

Workshop Meeting of the Lamar County Board of Commissioners
February 11th, 2021
12:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on February 11th, 2021. Present for the meeting were Chairman Glass, Vice-Chairman Horton, Commissioner Heiney, Commissioner Traylor, Commissioner Thrash, County Administrator Townsend, and County Clerk Davidson. The meeting was available via Zoom.

Legislative Director Client Mueller

Commissioner Thrash explained that the Tax Commissioners Association dropped a bill this year where in addition to the benefits that they get from the County, they want a comparable State retirement. Commissioner Thrash said that the bill suggests that the County receives one percent from the processing of Tax Ad Valorem Taxes (TAVT) that goes into the General Fund. She said that they want to take 25 percent of the one percent to fund this plan. Commissioner Thrash said that this will be another unfunded mandate that will start from ground zero. She said that there will be nothing to pull from to fund this.

Legislative Director Client Mueller with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) addressed the board via Zoom regarding Senate Bill 41. Mr. Mueller said that the Tax Commissioners are proposing legislation for a State retirement plan. He said that this does not include their staff. Mr. Mueller said that there is a two-year process for passing retirement bills therefore final action could not be taken during this legislative session. Mr. Mueller said that the Tax Commissioners Association has introduced similar retirement plans in previous legislation and none of them have passed. He said that the Tax Commissioners are claiming that in rural counties the Tax Commissioners do not have a retirement plan and the County is providing a retirement plan for them because they do not qualify for the former State retirement plan. He said that there was an older retirement plan that the General assembly cut off about nine or ten years ago. Mr. Mueller said that the Tax Commissioners that were under the old retirement plan were grandfathered in. He said that the Tax Commissioners who were not on the old plan only have a retirement plan if offered to them by their County. He said that the other Constitutional Officers, the Probate Judge, the Sheriff, and the Clerk of Superior Court all have some type of State retirement plan in addition to the County provided retirement plans.

Mr. Mueller said that the legislation that the Tax Commissioners introduced that was not passed had funding coming partially from contributions made by the Tax Commissioners and partially from an increase in a fee on delinquent property taxes. He said that ACCG did not take a position on this and remained neutral because there was no revenue coming from the County government. He said that the bill that is in the legislation this year creates a funding source from the Tax Commissioners partially providing some of the funding. He said that the government contribution would come from the TAVT administration fee. Mr. Mueller said that there is a one percent administration fee that is applied to all TAVT collections. He said that the Tax Commissioners would take 20 percent of that a one percent administration fee and use it to help fund the retirement plan.

Mr. Mueller said that the policy council discussed this and the two main concerns that he heard from the policy council was that it is revenue that comes out of the County's general fund which is where the one percent administration goes. He said that if you take 20 percent of that to fund the retirement plan then you lose 20 percent of the one percent administration fee. Mr. Mueller said that the second concern raised was that some of the larger counties are subsidizing some of the smaller counties. He said that the greatest generated TAVT revenue is in the larger counties. Mr. Mueller said that Fulton County generates about \$400,000.00 a year based on 20 percent of the administration fee. He said that the policy council feels like that Fulton County's Tax Commissioner already has a good County retirement plan and even if the Fulton County Tax Commissioner was to participate in the State retirement plan, that \$400,000.00 would far

exceed what it would cost to provide that plan to their Tax Commissioner. Mr. Mueller said that in a sense, they would be funding the plans for the Tax Commissioners in rural counties.

Mr. Mueller said that the other Constitutional Officers have Statewide retirement plans that are funded through some sort of add-on. He said that the issue exists where the add-on generates more revenue than the more urbanized larger counties than it does in the smaller counties therefore there is already subsidization going on in the other Constitutional Officer's retirement plans. Mr. Mueller said that this plan would not be that much different than the other Constitutional Officer's retirement plans. Mr. Mueller said that the Policy Council did take a position to oppose the legislation. He said that this is ACCG's position but they are open to reconsidering if the bill changes.

Chairman Glass asked Mr. Mueller if the other Constitutional Officer's plans affect General Funds. Mr. Mueller said that according to Debra Nesbit with ACCG, who is the expert with fees, add-ons, and deductions, some of these were deductions. Mr. Mueller said that they actually come out of fees that the counties would receive. He said that he did not have all of the sources that the other Constitutional Officers were using to fund their retirement plan but he thought that they could tack-on criminal fines that would fund their plans.

Commissioner Thrash asked if this would constitute a trickle-down effect with some of the other Constitutional Officers where they would want this type of retirement plan. Mr. Mueller replied that the argument from the Tax Commissioner's side of it is that the other Constitutional Officers already have a State-funded retirement plan and they are trying to get what the other Constitutional Officers already have. He said that every other Constitutional Officer has some type of Statewide retirement plan in addition to their County provided retirement plan.

Mr. Mueller said that they sent out an excel file to the Policy Council members before last Monday's call which listed all of the various State plans for the other Constitutional Officers including the code sections and how they are funded.

Mr. Mueller spoke about other issues in the legislation going on at the Capital. Commissioner Thrash stated that she wanted to wait and see what was going to happen with the election bills. Mr. Mueller said that there was an interesting one that came out of the committee and said that with some Federal Court cases they had to extend the runoff period from four weeks to nine weeks in Georgia. He said that this legislation would create a different voting process for Overseas Military.

Chairman Glass asked County Administrator Townsend about how much the TAVT revenues were for Lamar County. County Administrator Townsend said that he would need to look into this. Chairman Glass said that if it is a million dollars, then 20 percent of one percent would be \$2,000.00 a year. County Administrator Townsend said that he thought that it was around 984,000.00.

Commissioner Thrash said that you have to look at it from the perspective that they are the only Constitutional Officer that does not have a State-funded retirement plan. She said one of the biggest issues is that in some of the bigger cities, the Tax Commissioners are double-dipping. Chairman Glass said that a couple of years ago, they collected the taxes for the cities and charged the cities then they spent the money and did not turn it over to the County. Commissioner Thrash said that Fulton County's Tax Commissioner is one of the highest-paid Tax Commissioners in the Country.

Animal Shelter-Fred Morris

Mr. Morris and other members of the animal shelter committee attended the Workshop meeting. Mr. Morris addressed the board regarding the animal shelter and thanked the board for their time and said that he knew that the animal shelter did not deserve the most priority with everything else going on in the

County. He also thanked the board for the prime location that has been allotted for the animal shelter, on Roberta Drive. He said that placing the animal shelter there will increase the use of the wetlands, which were all built by volunteers. Mr. Morris said that it will also provide a burial site for people to bury their pet's ashes and said that this is a good place to do it. He said that there are several wetlands where they place the pet's ashes and they get a rock and use that as a marker. Mr. Morris said it also allows the possibility of allowing the wetlands to be developed into a bird sanctuary. He said that he knows that the trees are marked and the whole complex can be a very strong area of improvement.

Mr. Morris said that the goal is to generate some questions from the board so that they can present some answers based on their research. He said that he also wanted to set some goals as to where they need to go in the future. Mr. Morris said that the rescue situation is a community function and not just an animal function. He said that shelters have to be cleaned, they have to be strong, and they have to be as inviting as a 5-star hotel. Mr. Morris said that they need to conclude from all their research that they have done all they can do in terms of need analysis and reviewing shelters. He said that he did an inventory of his pictures and he has taken photographs 23 different times in various shelters of things that he likes and does not like, and things that are functional and non-functional. Mr. Morris said that he had done lots of research on what they need to operate a functional facility. Mr. Morris said that at this point, the County needs to hire an Architect. He said that they lost the use of inmate labor due to COVID. Mr. Morris said that they have dealt with half a dozen different architects and one of the problems they have had with the architects and shelter planners is they do not know the difference between an animal shelter, a clinic, and a kennel. He said that each of these facilities has different requirements. Mr. Morris said that with a kennel and a clinic the animals are all well-nourished, the animals have names, and they are there for a brief time. He said that if you take them into an animal shelter, they have no name, and a lot of times they are emaciated and some of them are feral. Mr. Morris said that the County needs to hire an architect with a full set of plans and then the County could decide if they want to hire a general contractor to do the whole thing or if they want to take the plans and hire out plumbing and electrical contractors.

Commissioner Heiney inquired about the square footage of the animal shelter. Mr. Morris said that they have looked at a 4,000 square foot building. Commissioner Heiney asked how this compares with the other 23 animal shelters. Mr. Morris said that it varies. Mr. Tom Wellner, an animal shelter committee member, said that Jones County's animal shelter is 3,500 square feet and said that it cost them \$300,000.00. He said that they told him it was a lot of work and they wish that would have done things differently. Commissioner Thrash said that Stephens County was about 4,000 square feet. Mr. Wellner said that the animal shelters that the board looked at years ago were around 6,500 square feet and they had more runs for dogs than the needs analysis for Lamar County can justify. He said that 15 to 18 dog runs is what is planned for based on the need's analysis. He said that a 6,500 square foot animal shelter has 48 dog runs. Mr. Wellner said that they could have an animal shelter as small as 2,500 square feet. He said that this would basically be warehousing and it would not be appealing to the public to adopt an animal. He said that a 3,500 square foot building is a good compromise and there is enough room to do the job and also make it attractive to the public and something that the County would be proud of.

Commissioner Heiney inquired about the number of dogs that they could put in a 3,500 square foot building. Mr. Wellner said that they could put around 18 dogs in the animal shelter. He said that if you divide it into sections, where you have adoptable dogs that are clean and ready to be adopted, and then the ones in the back are dedicated to being cleaned up then decisions are made as to whether they can be adopted or not. Mr. Morris said that dogs come into the animal shelter in three phases. He said that initially they have to be completely quarantined on concrete to be sure that it has no parvo. He said that the second phase is where they have to be in a situation where they can determine if the dog is adoptable. He said that the third phase is where they are released the public where they can see them and work with the dog. Mr. Morris said that they can house about 20 dogs. Mr. Wellner said that you can have more cats. Commissioner Heiney asked how many cats they could have. Mr. Morris said that they have not designated a number for cats because the numbers that they have been receiving did not separate dogs and

cats. He said that they felt like half of what was brought in and put down was cats. Mr. Morris said that he spoke to the City of Barnesville's Animal Shelter Director and he said that of the 19 animals taken in for Lamar County, last month, 18 were put down. He said that three of them were cats and three were dogs that had to be trapped. Mr. Morris said that one of those dogs was a mama dog that was feral and had probably had several litters of puppies. He said that she is then out of the gene pool and this is the same as getting spayed or neutered. He said that this is the solution to animal control.

Commissioner Heiney inquired about how spay and neutering will be addressed by the animal shelter. Mr. Morris said that spay and neutering have nothing to do with the animal shelter unless they are going to be adopted then they will be spayed or neutered. He said that Dr. Korb has offered five hours of service per week to the shelter. Mr. Morris said that they have not specifically laid out an operating room in the shelter because they are 5 minutes from 2 veterinarians. Mr. Morris said that he visualizes the County picking up necessary animals and doing whatever they can do to socialize those animals and prepare them for adoption. He said that if the animal cannot be adopted then the County has to dispose of them. Mr. Morris said that he hopes that they can have a Humane Society-type organization to help with socialization and one that will help them to adopt or euthanize the animals.

Commissioner Heiney inquired about the animal shelter in Butts County. Mr. Morris said that he has a call into them because he is trying to get their operating cost from them and Lamar County, the City of Barnesville, and Upson County. He said that he had the operating cost for Lamar County slated at 150,000.00 but said that he feels like some things could be eliminated. Mr. Morris said that Jones County has a community service program where they can bring in a bag of dog food and get the hours of community service reduced. Mr. Morris said that once they get in line with the operation of the shelter a lot of things will happen. He said that there will be volunteers and grant money available. He said that people are reluctant to donate money to build a building that is owned and operated by the County. He said that once they have a building there is money on the sideline waiting to see something that can happen. Mr. Morris said that he was reminded that there is a good-looking sign at the animal shelter location but it needs to be repainted. Mr. Morris said that people are waiting to get on the shelter bandwagon but nothing has happened.

Mr. Morris requested that they have a full set of architectural plans so that they can have a specific plan to move forward with the animal shelter. Vice-Chairman Horton asked about the general contractor that the animal shelter was using. Mr. Morris replied that the plans were not functional after they had researched other facilities. He said that the prices that they had from the architect were obsolete. Commissioner Thrash said that the architect that they were using had not built an animal shelter. Mr. Wellner said that Todd Albritton was a great guy and he had done work for the County in the past and they thought that it could work out. Mr. Wellner said that he was getting frustrated with it and he got a new client and told them that he couldn't give them the time that they needed for him to do the job. He said that after speaking with other people about animal shelters they said that they need an architect who is familiar with building shelters. Mr. Wellner said that the last architect that they spoke with that knows about building animal shelters was located above North Atlanta and he charges \$70,000.00 for a set of plans; for a million-dollar shelter.

Commissioner Thrash inquired about the contributions that had been made towards the animal shelter. Mr. Wellner responded that there was \$140,000.00 worth of contributions that had been made. Mr. Wellner said that the money was sitting there earning nothing. He said those that have made contributions and intend to make more, are out there with their money invested. Mr. Wellner said that if he had waited to contribute today instead of years ago, he could have put in twice as much. He said that you are not going to get any big donations now but you might six months before you need the money.

Mr. Morris gave an example of how money works. He showed a picture that he had drawn up as an elevation to the front of the building by Patrick Henry. He said that they are in the retail business because

they are selling dogs and cats. He said that they want to compare them so that people come into an environment that is conducive to adopting animals. Mr. Morris said that Mr. Henry wants \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00 to paint this mural on the front of the building. He said that he asked for opinions on this matter and told someone it would be \$1,000.00 to have it done. He explained his error to someone else who said that they would pay the \$10,000.00 to have it done. He explained his error to the other person and they said that in a year or two they could probably negotiate the \$8,000 to \$10,000.00. He said that this does not have anything to do with construction but it does have something to do with projecting the facility.

Mr. Morris said that there is room on the property to have a pet cemetery. He said that George Moore with Barnesville Marble and Granite Company told him he could do a marker for around \$75.00 which will help raise money for the operation of the facility. Mr. Morris said that there are lots of ways to make money once they get a functioning support group. He said that there is money out there. Mr. Morris said that he has had people walk up to him and say that they will walk his dogs. He said that he received a check this past week for two contributions; one was \$12.00 and one was \$20.00. One was a check and one was cash from California. He said that money will come in.

Chairman Glass said that to get started with hiring an architect they need to do a Request for Proposal (RFP). He said that they can get started on this process but they need some advice about what qualifications to request. Mr. Wellner said that they have an encyclopedia of knowledge and notes that they can get as nitty-gritty as someone wants. Commissioner Thrash asked if they should put together a committee with a couple of Commissioners on it. Chairman Glass said that they should assign the RFP process to County Administrator Townsend. Mr. Wellner said that they suggested that they have to have a project manager. He said that he doesn't know if County Administrator Townsend fits that definition or not but this would be someone who rolls up his sleeves and look at the details. Chairman Glass said that Construction Manager would be further down the line but in the past, it has always been the County Administrator that defaulted into that position. Mr. Morris said that the construction cost has now doubled and they have lost the benefit of inmate labor.

Liberty Hill Park

County Administrator Townsend stated that Attorney Mayfield is researching the guidelines for swapping out the land but he has not heard back from him. Chairman Glass said that the State needs a letter of justification and a request to do a land swap. He said that there are specific things that they are asking for such as demographics. He said that they do have the purpose and justification for the land swap. He said that details will need to be added for qualification. Chairman Glass said that it does not say that they have to have a piece of property already on hand to get this approved but it would be much smoother if they had a piece of property already on hand. Chairman Glass said that the County cannot afford another piece of property and he hopes to get reimbursed from the sale of this one. He said that he had spoken to Vulcan Rock Quarry about piggybacking on their entrance because the entrance into the property on Hwy 36 is not safe. He said he told them that they would much rather do something away from Hwy 36. Chairman Glass said that Vulcan Rock Quarry is interested in purchasing the land but they will need to commit something in writing to purchase it for a certain amount in the unknown future. He said that he had not looked at anything else but you could take the parcel map and see how many pieces of land there are according to different sizes on various County roads. He said that he did not know of anything that was for sale. He said that the first step is to send the letter to the State and the demographics are a big issue. Chairman Glass said that he inquired about how this fits in with the County's Recreational Plan, Regional or State Plans. He said that in the Lamar County Comprehensive Plan, there was mention of walking trails, an indoor facility that was geared towards a new gym. Chairman Glass said that this is currently being worked on. He said that he does not know if they have anything from the Comprehensive Plan to cover this but it does address the growth in the Northern part of the County. Chairman Glass said that this is the biggest motivation because there is a concentration of the population that needs to be served. He said that a recreation facility is needed in that area.

Commissioner Thrash stated that Congressman Sanford Bishop might be able to help them with the negotiation rather than involving the two new State Senators because he is on that committee. Chairman Glass said that the first step is on them to get the justification together and he thinks a land swap is a good idea instead of Vulcan Rock Quarry providing the entrance.

Truck Weight Report

Chairman Glass said that the board was involved with a meeting with the ACCG Policy Council and the representatives from the logging industry regarding an increase in truck weights. Chairman Glass said that the Forestry Commission is pushing for an increase in truck weights for log trucks. He said that one of the comments that he heard was about feed trucks for poultry. He said that these trucks are coming off onto County Roads as well as log trucks. He said that the feed trucks are not every day like log trucks are but they are making deliveries to chicken houses all over the State. He said that if they increase the weight for log trucks the feed trucks will be the next ones wanting to increase their truck weight.

Commissioner Thrash said that they want to increase the weight to 100,000 lbs. along with adding an extra axel. She said that there were a couple of people in the meeting that were experts on the subject matter and they said that adding the sixth axel will not help with the weight distribution which is what tears up the roads. Chairman Glass said that when the truck pulls up to the stop sign the truck's weight pushes the asphalt up; especially in the summertime when it is soft and hot. He said that this is what creates the ridges in the road. Chairman Glass said that they apply the same forces when they go around the curves and maybe it is not quite as bad because the truck has an extra axel to spread it across. He said that when you come up to a stop sign, regardless of how many axels the truck has, they are pushing all of that weight forward and 90 percent of the weight is on the front axle of the truck. Commissioner Thrash said that another safety concern is that because they are adding more weight, they will be stacking the logs higher so then you have the rollover issues. Chairman Glass said that you cannot go wider on the trucks so the logs are going to have to go higher.

Commissioner Thrash said that they brought a Power Point presentation from Maine with information from the year 2010. She said that Chairman Glass brought up a good question about having researched in Georgia and they had no answer. Chairman Glass said that there is an obvious difference between the roads in Georgia and the roads in Maine. He said that Georgia has sandy areas, red clay areas, and rocky areas. He said that Maine has mostly rocky areas and the weather conditions are extremely different too. Chairman Glass said that most of the year in Maine is below freezing and very little of the year is below freezing in Georgia. He said that the temperatures in the summer are higher in Georgia and it loosens up the asphalt. Commissioner Traylor said that the rain in Georgia affects the conditions of the roadways as well. Commissioner Thrash said that Georgia has a lot of swamplands.

Chairman Glass said that the meeting was not very satisfying regarding adding information and knowledge. He said that it felt like a sales job; smoke and mirrors. Chairman Glass said that when they asked questions, they danced around them. He said that they used fancy terms and data.

Other Discussion

Zoning-Abbott Woods

Commissioner Traylor said that his neighbors are going crazy about an issue with zoning. He said that former Building and Zoning Director Dan Gunter told some people in his neighborhood that even though they no longer had a homeowner's association, they did not have to worry because the area was protected based on the designation. Commissioner Traylor said that when he presented the new zoning map in a prior meeting it should have been a different color for Abbott Woods. Commissioner Traylor said that he

told him that it should be R-1 and he thought that everything was fine. He said that there is now a plan to build houses and they have already started the clearing. Commissioner Traylor said that one of his neighbors went online to look and said that the zoning is for a 1600 to 1700 square foot home. He said that the expectation was that the zoning was for R-1. Commissioner Traylor said that he called Planning and Community Development Director Buice and said that the zoning was changed to R-2. Commissioner Thrash said that she wished that they had never changed the zoning for R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning. Commissioner Traylor said that he had spoken with the builder and he has everything on hold. Commissioner Traylor said he told him that they are getting so many of the homeowners from the Needleleaf subdivision that are looking for space like in Abbott Woods. Commissioner Traylor said that this is one of the fewer subdivisions in Barnesville that have homes with crawl spaces, hardwood floors, and hardwood cabinets. He said that the builder told him that the homes will sell for \$279,000.00 and these are 1700 square feet homes. Commissioner Traylor said that he asked the builder if had he had looked at the homes in Abbott Woods because they are not starter homes and this part of Wilmot Road is a part of the Abbot Woods Subdivision. Commissioner Traylor said that this is an area where you can sell higher-end homes in this neighborhood and you can pull people from Henry County and other subdivisions that live in starter homes. He said that if you mix it all up in this location, you lower the value of the homes. Commissioner Traylor said that the original homeowner's association required 2500 square ft. homes but that was dissolved. He said that the R-1 zoning requirement would be 2000 square ft. instead of 1600 square ft.

Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that not only is the homeowner's association not active from the year 2012 but for some reason, all of the lots were released from the covenants. Commissioner Traylor said that this is when the foreclosure happened. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that there are seven lots on Wilmot Road and then there are also some interior lots that have not been built out. He said that there is a large 82-acre tract that was part of the original layout that was never developed. She said that the owner of the interior tract is for a large 13-acre tract in an 82-acre tract. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that his agent called her about 15 minutes ago and said that the owner is interested in having all of the interior tracts re-zoned to R-1 which is a 2000 square foot minimum.

Chairman Glass inquired about the zoning for the lots that had been cleared. Commissioner Traylor said that they are all currently zoned R-2 in Abbott Woods. He said that one of the interior tracts is zoned A-R. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the 82 acres and the 13 acres are A-R. She said that the rezoning request can come from a property owner or it can come from the board. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that it will still follow all of the same notification processes. She said that since there are so many different property owners involved, and they are all on board with having it rezoned to R-1. She said that by the direction of the board she can begin the notification process instead of waiting for three or four different applicants to come to her with the same request. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the process will still involve a Public Hearing and her deadline is Friday to get it to the newspaper for an advertisement for the March meeting. She said that if the board does not decide today, it will be April before it can be heard.

Commissioner Traylor said that the one good thing is that the major landowner agrees with having it changed to R-1. Chairman Glass asked if the lots belonged to one landowner or do they belong to other landowners. Commissioner Traylor said that there are three lots next to him that are owned by someone. He said that there is another lot that is owned by someone else. Commissioner Traylor said that the large tract of land is owned by Timber West. Chairman Glass asked if they are talking about four or five owners or 15. Commissioner Traylor said that they are probably eight to ten owners including the people that live there. Chairman Glass asked Commissioner Traylor if his lot was R-2 or R-1. Commissioner Traylor said that he thought that it was R-1. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that Commissioner Traylor's lot is A-R. Commissioner Traylor said that they have a 40-acre tract. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that there are 23 total parcels including Commissioner

Traylor's and those six to seven parcels have exiting homes. Chairman Glass said that if Commissioner Traylor puts all of his parcels in R-1 his taxes will go up. He said that if Commissioner Traylor decides to sell the back 20 parcels and it is already zoned R-1, he can sell it for a lot more than if it is zoned A-R. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the neighbors are already zoned R-2 and said that the tax assessors do not always look at zoning so it may or may not affect the neighbors. She said that Commissioner Traylor's neighbors cannot change the use of their property. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that it does not give them the ability to split it into more lots.

Chairman Glass said that he is okay with pursuing moving it to R-1 zoning and publicizing the Public Hearing but he thinks that there are other factors to think about before they decide. He said that to get the process moving they should go ahead and publish it in the paper. He said that it should state that the board is considering rezoning the parcels to R-1.

Commissioner Traylor said that there is no water on the lots. Planning and Community Development Director Buice says that this is according to the current code and in the year 2010 it stated the same thing but she is not sure what the code was in 2003 which is when the lots were originally divided. Commissioner Traylor said that they are one acre lots without water. Chairman Glass said that if they are building now, the current code applies and in order to get a permit from the Health Department the application will be based on the current code. Chairman Glass said that the current code is two acres if you have a well and septic tank. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the builder bought seven one-acre tracks but there is also something that says that if you have a piece of property that does not meet the current criteria it is still a buildable lot if you have permission; if you can fit a well and septic tank on there. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that you cannot deny someone reasonable use of their property when you change the rules. Chairman Glass asked if the Health Department would allow a well and a septic tank on one acre. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that they would if the soil is good and it can fit.

Highspeed Broadband in Lamar County

Chairman Glass reported that Southern Rivers Energy (SRE) is forming a partnership with Conexon, a full-service broadband consulting firm, that will provide high-speed internet to every SRE member across its nine-county service territory. He said that they will put 1g of fiber in their service areas and provide this to their customers. Chairman Glass said that Electric Membership Corporations (EMC's) cannot spend money from the electrical portion of their business on internet services. He said that the EMC's are buying fiber to connect their meters for things such as smart meters and scheduled power things and controlling the substations. He said that they choose to do this with fiber that they are going to own. Chairman Glass said that they would lease the excess capacity of that fiber to Conexon. He said that Conexon is going to provide internet services to the home such as AT&T and Spectrum do. Chairman Glass said that this company has done this with other EMC's across the country and they have a very good record of success. He said that Conexon is putting 6.5 million dollars of their own money into this project and the EMC's are putting in 63 million dollars across central Georgia. He said that the fiber cost \$25,000.00 a mile.

Chairman Glass said that in Monroe County, they had a Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project for \$700,000.00 to help improve internet services in the County. He said that for several years they could not find a way to use this money. He said that their initial thought was that they were going to get a grant to put the internet service in their County. He said that they found out that there is not a County that can do this because it has to be a bigger organization than just the County. Chairman Glass said that they put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for internet service in Lamar County for the \$700,000.00 in investment. He said that they received several quotes and Central Georgia EMC was one of them who was already speaking to Conexon. Chairman Glass said that Monroe County went with Central Georgia EMC but they wanted all of the county covered and Central Georgia EMC did not cover the whole County. He said that

Central Georgia EMC then brought Southern Rivers in on the project. He said that Monroe County has about two-thirds of its geographic area with Central Georgia EMC and one-third with Southern Rivers. Chairman Glass said according to the Monroe County Chairman of the Board of Commissioners the money comes from the \$700,000.00 in SPLOST, and the Monroe County School Board that they received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) II Act. He said that these funds can be used for internet access but it has to be spent by December of 2023. He said that a small fee is coming from the Monroe County general fund.

Chairman Glass said that he had some concerns about giving gifts to companies or individuals according to the State Constitution. He said that tax abatements are a title transfer where the title is held by the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the taxes are not charged to the IDA but they pay rent in lieu of taxes to the IDA and it is brought back to the County. Chairman Glass said that this plan could work if they signed over a title. He said that usually, it is the land that is purchased to build a business. Chairman Glass said that this has been reviewed by the ACCG and the IDA attorneys. He said that the IDA is going to hold the title for some amount of fiber in Lamar County, for a period of time. Chairman Glass said that the Chairman in Monroe County told him it was for a year and a day but Erin Cook with Southern Rivers told him it was for five years.

Chairman Glass said that nothing has been signed because they are working out the details but they will provide them some incentive to get first in line. He said that Southern Rivers would like to put Lamar County as the next priority behind Monroe County because Lamar County has the highest concentration of meters in its service area. He said that Monroe County would also like to get some help because they are having to borrow money and pay interest on it. Chairman Glass said that if Lamar County could provide them some money that would help them with not having to borrow money that they have to pay interest on.

Commissioner Thrash asked about the next round of CARES II money. Chairman Glass said that he spoke to the Lamar County School board and they have CARES II money that they could provide for this project because they have not allocated all of it yet. He said that the Lamar County School board is interested in putting some money into this project. Chairman Glass said that Central Georgia EMC does serve part of Lamar County in the North-East corner. He said that more information and details are needed but he wanted to plant the idea for the board members to consider. Chairman Glass said that if they have to pull money from the General Fund, they may have to do a special tax district because people that are not covered by the EMC's will not be eligible to get the fiber. He said that if they serve parts of the school campus, which is inside of the City limits, and they run past your home, to get to the school. and you are in the City, they could still provide you with fiber. Chairman Glass said that it is not clear that the tax allocation district is just the City limits.

Commissioner Thrash said that she was in favor of looking into this to see what they could do. Commissioner Traylor said that a lot of people have been discussing this and there is a lot of interest in this. He said that he has not seen an estimated cost for the service per homeowner. Commissioner Thrash said that in Monroe County it is not costing the homeowner anything. Chairman Glass said that when the service is installed it has to run from the pole to the house. He said that Conexon will handle this part. Chairman Glass said that the monthly service cost will be paid to Conexon. Commissioner Traylor said that he works from home and his service charge went from \$90.00 to \$130.00 and it still is not enough. Chairman Glass said that the fiber service will be 1gb. He said that this is a Federal issue because Conexon received some of their money from the Federal Government and when they committed to taking the money their service level was 1gb. Commissioner Traylor said he was wondering what the monthly cost would be because there are lots of people that are asking for it.

Commissioner Thrash said that people do not mind paying for internet service if it is a good service. Commissioner Traylor said that this does not apply to everyone. Commissioner Heiney said that they were

paying over \$100.00 for DSL service because of the number of streamers they have in their home. He said that people are streaming a lot and they are going over the allotted gigabytes. Commissioner Heiney said that people are paying at least \$100.00 a month for internet service. Chairman Glass said that it is good to have options. Commissioner Traylor said that he knows some people will fuss if they have to pay \$100.00 a month. Chairman Glass said that Conexon has done this with other EMC's across the country and they have made it work. Commissioner Traylor said that with everything that he has read and researched no one has provided an estimated cost of service. Chairman Glass said that it is probably more than what they want to admit to.

Vice-Chairman Horton said that at a recent Three Rivers Regional Commission meeting there were discussions about this and they were going to get with the experts and other people in the State to see what they were doing. He said that the Troup County EMC had told them that they want the service but they do not want to see a bunch of boxes on the poles that could create health problems. Vice-Chairman Horton said that there was also discussion about the 4g and 5g network. He said that they discussed finding a solution with data for the next five years.

Chairman Glass said that Mrs. Cook told him that the build-out plan is for a four-year cycle and is to cover the whole area for Central Georgia EMC and Southern Rivers EMC. He said that they do not have a start date as of yet. Chairman Glass said that he would try to get more details. He said that he is sure they would like to have five million dollars but they would be happy with \$50,000.00 from Lamar County. He said he thought that they could work something out that would be beneficial to the citizens that would help to promote early delivery.

Old Jail Museum

Chairman Glass stated that he heard that the Old Jail Museum has a construction problem and that the City of Barnesville would like to take it over to make it more of a tourist attraction. He said that he was not sure that he wanted to give up the Old Jail Museum but they might start negotiations to do something in partnership with the City of Barnesville to help with construction improvements. Chairman Glass said that the hotel-motel tax that is being collected is the only facility that the County can spend it on because it has to be associated with tourism. Chairman Glass said that they are asking about the strip of land between the bank parking lot and the AT&T building across the back of the County's parking lot and the structures that are on it. He said that his thought is that the City of Barnesville wants to take it over entirely.

Commissioner Traylor said that City Manager Turner is very passionate about the Old Jail Museum. Chairman Glass said that they are nowhere close to making a decision and he just wanted to give the board a heads up about it. He suggested that County Administrator Townsend get some more details about it and try to work out a solution.

Towaliga Circuit

Commissioner Thrash said that the board members should have the Towaliga Circuit meeting on their calendar. She said that the meeting will be held on February 25th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Butts County EMC building.

Public Hearing Meetings

Planning and Community Development Director Buice addressed the board regarding several public hearings. She reported that the rezoning request for Ed and Vera York on Hwy 36 West had been withdrawn. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that when Mrs. York met with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) about a new partial entrance, they told her that they would require a middle turning lane at her expense and this was not feasible.

Planning and Community Development Director Buice reported on the minor subdivision request. She said that the owner bought a little over five acres because it was originally part of another platted subdivision and that is why this would need to be a board decision. Commissioner Thrash said that she had received several phone calls in opposition to this subdivision. Commissioner Thrash said that there is a stream that runs on the far side of the property and it goes down and drains into a swamp. Commissioner Thrash said that Public Works Director Rigdon is requiring a 36-inch pipe be placed out there for proper drainage because his driveway will come out around that area. She said that Mr. Lewis is aware of this. Commissioner Thrash said that neighbors are afraid that it is going to set a precedence and the neighbors are going to start selling and subdividing their property. She said that they are afraid that more people are going to try and build minor subdivisions. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the Planning and Zoning board recommended approval and no one came to the meeting to speak in opposition of the minor subdivision.

Planning and Community Development Director Buice reported that there is a special exception for a solar panel farm. She said that there were neighbors present for the Planning Commission board meeting. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that they had environmental concerns because they used metal to make the panels and they had aesthetic concerns about how it would look and the fact that they would see it every day when they drive by the property. She encouraged the board to do their own research regarding the safety of solar panels. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that when they start looking it up, they will find whatever they are researching. She said if they are against them, they will find lots of articles that will tell them really scary things and if they are for them, they will find a lot of studies that say that this is the safest alternative to creating energy. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that there were no hard and fast guidelines on how the solar panels will be in 40 years although they have been in place for about 40 years. Commissioner Thrash noted that there had been a lot of changes with solar panels. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the technology for solar panels has changed over the years. She said that in Georgia there are more and more solar panels going in and the Federal Government has put five in the past few years on military bases that are comparable in size to this one.

Chairman Glass said that they approved two solar panel sites in the County. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that this is for different property owners. She said that the first step in getting these sites approved is at the local level and if that site is approved then it goes to a higher level for approval. Commissioner Thrash said that this is different from what is done in other States. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the other solar panel sites, that did not get built, she can only assume that they did not get approval from the higher level. Commissioner Thrash said that these were smaller solar farms. Chairman Glass said that they planned to pitch to Georgia Power that they are ready to build and they have it zoned and they just need an agreement for them to buy so much energy from them. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that this is how this new Solar Panel farm works also. She said that once they have the local approval, they still have to apply to Georgia Power and Georgia Power still has to agree to buy the energy from them.

Chairman Glass asked if they had put any additional conditions on the previous solar panel farms regarding building within a year or two. Commissioner Thrash said that they did not. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that on the plans that TMJ Investments, LLC submitted with their Special Exception Application, they proposed their own 50 ft. buffer where it would be property line 50 ft. trees and then a fence around the panels. She said that during the Public Hearing with the Planning Commission board this is not what they said, so as the board is making this decision if it is approved, she said that buffers will be very important. She said that also they need to consider how long they need to give them once the site is decommissioned so it can be reverted back to its natural or original state of condition: farmland. Chairman Glass said that they needed to be more descriptive. He said that the original state of condition is A-R. Commissioner Thrash and Chairman Glass discussed what farmland should look

like; a nursery or a cotton field. Commissioner Thrash said that what they mean by this is that the panels are disposed of. Chairman Glass said that they need requirements about being decommissioned. He said that he did not want it to just say 'returned to the original state' it needs to be something more enforceable.

Commissioner Thrash said that she meet with Mr. McCook and discussed putting up a fence. She said that she had a constituent that had a complaint about seeing the solar panel farm from Crawley Road. Commissioner Thrash said that they discussed putting a fence where they cannot see inside. She said that Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that she felt like this was an eyesore and why not go ahead and plant the trees. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that what Mr. McCook was talking about was different from the plans because he was talking about putting the fence on the property line which runs right along Crawley Road. She said that it would be a road, a small ditch, and a 6 ft. tall black fence with nothing in between and no buffer. Commissioner Traylor said that it will look like an industrial site rather than an agricultural site. Vice-Chairman Horton said that he went out and looked at it and said the property is sitting out in the middle of nowhere. He said that back when electricity and all the other conveniences, that we have, were discovered, people complained and said that things are not going to stay the same. Vice-Chairman Horton said that in order to have progress, you have to make some changes. He said that making changes sometimes means sacrifice. Vice-Chairman Horton asked if they would be able to see the solar panels from the road. Commissioner Thrash and Commissioner Traylor replied that they will be able to see the solar panels from the road. Vice-Chairman Horton asked if they would be that much of an eyesore. Commissioner Thrash said that she went to Butler, Georgia, and looked at a large solar panel farm there. Chairman Glass said that there was one on Hwy 36 below the Rock, Georgia. Commissioner Traylor said that he also went and looked at the property for the solar panel farm and he understands visibility and he learned a lot with a trucking company that was on Hwy 36 regarding having trees and a fence as a buffer. Commissioner Traylor said that with issues like this, the board can assist. He said that this is just like the mobile home park in Millner, Georgia when the lady requested that trees be planted so that she would not have to see the mobile home park. He said that if you have a 50 to 75 ft. buffer of trees and a privacy fence versus a chain-link fence then that would not look so bad. Commissioner Traylor said that a chain-link fence with a black tarp around it reminds him of his father-in-law's industrial shop.

Chairman Glass said that with the decommissioning they need to address things such as the concrete base and if that is going to be allowed to stay or not, removing all of the metal structure, and the wiring that runs in the ground. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that it was her understanding that the concrete would only be under the mechanic room but not on each row of the panels. Chairman Glass said that if the panels were going to rotate then you would need a concrete base. He said that you would have to drive a post 20 ft. in the ground to be stable enough. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the conversation that she had with them was that under the row of panels it would remain grass. Chairman Glass said that there has to be a concrete base around the post to make sure it is stable. He said that if the whole solar panel farm is paved then this is even worse because you have a bunch of pieces of concrete at random in the field. Commissioner Thrash asked what the difference was in putting in a foundation for a house. Chairman Glass said because you assume the house is going to be there 100 years. Chairman Glass said that they could require decommissioning for houses too. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that they already do with the abandoned house ordinance. Chairman Glass said that you do not tear up foundations. Commissioner Thrash said that they want to make sure they put the structure back and they are not leaving a bunch of poles standing up. Chairman Glass said if there were tall enough trees, the pole could remain. Chairman Glass said that they needed to be specific and something enforceable with the decommissioning. Commissioner Thrash said that she was worried about the aesthetics. Commissioner Traylor said that the taxpayers would not have to pay for this unless it became the property of the County. Commissioner Thrash said that if this company goes under, she was told that 10 companies could take this project over. She said that the life expectancy of these projects is 30 years. Commissioner Thrash said that it was her understanding that after 10 years they have to come in and do extensive maintenance to the panels including spraying down the panels. She

said that they do not use any chemicals in cleaning them and there is no lead or mercury and it is all enclosed in plastic enclosures. Commissioner Thrash said that the question was raised about runoff and what will it do to the soil. She said that in order for something to leach into the property, there has to be something that changes the structure of the liquid that is leaching into the property. Commissioner Thrash said that there is nothing there to change the molecular structure. She said that the runoff issue is a mute issue. She said that another question was raised when she and Commissioner Heiney attended the Planning Commission meeting. This issue was one that Ed Bistany had who is building a house 100 ft. from the property line where this solar panel farm will be. He said that he is concerned about the glare from the panels and asked if his kids could go out in the yard to play. Commissioner Thrash said that it is her understanding even though they have not done the engineering on it yet, but she was told the panels will have to be placed in a southwestern direction which means the panels will be facing towards the lumber yard; like going towards Milner, Georgia. She said that they will rotate a little bit in order to absorb the full heat of the sunlight so this issue is a mute issue because they will not get direct sunlight. Commissioner Thrash said that there is a buffer line of trees.

Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that someone brought up that solar panel farms create a heat island and they were worried about how it would affect the weather. Commissioner Thrash stated that this was Ms. Holloway and she addressed her outside of the meeting about this and requested that she email her what she was talking about because most of the time when people are talking about climate change it is a political issue. She said that she had not heard back from her and she cannot address it if she does not know what the issue is about. Commissioner Traylor asked if there was anything that could cause contamination to the stream. Commissioner Thrash replied that there was nothing that could cause contamination to the stream. Commissioner Traylor said that this is an area of concern for him and when he visited a Rock Quarry, he found out that they have to do a water sample. Commissioner Traylor said that this is not unheard of and said that it would appease people to have a water sample once a year. Commissioner Thrash said that the only thing that they are talking about is rainwater. Chairman Glass said that if the water runs over it, it can pick up aluminum and glass. He said that the cadmium is crystalized into the cells. Commissioner Heiney said that there is a minimal amount of cadmium used in the panels according to what was said at the Planning and Zoning meeting. He said that the process includes a lot less cadmium. Chairman Glass said that it is used to generate electricity. Chairman Glass said that cadmium is toxic in powder or gaseous form. He said that once it is baked into the crystal it is not coming out of there even if the crystal breaks. Commissioner Thrash said that the way it is enclosed it cannot be released. Commissioner Traylor said unless it is broken or shattered. Commissioner Thrash said that this would raise another issue. Chairman Glass said that they would have to pulverize and heat it to get the cadmium to release. Commissioner Heiney said that these solar panels are under a new process than previous solar panels used. He said there is no mercury and no lead and a reduced amount of cadmium. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that when they are decommissioned, they will be easier to recycle and they will not end up in a landfill. Chairman Glass, Commissioner Thrash, and Commissioner Heiney agreed that they needed to list the part about decommissioning as a condition for aesthetic reasons. Chairman Glass and Commissioner Thrash said that they needed to state that everything would need to be removed above ground.

Commissioner Traylor asked if the conditions set would be on a deed in case there are remnants of the solar panel. Commissioner Thrash stated that it was public record. Chairman Glass said that it would not be on the deed unless they specified that it be added to the deed. He said that it would be a separate record. Commissioner Thrash said that they should not require this but they will require the buffers. She said that Mr. McCook asked if on the backside of the property, where the house is located, is he going to be required to put in a 300 ft. buffer that blocks the house, or are they going to require a 300 ft. buffer all the way across the backside of the land. She said that the Planning and Zoning Board required a 6 ft. chain link security fence at 50 ft. buffer from the property line. Commissioner Thrash asked if this meant he would do a buffer all the way across the property. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the plans are different from what they verbally said during the Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Thrash said that this is not what they told her after she met with them. Commissioner Thrash said that she was told that they wanted to do a 300 ft. buffer on the backside of the property and then all the way down Crawley Road. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that she wants the applicant to understand, because the person from the Solar Panel company, not Mr. McCook, almost sounded like that they only wanted to plant trees where the neighbors did not already have trees. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that this is not the intent of a buffer. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the person from the Solar Panel company said in the meeting that they would have a security chain link fence encompassing all of the property. Commissioner Thrash said that from what she understood, and from what she was told, they want to do the tree buffers all the way across Crawley Road and then on the backside of the property and approximate 300 ft. tree buffer to keep the people, that built the house, 100 ft. from the property line. Planning and Community Development Director Buice asked about cutting trees on the property not mentioned. Commissioner Thrash said that they said that they would cut some trees when you go into the entrance because solar panels will be placed there. Commissioner Thrash said that no one was affected in this location. She said that there is a utility line that runs through that spot. Commissioner Thrash suggested that Planning and Community Development Director Buice call them. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that if a buffer is required, the buffer is the burden of the applicant and not the adjoining property owner. Commissioner Thrash said that this was true and the applicant would be the one to do the buffer. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that if the adjoining property owner already has trees planted her understanding in the Planning Commission meeting, is that they said that they would not add trees. Commissioner Thrash said that they are adding trees. She said that they have to and they know that. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that she heard differently. Commissioner Traylor said that the applicant, the Solar Panel company, and the opposition would be at the Board of Commissioner's Public Hearing meeting and that Planning and Community Development Director Buice needs to make sure that this is clarified. Commissioner Traylor said that he understands that their trees are not the buffers and if they want to cut their trees down then they still could but there still needs to be a buffer between the solar panel farm and the property. Commissioner Thrash said that there will be. Planning and Community Development Director Buice asked why could they not just put a buffer where the person's house is close to the solar panel farm. Commissioner Thrash said that this was because there are no trees there. She said that the only thing that is there is a fence. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that she was lost on this issue and asked if he was asking to not add trees.

Chairman Glass said that they needed to just require a buffer wherever there is an adjoining property structure. Commissioner Thrash said that would not cover all of Crawley Road. She said that if they do only 300 ft. this only covers the vision of the solar panels. Commissioner Traylor asked why would they not do it all the way down Crawley Road in case they sell the property. Commissioner Thrash said that this was her point because Mr. Bistany is planning on building on more of this property. Commissioner Thrash said that they could either address the issue now or you are in essence penalizing this property owner, Mr. McCook. Commissioner Thrash said that this is a point that is going to be raised. Commissioner Traylor said that if he owns the land and there is no buffer then you have killed the value of his property so she would think that the buffer would go all the way around the property. Chairman Glass said that he has the responsibility for buffering this himself, on his side, because the solar panels were there before he decided to sell. Commissioner Traylor said that this is more of a grandfathered type of deal and they just cover the ones that are currently there. Commissioner Thrash said that this is the board's responsibility. Chairman Glass said that it is a burden to require a buffer around the entire property when a lot of it looks out over a pasture. Commissioner Thrash said that they would penalize him for something that may or may not happen. Planning and Community Development Director Buice said that the applicant planned to have a buffer all the way around the property.

Regular Business Meeting Discussion.

- A. The board heard that Mark Dicks with Rock Springs Church would give the invocation.
- B. The board reviewed 2 sets of minutes from January
 - i. Workshop Meeting-January 15th, 2021
 - ii. Regular Business Meeting-January 19th, 2021
- C. The board reviewed the Black History Month Proclamation.
- D. The board reviewed Resolution 2021-01 Annual Budget Amendment for the General Fund
- E. The board reviewed Resolution 2021-02 Annual Budget Amendment for E911.

County Administrator Townsend stated that last year the auditors determined that the way some things were handled needed to be done differently. He said that they are moving the expenses out of the General Fund into the E911 fund and begin subsidizing the E911 fund. He said that the biggest issue is with payroll and every month they will do Journal Entries to move expenses over to the E911 fund. Then they will reimburse the General Fund. Chairman Glass said that nothing that has been done is illegal, it is just a different way of tracking the expenses in the financial software. County Administrator Townsend said that during the year a certain amount of money would be transferred that has been budgeted as revenue. He said that this way they are paying for E911 each month as a reimbursement. Chairman Glass said that the business part is the same and it is the tracking that has changed. County Administrator Townsend said that he has to do a budget amendment for the General Fund as well as E911 because they are reducing the budget amount. He said that they are increasing the E911 fund and decreasing the General Fund.
- F. The board reviewed Resolution 2021-03 TMJ Investments, LLC-Solar Panels.
- G. The board reviewed Resolution 2021-04 Richard and Geri Lewis-Minor Subdivision
- H. The board reviewed Ordinance 2021-01 Richard and Geri Lewis-Minor Subdivision to rezone from Agricultural Residential (A-R) to Residential (R-1).
- I. The board reviewed the bids for the FY 2021-01 County Wide IT Managed Services.

County Administrator Townsend explained that he is getting quotes for someone to manage the IT services. He said that for every service call they charge \$120.00 so they want to change the IT service so there is a monthly charge rather than an individual charge for each service call. He said that he had been working with Wired Technology for the last four months and with COVID-19 it has been hard for them to come in and plug into all of the servers and the computers. He said that the bid of \$32,400.00 from Wired Technology is lower than what is currently being paid. He said that the quote from Milner Technologies is \$60,906.12 and the quote from Hargray is \$76,200.00. He said that the cost includes sonic firewalls, new switches, and licensing so that they can access each individual computer. County Administrator Townsend said that Wired Technology has all of this already done. He said that the staff recommends Wired Technology. County Administrator Townsend reported that in 2020 Wired Technology charged around \$60,000.00 not including the purchase of computers and servers. He said that he budgeted \$60,000.00 for 2021.
- J. The board heard a County Administrator's Report.
 - A. County Administrator Townsend reported that he had one bid on the Courthouse windows and he is waiting on another bid. He said that he called Home Depot and Lowe's and no one showed up.
 - B. He said that as of yesterday there was \$2,874,865.34 in the General Fund. Currently, there is no date set for the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) because the Departments are working to keep expenses low.
 - C. County Administrator Townsend reported on the ambulance contract. He said that the first suggestion was to pay them \$650.00 a month for the first 90 days and then \$850.00 for 120 days and then \$1,000.00 after 180 days. He said that in the contract it stated that if any of this was not met then they would have to surrender the ambulance service. He said he was told that they could not do that because this is Public Health. He said that he was told that he couldn't guarantee that if he gave them \$2,000.00 a day that they would not miss any calls. He said that he was told that they are slammed like every other EMS. He was told

that this was just a suggestion to help them. Now he is not requesting any money to help them out. He said that he is trying to hire some people and then train them.

- D. County Administrator Townsend said that the Coroner was not here when the budget was done. He gets insurance from the City of Zebulon and he wants to move \$2,000.00 from the insurance line item into the Tools and Supplies line item to help him purchase body bags. He wants to move the balance that is in the Insurance line item to the Supplies line item which is about \$5,800.00. He said that the Coroner is hoping to get a van donated then there would be a need for funds in the Fuel and Maintenance and Repair line item. He said that they are paying \$350.00 for transports to the State lab. He said that he needed approval from the board because even though it not against State law it is typically frowned upon to move funds from Personnel Services to the Operating Budget. Chairman Glass said that they had a situation like this before when Frank Abbott retired. He wanted to move salaries around so he negotiated half of that amount for his staff
- E. . Chairman Glass said that it was already in the budget and legally they could not deny it but they negotiated giving half of it back to General Fund and the other half going to other salaries. Chairman Glass said that this is a different case because it is not going into other salaries, it is going to the operating funds and for ongoing expenses. Chairman Glass said that this has not been done that he knows about. He said that this will revert back to the general operating funds and be spread across the rest of the budget. He said that it would go back into the reserve. Vice-Chairman Horton asked if the reason had to do with the COVID. County Administrator Townsend said that in the past, former Coroner Smith had gotten bags from funeral homes or the Sheriff's Office. He said that when he needed a body bag, he would not have one but said that he did order some but not as much as what was needed. County Administrator Townsend said that he did not know if it had anything to do with COVID. He said that he gets \$175.00 for each death plus mileage. Commissioner Traylor said that his only concern would be if he decided to change jobs and wants insurance in Lamar County or if the next Coroner comes in and needs insurance. He asked if they would pull it back out of the operating budget back into the Personnel Services. County Administrator Townsend said that it changes every year and he was not here during the process. Chairman Glass said that what happens if he does not get re-elected in four years and someone else comes in and needs insurance. He said that this would have to be added back and asked if it would come from the Supply line item. County Administrator Townsend said that every year is a little bit different from what the Department heads request. Chairman Glass said that four years from now it is going to be tougher to take it from the Tools and Supplies line item and then put that back into the Personnel Services/Insurance line item. County Administrator Townsend said that he would think that the Supply line item would actually be a little lower and they could take \$2,000.00 and put it in the Tools and Supply line item. He said that he is just trying to make sure that he has body bags and any kind of office supplies that he may need and said that Coroner Tillery had suggested that they do it this way. Commissioner Heiney asked where the body bags were stored. County Administrator Townsend replied that Coroner Tillery told him that he has a couple and Sheriff White has given him some. He said that Coroner Tillery has an order in for body bags. Commissioner Heiney asked how much they were a piece. County Administrator Townsend said that when he first got into Local Government, he asked a stupid question, "Can't you just re-use them"? Commissioner Traylor said that it might be better to do a one-time adjustment to the Tools and Supply line item and leave that money where it is and then know that it is going to roll back into the budget at the end. Commissioner Traylor said that this way he still have a line item associated with his benefits. Chairman Glass said that County Administrator Townsend has this authority to make this transaction. He said that he is just looking for some guidance and they do not have to vote on a budget amendment. Chairman Glass said that they just need to give the County Administrator some direction and clarification. He said that his thought is that the

Coroner may need money for supplies, so because it is different this year and the Coroner and a different way of doing things, he would tell him that we are leaving the budget as it is and if he has specific supplies that he needs, then County Administrator Townsend can approve those on a case-by-case basis. Chairman Glass said that this year the Coroner has the authority to move the money between his operating budget lines and the Coroner Tillery can work with the County Administrator to make this happen.

Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Horton made a motion at approximately 2:43 p.m. to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Heiney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

THE LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles Glass, Chairman

Bennie Horton, Vice-Chairman

Robert Heiney, Commissioner

Ryran Traylor, Commissioner

Nancy Thrash, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk