her to take over the Tax Assessors Office in about five years.
- m.) Chairman Traylor requested that they purchase new software for their office. Tax Assessor Haddock says WinGap does have a program to enter data in the field. Right now, Brock Lanier draws it in the field and brings it back to the office for Lacey to enter into the system. He has an old iPad where he uses the internet and Qpublic.
- n.) Reported that the dues for WinGap went up from \$1,500.00 to \$6,000.00 and the reason why is the backup every single photo and they backup every day. This is the result of losing all of her files in 2020 and she lost a lot of the pictures.

- o.) Requested to know if the Board of Commissioners will opt out of the tax value freeze. They have until March 2025 to decide. On the current Tax Assessment notice the estimated taxes are listed based on last year's millage rate. That will come off of the assessment notice but they want to add on to the assessment notice the inflation growth millage rate. However, the rollback on the PT32 is not done until she sends the digest to the Tax Commissioner. Tax Assessor Haddock said if the change the millage rate and it is supposed to be 10.9 and they increase it to 11.00 then it is on the tax bill telling them which entity did not want to roll back the millage rate. Then appeals have to be considered and if she cannot submit the digest they are penalized.

Recreation

Recreation Director Tiffany Lowe addressed the Board.

- a) The Board congratulated Recreation Director Lowe for the LC10U All-Stars Team that traveled to Baton Rouge Louisiana placing 3rd in the World Series.
- b) Reported budget wise for the first six months they have no major expenditures.
- c) Reported she is fully staffed with all of the full-time position.
- d) Reported keeping employees is a challenge with the biggest challenge being pay and benefits.
- e) Requested to have a part-time position, gym attendant, because keeping the gym open is a need. The gym is open; Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons but it is strain on the employees. There have been requests to open the gym on Sunday's after Church but she does not have the staff to do this. During basketball season, the gym will not be open to the public and will have to move to a weekend availability.
- f) Reported that AmWaste is going to replace the bleachers on two of the ball fields for a cost of around \$8,000.00. This was a needs assessment discussed with the Recreation board where they looked at safety concerns for the park. The cost was originally \$60,000.00. They bought two used sets which took care of two fields and AmWaste is taking care of two more fields. The cost is now around \$15,000.00. The connection to AmWaste came from Elaine Hallada and through the grapevine-Bubba Samples, the Chairman of the Recreation Board. He connected with Mrs. Hallada when he did cabinets for her. Mr. Samples also talked to Vulcan about helping out but they are spent for this year but would be interested in talking to them next year. Vulcan is going to put some recycling bins at the park.
- g) Reported that one of the tennis courts is earmarked for pickle ball. The issue with the tennis courts, basketball court, and the skate park is the concrete is cracking. The balls bounce wrong and it is a trip hazard. Commissioner Thrash noted that there are people who would like to play tennis. Requested to have these courts fixed.
- h) Reported that basketball is not being played at the gym as much as pickle ball. Pickle ball is huge and there are lots of players when the gym is open. The Youth Pickle Ball camp was a big success and about 17 youth came.
- i) Commissioner Thrash requested to have an adult softball. Recreation Director Lowe said the lightning is an issue with playing adult softball at night. There are umpires that will not call games at night because of the lightning.
- j) Reported that Football and Soccer is going strong.
- k) Reported that vehicles are good.
- l) Reported that they had a trailer that was missing a tag and they are getting a new one.
- m) Reported that the Recreation Board members handle situations as they arise.
- n) Chairman Traylor requested that they tag the Board of Commissioners Facebook page with any news that they may post on the Recreation website.

- o) Reported that she is still working on the partnership with the Lamar County school system regarding using their gyms, especially during basketball.
- p) Reported that the LC10U All-Stars Team will be recognized at the August Regular Business Meeting. They had t-shirts ordered for them and matching bags. They received donated goodies from family, friends and the community. The Recreation set aside \$5,000.00 for the tournament. They were able to pay for the hotel rooms for the kids and their passes to get into the game. There were 11 team members. Commissioner Fletcher said he would be nice to give them a pizza party and offered to donate the pizza. Recreation Director Lowe said the coaches want to give them a party in the near future.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

EMA Director Becky Martin addressed the Board.

- a) Reported that three grants are running. 1) The Hazard Mitigation Grant expires in December of 2025 but they have to get started this Fall to meet the deadline. The contract cost is \$25,000.00.
There is a 75 percent reimbursement with a 25 percent in-kind cost. 2) HGP Grant will be for two new warning sirens and they will arrive the week of August 19th, 2024. The cost for this is \$65,488.71 up front. This is already in her budget as a total of \$75,955.00. Requested to purchase a Generator for the new EMA building with the carry-over difference. The Coroner gave her specs for a stationary generator. This will be used for the body cooler, the EOC, and the computer system for the EMA. The generator will run for a period of four to six hours. 3) The EMPG Grant for 2024 will start. This is the grant that supplements the EMA Directors' salary. They are in the process of closing out the one from 2023. They were supposed to get the check in December of 2023 but not receive it until June of 2024. She had to ask for an extension because she could not do anything until she received a check. There is an approximate \$2,000.00 carry-over that used to supplement the former EMA Director Billy Campbell. He passed away. Reported that she bought ham radio equipment with what was left over last period. Reported that Tim Cherry is setting up a Ham Radio Station in the new building.
- b) Reported that she reached out to Southern Rivers about getting two new phone poles for the Ham Radio Equipment. They delivered two free poles that Public Works will install. They will need to wait on 811 to give them good clearance and then Southern Rivers can wire everything.
- c) Commissioner Thrash inquired about security for the EMA building and said it had to be secured.
- d) Reported that the Fire Department would move the large cover that is covering the EMA equipment. Chairman Traylor suggested that the equipment go in the back of the EMA building and allow the Recreation Department to use the cover.
- e) Requested to increase the line item for Other Equipment for the Warning Sirens excluding the two new sirens. The annual cost is \$7,000.00 and is paid to Alpha Electronics.
- f) Reported that batteries for the warning sirens are purchased at NAPA for around \$100.00 apiece. Chairman Traylor stated that the new battery company is offering to provide batteries at a discount cost or possibly for free.
- g) Reported an issue with the Hazard Mitigation Grant. The cost is \$25,000.00 and they are requesting to be paid quarterly and one quarter will fall this year that is not budgeted. She will try to push it out so that it falls in 2025 but this is frowned upon and the Grant could expire. They need 15 months prior to the start of the Grant. If the Grant expires it could cause issues.

- h) Reported that she is trying to re-build some relationships that were broken by the Former EMA Director.
- i) Reported that the AC units in the current EMA office are broken and there is only 1 AC unit that is working. If anyone tries to move into that office there will be problems.

LUNCH BREAK

Commissioner Thrash made a motion at 12:08 p.m. to Recess the Mid-Year Review Workshop for lunch. Vice-Chair Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Douglas Matthews Address the Board.

- a) Reported that Station 6 had roof leaks and they would like to re-do the floors, getting rid of the carpet and adding a hardwood type flooring. Plus, they would also like to add a few bedrooms for privacy.
- b) Reported that they had been on a two year journey with their ladder truck. They purchased for a great price but the company that was doing their testing on the pumps is no longer in business. They had a new company come in and do the test and they failed them on a few things. The estimate to get it repaired will cost \$19,000.00 to \$29,000.00. This is just for the ladder.
- c) Reported that there are 10 to 14 percent increases on everything they have.
- d) Reported a six month time limit for fire hoses and turn out gear. It could be January of 2025 before they get here. They are not doing rental unless necessary; gear is damaged and they have to rent it until the gear comes in. The goal is 2 sets of gear for each on duty firemen and 1 set for the volunteers.
- e) His Part-Time position resigned so they are looking for the right person to fill that position and switch it to a Full Time Assistant Chief /Training Officer. They will help with training, building inspections and EMS licenses.
- f) Reported they hired three new volunteers but the schooling takes a long time to complete.
- g) Reported that the employees want a pay increase.
- h) Reported no update on the FEMA Grant; two fire engines. The application process is complete, they are just waiting on approval or denial.
- i) Discussed the roof leaking at Station 6. County Administrator Townsend stated they needed to get Certified Advanced Roofing to go back out there and find out what is going on since they already paid for the repairs. Maintenance Director Beverly is supposed to be talking to them about it. Fire Chief Matthews said they did not put anything up they just sprayed over it and said that this did not work to well. County Administrator Townsend stated they put silicon on it. He said that Public Works Director Rigdon did this same type of spray 13 years ago and his roof is not leaking. County Administrator Townsend stated that he did not know if there was a warranty and the Maintenance Department could have ended up doing it.
- j) Reported a Kenworth Fire Truck has broken down but it has not been towed yet.
- k) Reported a new Fire Truck will cost \$620,000.00.
- l) Reported a need for a CPR on the Northside of the County. Reported the cost for one of these is \$16,000.00 to \$18,000.00. They have been transporting one by SUV. They have applied for small \$25,000.00 grants but they are hard to get and they have not been able to win one.

Magistrate Court

Magistrate Judge Paul Kuntz addressed the board.

- a) Requested to have a phone on the Judges bench.
- b) Requested to have a Zoom Account. County Administrator Townsend gave him the OWL, a plug and play video conference that was used prior to doing Zoom and Teams Meeting.
- c) Requested to have a new computer for the Magistrate Clerk.
- d) Reported that there is a room full of old case files stacked in a corner. He said they only have about a years' worth of storage room left. There are plans from the Sheriff Office to turn the room adjacent to the Magistrate Court into a storage room for them.
- e) Reported that when they got the new software system from CJT software system they can scan documents but at some point, they will need computer storage either through an external hard drive or cloud storage (off sight computer storage). The County has Laserfiche that did the Administration, Tax Assessor and Planning and Community Development scanning. Reported that once a Case is open 5 years and there is no activity it is automatically closed. The State Records Retention Schedule is all over the map. Criminal Warrants have to be kept forever. Civil Files have a certain retention schedule. County Clerk Davidson reported that they used the State Record Retention for Local Government for record destruction when they went through the scanning process
- f) Requested salary increases for his employees. Constitutional Officers will receive another increase due to the population being over 20,000.00.
- g) Reported that Civil Cases have increased from last year and arrest warrants are around 250 plus other charges that are attached to each person. Today they had 5 warrants on one person. The need for Civil Case storage had drastically increased.

County Extension

County Extension Director Octavia Jackson addressed the board.

- a) Reported the budget is fine.
- b) Reported she is working on plans for retiring in about two years.
- c) Reported that they have an opening for an Agriculture and Resource Educator. The position has been open for a long period of time. They have 5 applicants but they have to go through the applications to make sure the credentials are in place. The district office is handling this.
- d) Reported there is an AmeriCorps position open that is similar to the Peace Corps. They have a line in their budget for this.
- e) Reported that the 4-H Program has about 175 to 200 kids in the Public Schools beginning in the 5th grade and they also have a 5th grade Science Program in the Public Schools and at Rock Springs. They have after school programs and lots of volunteers. They have a category called Shooting Sports: Shot Gun, BB Shooting and Archery. They need an Archery Coach who has a heart to work with children.
- f) Requested to have another mode of transportation since their Bus is a 2008. The bus gets about 8 miles to the gallon and stays in the shop. UGA required to have them to have a minibus. Requested to have a nicer SUV or Van to haul the kids and also to haul supplies, racks, plants, soil, to and from the schools.

Senior Center

Senior Center Director Antionette Watts addressed the Board.

- a) Requested for an increase in training of \$500.00 for Meals on Wheels Conference and Three River Training. Reported that she does after hours training from the University of Kentucky
- b) Requested for a \$300.00 increase for Exterminating. They are currently overbudget.
- c) Requested an increase in Diesel Fuel.
- d) Reported that the Senior Center activities has gone over budget by \$500.00 because they have grown in number. There enrollment has increased from 30 to 50 people.
- e) Requested to increase the office supplies by \$200.00.
- f) Requested to increase communications which includes the sign in system called My Senior Center to \$6,000.00.
- g) Reported that they are doing good on preparing the food but as of July 1st, 2024 there was no more ARPA funding.
- h) Reported the Federal Fiscal year begins October 1st, 2024 and they may get some funding but it will not be allocated until January of 2025.
- i) Reported that the funding for the coming years is not looking good but should not be less than the contract of this past year.
- j) Reported that there are 16 people on the waiting list for Meals on Wheels. Three Rivers will not allow them to take any more people because there is no more funding available for this. Each person cost \$242.20 per month. They will not allow them to give them a meal if they walk into the Senior Center and the full price is \$12.06 per meal.
- k) Reported that the Senior Hunger Coalition that she is a member of with Three River requested that she have a scenario setup in case of an emergency disaster which includes having a shelf staple meal box in the trunk of her car.
- l) Reported that the bathrooms are a huge maintenance issue. Senior Center Director Watts said the toilets may need to be replaced. She said she has personally gotten down on her hands and knees and scrubbed the floors and the toilets with bleach but the smell just keeps coming back. Reported that the Seniors are complaining about this issue. Senior Center Director Watts said she personally buys air fresheners and they only last about two days.
- m) Reported that she is waiting on the dishwasher and the sink to be installed and reported they buy bottled water since they have no water fountains.
- n) Reported that she has been asked about the landscaping in front of the building and requested to do something better.
- o) Reported that the doors to the dining room will not pull shut. You have to take all of your body weight to pull it closed and then lock it. The other door, if you do not fix it a certain way, will not lock and it still comes unloose.
- p) Reported that the gutters have split on the backside of the building.
- q) Reported that she is trying to get the patio poured that she received a grant for but she has decided to get enough poured and then apply for more grants to make it bigger.
- r) Reported that she has been asked to have a Line Dance class in the evenings and charge a fee to help offset this cost.
- s) Reported that the Three Rivers Transportation pickup and drop off is improving but now the Seniors are getting there before 6:15 a.m. They are not supposed to be there until 9:00 a.m. Sysco drops off supplies anywhere from 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. The driver has a key to the drop box but most of the time she is already there at 6:00 a.m. She has to be there

to get the stove on because it cooks very slowly. They have to be there to get it all cooked so that the Meals on Wheelers Driver is on the road by no later than 9:00 a.m. Reported that the gas stove is over 15 years old.

- t) Reported that the new Health Inspector requested that they get a new freezer. She priced one of those at Lowe's and the cost is around \$1,400.00 or more. The Sysco orders come in cases so they have to have enough room in the freezer. They get frozen meals and they are not supposed to be in the same freezer as the other items.
- u) Reported that they had a visit about two weeks ago from the Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging (TRAAA), Emily Hatchett, and their only complaint was that they have a lot of activities but they do not have a lot of space. They only have one big room and you cannot have 20 to 50 in a room.
- v) Reported that Three Rivers requires them to do Community Outreach and they have done; the Gospel Fest, the Senior Wellness Day, a Virtual Dementia Tour, a Juneteenth Program and they are also collaborating with the Housing Authority to be featured in their newsletter. She reported that she also attends the Line Dancing events.

Barnesville-Lamar County Library

City of Barnesville Mayor and Library Manger Kelly Hughes addressed the board.

- a) Reported that they are independent from the County even though they are also under the County Government.
- b) Reported that they get State Grants for Technology.
- c) Reported that the dynamics of the Library have changed and now they have laptops and hotspots for check out. They have a total of 15 hotspots and 20 computers. They have 10 computers available for the public; 6 for the children, 2 that are educational.
- d) Reported they work with all of the School System; Lamar County School System, Rock Springs, St. George's.
- e) Reported that they participate in the First Readers at all the school systems.
- f) Reported that they have 3 full time and 2 part time employees and 2 substitutes.
- g) Reported they had 145 to 229 people at the Southern Reptile Rescue Library Day and they usually have around 125 kids come to the Library each week for the Summer Reading Club.
- h) Reported when the Splash Pad is closed on Mondays the kids come to the Library.
- i) Reported that cleaning supplies, the yard, and the utilities comes from the County funds.
- j) Reported that the Friends of the Library donated \$9,000.00 to the Library this year. This comes from used book sales, raffle baskets, they do have a license with the Sheriff's Office.
- k) Reported they have a shelf of used books donated by patrons.
- l) Reported they have volunteers and one young lady from St. George's that gets credit. She comes in twice a week to help with the Summer Reading Club and traffic control.
- m) Reported the main increase is the audit fee that went from \$1,500.00 to \$3,500.00.
- n) Reported the office supplies have increase about \$1,200.00 because people come there to make copies.
- o) Reported they pay back the insurance premium to the County.
- p) Requested a 3 percent COLA for payroll including taxes is about \$6,200.00
- q) Reported as the Mayor of the City of Barnesville that City Manager Tammy York is available. Reported that as Mayor she goes to City Hall about three times a week.

- r) Requested that the City and the County work together because they are one community.
- s) Reported that she would have loved to have been a part of the Animal Shelter Project.
- t) Reported that the City is paving roads, fixing potholes and beautifying downtown Barnesville.
- u) Reported that the City is collecting money that had not been collected.
- v) Reported that they are working with Truman Boyle on their tower.
- w) Reported that the feedback from the people is positive.
- x) Reported that the Sewer System is a big issue but Senator Ossoff called her personally and they have a \$2,000,000.00 Federal Project that they are working on where she had the Commissioners write letters and also there were letters from the citizens. Senator Ossoff told her if the stars align and they have a bipartisan, then it will be a top priority for them to get that money for infrastructure.
- y) Reported they already have bids for the North based trunk line starting from the Water Treatment Plant. They have to open that up so they can get it from there to here. Reported that the City of Milner has more than doubled the capacity that they thought was coming.
- z) Reported that they are changing some rates.
- aa) Reported that they are working on a project with Pike County and the Pike County/Lamar County Line.
- bb) Reported that Jerry Motes is the City of Barnesville's Sewer Superintendent and if they have a spill, or they have to contact EPD, they have a good relationship.
- cc) Reported they have had three different breaks on Sims Street.
- dd) Chairman Traylor inquired about opening an entrance onto Murphy Avenue. Mayor Huges reported that in the past the citizens on Murphy Avenue did not want the Fred's Building and opening an entrance on to Murphy is something that she thinks will not fly but said the Commissioners may know more than she does. County Administrator Townsend said they are preventing people from coming onto the back of the property by placing poles around the back of the property. Mayor Huges said there was a petition years ago that went around. County Administrator Townsend said the citizens thought trucks would be accessing Murphy Avenue. Chairman Traylor said that the positive support will come from Thomaston Street because they are the ones driving the golf carts that need access on the property. County Administrator Townsend said they put the poles up because they were afraid they would get into a ditch and flip over.
- ee) Mayor Huges said she is looking forward to working with the County, the community and getting some things accomplished and doing what she can for the people.
- ff) Mayor Huges said that she is looking forward to the mutual aid between the County and City Fire Departments. County Administrator Townsend said the issues are with the Fire Chiefs. Mayor Huges said this is because they do not like each other but thought they could find a way to work it out.
- gg) Reported that the Library is a great asset to the County and a lot of civic organizations and families meet there and they are unique because of their friendly and helpful atmosphere.

Clerk of Superior Court

Clerk of Superior Caleb Tyson addressed the board.

- a) Reported that his budget has had no major changes.

- b) Requested to know the long term goals for the Courthouse; move, renovate or keep putting band aids on issues as they pop up at the Courthouse. Chairman Traylor said they cannot build a new one, like Upson County, but there has been room for them to improve on how they maintain the Courthouse; fixing the roof and the brick and pressure washing the Courthouse. Clerk of Superior Tyson asked if they should look at doing a renovation project at the Courthouse so they do not keep patching things that are happening monthly. He reported air conditioners leaking, and water coming out of the wall of the jail holding sale upstairs near the Courtroom. He said it seems like there are monthly issues occurring and to prevent this asked if there were some type of renovation project that could happen. County Administrator Townsend said the biggest problem with the Courthouse is the fact that you have 2 foot concrete walls. Clerk of Superior Tyson said he knew it was an old building but wanted to know if there was something they could do that was proactive rather than always being in a reactionary state. County Administrator Townsend said the roof has been kicked down the road for 25 years and said the Courthouse has been neglected for so many years. He said they put in all new air conditioners at the Courthouse. Clerk of Superior Tyson said he was just wondering because there is no easy fix for an old building and asked if there was another way of doing it. County Administrator Townsend asked Clerk of Superior Tyson where he would go if they did a renovation because you have to have Court Rooms. He said they would have to put everything in another County because you cannot close the Courthouse to renovate. He said that they did this in Pike County and sent everything over to Upson County.
- c) Clerk of Superior Tyson said from a personal standpoint he had no complaints from the use of the health insurance but he has employees complaining that the health insurance is not adequate to meet their needs. He asked if they were looking to change the health insurance or were they keeping it the same. Commissioner Fletcher inquired about the concerns. Clerk of Superior Tyson said he encouraged his employees to relay their concerns to Human Resources. County Administrator Townsend said the first couple of months were tough but now the employees are getting used to something different; the complaints have lessened. He said you have to talk to the Doctor's office more and there is more entailed. He said a lot of Doctors were not accepting the insurance because it is something totally different. Chairman Traylor said the concern is more with the cost of the deductible. He said it is fortunate but unfortunate because the health care cost are escalating and in talking with other places they have gotten to the point where free health care is not provided. Chairman Traylor said they would have to figure out some type of way to have a cost share.
- d) Reported that all of the historical scanning has been completed. They are waiting on the software to communicate with other software. The leg work has been done and they are waiting on data conversion processes.
- e) Finance Director Johnston inquired about a \$12,533.50 where they were supposed to get a refund to give to the County from the Clerk's Association. This is for the scanning project that the County paid for and was supposed to be returned to the digest. Clerk of Superior Tyson said that every bit of money that is due to the County or any money that comes into his office flows out to someone else. Clerk of Superior Tyson said that it would have come to the County in the form of Clerk's fees on the monthly fees or monthly distribution. Chairman Traylor said the County paid the money up front for the scanning project and the reimbursement would have come to the Clerk of Superior Court. It would be up to him to contact the Clerk's Authority or Association.

Adjournment

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to adjourn the Mid-Year Review Workshop at 2:43 p.m. Vice-Chair Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Ryran Traylor, Chairman

Ashley Gilles, Vice-Chair

Jarrod Fletcher, Commissioner

Jason Lovett, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk