

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
October 24, 2023
6:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Gene King, Commissioner Rosla Plant, Commissioner Emmett Collins, and Commissioner Adam Worsley
Staff Present: Interim County Administrator Theron Gay, Assistant County Administrator Blue Cole, County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Directors Bill Gregory and John Gorton, and County Attorney Michael Hill

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bryan Threadgill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Bill Gregory, Finance Director.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Commissioner Plant to adopt the Agenda. All were in favor.

V. PRESENTATIONS

None

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director, Bill Gregory, reported the General Fund had increased due to the State Insurance Commissioners deposit from last week. We have also received some large transfers from the Tax Commissioners office. Funds have been moved from the TSPLOST account at F&M Bank to the State Account in order to earn a higher interest rate.

VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS

George Richmond announced the MC Animal Shelter was recognized by a National Organization, Best Friends, for being a no kill shelter for 2022. Mr. Richmond stated we are also in line to receive one for 2023.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT

Tony Dolittle, resident of Fern Road, in Woodbury, discussed conditions of the roads in his area. Mr. Dolittle stated rain that occurred on October 12, 2023 had made the roads impassable. Some residents got stuck because of the muddy road, some were unable to get to their jobs and medical appointments. There were concerns from the residents of not being able to get a firetruck to a home if needed. Residents reported roads are worse now than they have been in the past. Mr. Doolittle stated residents have reached out to the County but had not received a reply by email or telephone. Mr. Doolittle discussed the drainage and stated the dirt is washing into the ditch. The

culvert pipes have been ineffective. Some of the pipes were removed in the last few years but still remained on the side of the road. One of the culvert pipes is blocking a neighbor's driveway. Mr. Doolittle urged the County to have more frequent maintenance of the roads and to clean up where the pipes had been left. Mr. Doolittle asked if the State does inspections on the storm runoff. A petition to the Board of Commissioners from the MC residents around Fern Road was given to the Chairman. The purpose of the petition was to make the County aware of the poor road conditions on and around Fern Road in Woodbury. The concerns were that even though there had been recent efforts to make the road passable, the full problem had not been addressed in its entirety and the relief provided would only be temporary. The residents of and around Fern Road requested frequent, scheduled maintenance and to crown the road, clear drainage ditches, unstop the culvert pipes and clear all obstructions, and to have adequate base material installed and maintained.

Debra Findley Goff, Findley Cato Road, provided a letter to each Board Member. Chairman Threadgill read the letter at the request of Ms. Goff. In her letter, Ms. Goff expressed concerns that Findley Cato and Fern Roads were impassable for five days on or around October 12, 2023. There were issues with the road after it was scraped and loose debris was piled on top of the roads. This was reported to Mr. Lucas, from Public Works, who stated this happened because the ditches had not been cleaned out in a long time and it created a lot of soil that was unable to be packed. After receiving 3" of rain the loose soil turned into deep mud. When the roads were initially scraped there was a lot of dust and no gravel was added prior to the rain. Following the rain, the entire length of both roads became impassable. Ms. Goff stated this was not caused by nature but by County workers. Ms. Goff stated there were women, children, and people with health problems that were unable to travel from their homes to the highway for five-days. Ms. Goff stopped by the Commissioner's office and spoke with Interim Administrator Theron Gay and County Clerk Beverly Thomas. Interim Administrator Gay thought more funding for gravel would be necessary and said he would look into road work machines that will pack the road once work was completed. The County will continue to document before and after conditions at the logging sites. Ms. Goff requested in her letter that the Board support and make a priority funding for the County Administrator and Road Worker's requests for maintaining the County's dirt roads along with encouraging and providing training and standard operating procedures. Ms. Goff then stated it would be unacceptable to the County Administrator and Commissioners that the roads were impassable for five days. Residents were put in danger, three were stuck in the mud, and UPS and FedEx would not attempt deliveries during that time.

Derrick Bowman signed the request to speak.

Jay Coogler, Findley Cato Road, stated he was mad and had moved here 10-years ago and had called regarding minor and now major stuff. Mr. Coogler asked what Board members would do if their loved one was on the road and the ambulance or firetruck could not get to them. Mr. Coogler stated this is ridiculous and then spoke about the size of rocks that had been put down and the correct size rock that was needed on the roads. Mr. Coogler provided insight on how to improve the road with scraping and the addition of rock. Currently residents cannot go over 3 miles per hour due to the large size rock the County added because it hits the cars and bounces into the ditches.

IX. MINUTES

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to approve the Minutes from the October 10, 2023 Regular Meeting. Voting in favor were

Commissioner Plant, Commissioner Collins, Vice Chairman King, and Commissioner Worsley. Chairman Threadgill abstained.

X. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go into a Public Hearing for the 2023-2043 Joint Meriwether County and Cities Comprehensive Plan Update. All were in favor. Stephanie Wagner, Planner with the Three Rivers RDC, stated they have helped to facilitate Meriwether County and the Cities with the 2023 five-year Comprehensive Plan update. It is an update that is required every five years to remain a qualified Local Government. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to let the Board know that the draft document is available for review. Ms. Wagner encouraged everyone to take a look at the draft document and send any comments or considerations to Three Rivers. A copy of the draft document will be sent to the Department of Community Affairs for their formal review which may take from 15 to 30 days. Public comments are welcomed during that time before the draft document is adopted into a final document. There were no questions from the Board for Ms. Wagner. Mayor Don Cuttie from West Oak Street in Luthersville addressed the Board. Even though we have labeled the Comprehensive Plan the 2023-2043 plan, it is really an update of what went into effect in 2018. Mayor Cuttie addressed one portion that has to do with Gateway Signage. The question to the Board was if they were willing to work with the City of Luthersville in establishing those signs. Chairman Threadgill stated the Board would discuss this. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to go out of the Public Hearing. All were in favor.

2. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-01- An Ordinance amending the code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to adopt and amend Appendix A-Zoning, Article 3 – Definitions, Sec. 3.1 -Definitions, repeal conflicting code provisions, uncodified Ordinances, or portions thereof; to restate and reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as modified herein; to establish an effective date; and for other purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning and Community Development Director, stated a redline version and corrected version was provided to the Board. This is for the definition of Plat Minor Final and Ms. Sharpe requested the Board approve and allow the Chairman to sign. Interim Administrator Gay stated this prevents Plats, that are not approved through the MC Planning Department, to be put on record at the Courthouse. The County will make sure that it meets County standard before they go on file. Michael Hill, Attorney, stated this coincides with the next Ordinance and together they will do that. There were no comments from the Public. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of the Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman King to approve Ordinance 2023-01 and allow the Chairman to sign. All were in favor.

3. Motion was made by Commissioner Collins and seconded by Vice Chairman King to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-03 – An Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to adopt and amend Appendix B, Article IV – Platting Jurisdiction, and Enforcement, Sec. 401 – Platting Authority, Repeal Conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or Portions Thereof; to Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as modified herein; to establish an effective date; and for other purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community

Development Director stated the Board had been provided a redline copy and a correct copy of this Ordinance. This coincides with Ordinance 2023-01 that was just approved. We are having to strike out Subdivision under the Plating Authority because this is for all plats. Ms. Sharpe asked the Board to approve and allow the Chairman to sign. Interim Administrator, Theron Gay, stated this will allow the Community Development Department to be the official authority to sign off on these before they are recorded. Attorney Hill stated in the redline version it changes it to final plat or plat minor final down the last two lines. What we had before required that a subdivision which required a final plat, be reviewed but not any other plat. By adding the plat minor final that is what would be changing. Vice Chairman King asked if this was for subdivisions only, such as if you were doing two lots. Attorney Hill stated a plat minor final is defined as the, as it was mentioned a second ago, as any division of a tract of land into two or more lots that is not considered a subdivision. This is for anytime you have a family splitting parcels or whatever it may be, they need to get the Community Development approval. Vice Chairman King did not know why it should be declared a misdemeanor because it can now split. It was discussed the other day that the new Ordinance we have now, for example someone was going to get/purchase a piece of property that meets the road front requirements, we now can split that property up to three times without having to go through Planning and Zoning and posting a sign like we used to do. You can have a surveyor come out and survey it and it is ready to go and the Planning Department would need to sign off on it. Vice Chairman King did not understand why this would be a misdemeanor because somebody did everything we had passed saying yes, you can have a survey and they split it up then go to get it recorded and did not realize she just has to put her signature on this, but yet, we have a Code that says you can do this. Vice Chairman King did not feel any citizen should be written a misdemeanor. Interim Administrator Gay stated he thought what you will find is that once this document is in place the Clerk's office will not record it without this. Vice Chairman King had been concerned that someone could have recorded it and they were not stopped at that time and then they were charged with a misdemeanor. Attorney Hill stated it would not be an automatic charge and the Office could decide whether to charge. There were no others to speak. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to approve and allow the Chairman to sign Ordinance 2023-03. All were in favor.

4. Motion was made by Commissioner Rosla Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-04 – An Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to adopt and amend Chapter 6 – Building and Building Regulations, Article 1 – In General, Sec. 6.5, Permits; When Required; Fee; Exceptions, (G), Repeal Conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or Portions Thereof; To Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as Modified Herein; to Establish an Effective Date; and for Other Purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community Development Director stated a redline and corrected copy had been provided to the Board. The change adds section G and section 6.5 to allow for the use of a Recreation Vehicle while having an active building permit. Currently, people are living in RV's and our Ordinance does not allow this. When they sell their homes and have no place to go they are wanting to live in the RV while they build their home. The County has created section G to allow this as a temporary use. There was no one to speak. Motion was made by Commissioner Collins and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to go out of Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to approve. All

were in favor.

5. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-05 – An Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to Adopt and Amend Appendix A – Zoning, Article 7 – Zoning District Standards and Permitted Uses, Sec 7.3 - Permitted Uses and Special uses, Repeal Conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or Portions Thereof; To Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County Georgia as Modified Herein: To establish an Effective Date; and for Other Purposes. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community Development Director stated a redline and corrected copy had been provided to the Board. We have added #3 under Section 7.3, permitted uses because of recreational vehicles now being allowed as a temporary use. They were not allowed under certain districts. This Ordinance allows them under the A-1, RR, LDR, RD, and R-1 while a Building Permit is in effect. Vice Chairman King stated we had discussed this before when it came before the Board. It states only a family member. Vice Chairman King gave an example of having a designated person other than family being allowed to live in the RV while the home is being built. There is no way to police that it is a family member. Ms. Sharpe stated this is for temporary use not a permanent use. Chairman Threadgill agreed with Vice Chairman King in allowing someone other than a family member to live in the RV while the home was being built. An example was given of allowing an elderly couple to name someone besides a family member to stay in the RV while the home was being built. They may want to do this for security purposes. Chairman Threadgill stated we do need the application to permit an individual to be named. Attorney Hill stated this was discussed in redrafting and they considered the Board's comments. The recommendation of Attorney Hill, Interim Administrator Gay, and Ms. Sharpe was that the purpose of this Ordinance was not for security, it is for people who sell their homes early or who don't have a place to actually live. What was meant by the immediate family was if you have a family of five and you sold your home and all could live in the RV while the house was being built. Attorney Hill stated you have to make it consistent and our Zoning Ordinance had to be consistent with the Ordinance that is allowing this. Chairman Threadgill did not understand how it went from what the Board of Commissioners wanted to a whole different outlay. Vice Chairman King stated he backed up Chairman Threadgill on the "what if" examples that were used. Chairman Threadgill thought we needed to add a provision for allowing someone beside a family member, such as a designee, to stay in the RV because if they have someone hired to watch or look over the construction, that individual may stay on the property such as if the people are moving here from somewhere else or out of State. Attorney Hill stated the Board just approved #4, which reads immediate family member. To rechange #4 Article 1, Section 6.5 G we will need to do a notice for an Amendment to that Ordinance, 2023-04. It was determined no changes were needed in the next Ordinances that would be read. There were no comments from the Public. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go out of Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Collins to *(corrected under Minutes of the November 28, 2023 Meeting) - continue the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-05 and to readvertise a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-04 to correct language that is in conflict with the recommended changes to Ordinance 2023-05.*

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to go into Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-06 – An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to Adopt and Amend Appendix A-Zoning, Article 10- Manufactured Homes and Manufactured Home Parks, Sec. 10.4 – Recreational Vehicle Parks, Repeal Conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or Portions Thereof; to Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as Modified Herein; to Establish an Effective Date; and for Other Purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community Development Director stated a redline and corrected copy had been provided to the Board. This Ordinance is in Section 10.4 Recreational Vehicle Parks. Prior to this you could only have your Recreational Vehicle in an RV Park. This Ordinance allows you to have the Recreational Vehicle in zones that were mentioned before. Attorney Hill stated this was not dependent on the Zoning Change in #5 which the Board deferred. It is dependent on #4 which was approved. The Board can pass this Ordinance and when the Board changes #4 this Ordinance will change by operation of referencing #4. There were no comments from the Public. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go out of the Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Collins to approve Ordinance 2023-06. All were in favor.

7. Motion was made by Commissioner Collins and seconded by Rosla Plant to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-07 An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to Adopt and Amend Appendix A – Zoning, Article 5, Supplemental Regulations, Sec 5.4 Accessory Uses and Structures, Repeal Conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or Portions Thereof; To Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as Modified Herein; to Establish an Effective Date; and for Other Purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community Development Director stated a redline and corrected copy had been provided to the Board. This Ordinance is for building a Guest House or Mother-in-law suite. It allows an accessory use and allows for one GH or Mother-in-law suite with a maximum of 1,000 square feet and a minimum of 500 square feet of heated finished floor area. This structure would need to be located on the rear or side of the principle building but no more than 100' from the principle structure. There was conversation of an error on the corrected copy which included a red line and it will be removed. Any accessory building must be located at least ten feet from the principle building. Under H the County added I to allow for residential accessory building that could be used as a Guest House. A change was made to D to say any accessory building. James Clements asked about how the accessory would be taxed. There were no other comments. Motion was made by Vice Chairman King and seconded by Emmett Collins to go out of the Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman King to approve Ordinance 2023-07 and allow the Chairman to sign based on the changes discussed. All were in favor.

8. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go into a Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-08 – An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia, to Adopt an Amended Chapter 6, Article 1, to Provide for the Requirement of Posting of a Building Permit For Work Requiring a Building

Permit in Unincorporated Meriwether County, Georgia; to Repeal conflicting Code Provisions, Uncodified Ordinances, or portions thereof; to Restate and Reaffirm the Code of Ordinances of Meriwether County, Georgia as Modified Herein; to Establish an Effective Date; and for other purposes. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Building, Zoning, and Community Development Director stated a redline and corrected copy had been provided to the Board. Ms. Sharpe stated this is for Article I in General, Section 6.7 – Posting of Building Permits. We do not have a current Ordinance that requires Building Permits to be posted at a certain location and height. This has created a problem when our inspectors and code officers are going to the property to see the properties. Some are not being posted. Chairman Threadgill asked about the requirements. Ms. Sharpe stated work shall not commence until the permit holder or his agent posts the permit card in a conspicuous place and no higher than 6' from the ground. The building permit shall be protected from the weather. The permit card shall be maintained and kept onsite by the permit holder until the certificate of occupancy or completion is issued by the building official. Vice Chairman King stated he thinks we need to change the wording on this because it states work requiring a building permit shall not commence until the permit is posted. Vice Chairman King stated in every County he works in; you do not get inspections unless it is posted. Vice Chairman King gave an example of someone having to go to the hospital and not being able to get the permit posted and a framer comes to start work and he would be issued a misdemeanor. Ms. Sharpe stated they should not start work without a permit. Vice Chairman King stated he may not have it posted. Vice Chairman King stated he had been sheet rocking for three weeks. It took a while to get a permit because the computer system would not give it to him. He came in to get a permit and the girl in the office could not handle it. Ms. Sharpe stated that is a rare occasion and this keeps people from starting work and not getting a permit. Vice Chairman King stated it is all done online now and gave an example of the process in getting and paying for a permit online. Vice Chairman King stated once someone has that permit and has paid for it they should be able to start work. You should not have to stop workers just because you have not got the permit posted. There was more conversation and examples given. Attorney Hill stated Ms. Sharpe looked at what other Counties were doing and some of our neighboring Counties use nearly the exact language in 6.7. Technically 6.8 already exists and all we did was move it down. The misdemeanor language already exist in our Ordinance. Commissioner Worsley stated it does not say posted it says not obtained. Attorney Hill stated it is any violation of Section 6 not just 6.7. Commissioner Worsley stated you would not get a misdemeanor if you do not post it you would get a misdemeanor if you do not have a permit. Attorney Hill stated 6.8 already exists under our Ordinance. Vice Chairman King stated Counties tell him all the time to make sure the permit is posted and visible if he wants the inspections. Attorney Hills stated this is the specific language that Coweta County has on their books but the Board has to make the decision. Vice Chairman King stated the only citation he got was for working before he received a permit because of being in a hurry. Commissioner Worsley did not have a problem with the way it is written.

James Clements, from Primrose Road, stated he opposed Vice Chairman King's position. Mr. Clements is currently building a Church in Dekalb County. Before he could start he had to have a permit and his plans on site. Mr. Clements feels the Ordinance should not be something to favor some people. Mr. Clements gave an example of a man whose wife is having a baby. He will have

someone else working for him that can pull the permit if he wants to get to work. If we want to be consistent, like other Counties, we need to stand up and be like the surrounding Counties who have the same Ordinances. A lot of people are moving to Meriwether County because a lot of the laws are eased. An example was given of emissions and having to pay for that in Coweta County but not having that in Meriwether County. Mr. Clements stated but is that right. We need to stand on the side of right and not for a preference of one company or one person. Vice Chairman King clarified that he represents Meriwether County and does not want to be like Dekalb and a lot of other big Cities and Counties in the State of Georgia. Vice Chairman King did not mean that for favoritism but for 40 plus years working here. When he has big jobs in larger Cities and Counties, you have to have everything in place. Mr. Clements stated from sitting in the audience it seemed personal. Vice Chairman King stated it is not personal and that he posts his permit signs. When someone has paid their \$1,400 for a permit but hasn't gone to Home Depot and got the box to post on the site yet, the Code Enforcement could cite them, even though he has the permit. It was the opinion of Vice Chairman King that if the person has a permit and everything is approved that would mean he can go to work. There were no other comments from the public. Motion was made by Commissioner Collins and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to go out of the Public Hearing. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to approve Ordinance 2023-08. Voting in favor were, Commissioner Plant, Commissioner Collins, Chairman Threadgill and Commissioner Worsley. Vice Chairman King was opposed. The motion passed.

XI. APPOINTMENTS

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to table the appointment to the CAFI Board to fill an unexpired term. All were in favor.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Interim Administrator, Theron Gay stated Administration has requested to purchase software to assist in the management of Open Records. Interim Administrator Gay stated that the office is inundated some days with Open Records Requests and the Clerks are not able to get anything else done for assisting with those requests. Interim Administrator Gay stated that staff had researched this software and visited with the Clerks at the City of Newnan. Interim Administrator Gay explained that this software would assist in streamlining Public Records Requests offering a more user-friendly interface and platform. Interim Administrator Gay explained that the breakdown of costs was in the package with the first year being negotiated down and paid for out of SPLOST and subsequent years paid for out of the General Fund. Chairman Threadgill asked for an explanation of the costs. Deputy Clerk Allyson Stephens explained that the cost would be \$4,991.00 for the first year as there is a one-time set up fee of \$500.00, but the company is giving a One-time Credit for Service in the amount of \$1497.00, which is three months of credit. After the first year the cost is \$5,988.00. County Attorney, Michael Hill explained to the Board that there is a redline version of the Master Service Agreement and just like any other vendor that has a product there is a Master Service Agreement. Attorney Hill explained that there was extensive back and forth between their legal and the County's legal departments and there are two areas that the Board should be aware of. The first was section 4.2 where legal had the company strike some indemnity language but there is potential for penalties if the County misuses their software and their company wants to be able

to pass those penalties through if they are cited by a government entity or someone who is policing that. Commissioner Worsley asked if that was if we misuse the software. Attorney Hill explained that if we misuse the software then the company can be penalized and they would pass that penalty, up to \$100,000 to the County. Attorney Hill stated the other item is in the Service Level Agreement in Section 3.3, referring to tech support, the vendor has a procedure for tech support and if there is some type of damage caused by the unavailability of getting that tech support, then the vendor has a sole remedy of where the County would get free tech support in the future. Attorney Hill stated the vendor was agreeable on removing indemnity clauses and agreeable on adapting their limitation of liability clauses and allowing an addendum that we had attached to another company that we started using as a standard to take precedence. Attorney Hill wanted the Board to be aware of these two items; but if the Board feels this is a service that is needed, they needed to be aware of a couple of unfavorable terms. Chairman Threadgill asked I.T. Director Matthew Brown for his take on the software. I.T. Director Brown stated this would be a really good program for the County and will help bring all the Open Records Requests into one place. I.T. Director Brown explained that the requests could then be sent out as well as payments being able to be tracked. I.T. Director Brown stated that credit card payments could be included with the system and fees being passed on to the requestor. Chairman Threadgill asked if the responsibility of the software would be totally on I.T. Director Brown. I.T. Director Brown stated it would not, but he would help manage it as well. I.T. Director Brown stated he felt this would be a benefit for the County and is with a vendor that the County already has multiple other pieces of software with and would keep everything in-house. Commissioner Worsley stated to Attorney Hill that in the redlined addendum in Section 14 it states the County has the right to terminate the agreement without cause upon 30 days and then in parenthesis 60 days. Commissioner Worsley asked which is it? Attorney Hill stated that in this instance you would use the handwritten over the typed and it should be 30 days. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to accept the Agreement with the first-year cost being \$4,991.00 paid out of SPLOST and second and subsequent years being \$5,988.00 to be paid out of General Fund. All were in favor.

2. Interim Administrator Gay stated before discussing the Ellis Road project, a little later on in the meeting during his report time, he would like to speak with the Board about setting up a couple of Work Sessions. Administrator Gay stated that one of those Work Sessions would be to discuss work projects and has suggestions on what could be done with some of the remaining TSPLOST dollars to improve some of the dirt roads in the community. Chairman Threadgill stated that he realizes that this was already brought up at a previous meeting with a 2 to 2 vote with no action being taken. Chairman Threadgill stated he read over the information and looked over it and would like to table the discussion until he has a chance to go out and look at the road. Chairman Threadgill asked that this be tabled to the next meeting, so he has time to go out, look at the road, and educate himself. Vice Chairman King stated that he did go and travel Ellis Road and traveled it at 55 miles per hour and that road to him was one of the nicest dirt roads in County. Vice Chairman King stated he calculated it, and the ditches are dug out and its wide and looks good. Vice Chairman King stated he was informed it was 3½ miles long with 39 houses on it. Vice Chairman King stated the first two miles has houses on it but the last 1½ miles has hunting land on both sides and he counted 29 houses. Vice Chairman King stated that if you were to go down that road right now and put 20ft wide 2inch thick gravel on it for two miles, for about \$45,000, those people would think Meriwether County hit the lottery and they would be ecstatic. Vice Chairman King stated that the Ellis Road project is \$500,000 on this dirt road and

Fern Road folks can't even get out of their driveways or ambulance or so forth. Vice Chairman King stated that road he was going to recommend too and then Chairman Threadgill is going to look, but that road has a crown, is going downhill or uphill, the ditches are dug out, although they did put all the dirt up on the bank and it is eventually going to run back down, but the road is exceptional other than the fact if it rains it will turn into red mud. Vice Chairman King stated that the road is flat and smooth and if it had gravel before it rained that would be a nice road. Administrator Gay stated that one of the things with the gravel is if it hasn't rained for two months and you try to put gravel down it just rolls off the top of the road and won't pack down. Administrator Gay stated one of the things he would like to explore and bring back to the Board after doing calculations, is the remaining dollars in TSPLOST. Administrator Gay stated that ideally it would be great to do what was bid out on this road, which is recrown the road, reprofile the road, do the ditches, and change the pipe out as we have all the paperwork ready to go on this project. Administrator Gay stated his thoughts pertaining to the balance of TSPLOST is that we are coming into winter and the roads don't have much gravel and what we would like to come up with is a program to contract out haulers to help deliver gravel and blade it in with packer and motor grader. Administrator Gay stated it would not be perfect but would be a whole lot better and maybe help avoid situations like what happened a couple weekends ago. Vice Chairman King stated that when he asked several months ago to get a list of the dirt roads that are in the worst condition and work our way up to the better roads, not start with a nice road at \$550,000 and the rest of the County is going to be livid. Commissioner Worsley stated that Administrator Gay just talked about getting into the dead of winter where the same people who came and spoke tonight shouldn't be anticipating getting any work done because of the weather that is coming up, but the same statement made about this road if we approve the money, we're not going to do the work until later on in the spring because of the weather conditions. Commissioner Worsley stated that we have people that are not able to get in and out of their house and now we're going to expect them to just tough it out through winter. Administrator Gay stated that is not what we are saying, what he is bringing to the Board tonight is let's do some work right now by putting some gravel down on these roads. Administrator Gay stated it won't be perfect, but it will be a whole lot better than what it is and not to put gravel down when it's too wet or it will mash down and create a mud puddle. Administrator Gay stated that if we have some good days left, we can get a lot done before winter. Commissioner Worsley stated it is not going to rain for the next 10 days and that is his reasoning on this road and based on the things discussed in the last meeting he is not in favor of paving this road or dedicating this money to this road at this time because of the current condition of it versus other roads and the amount of time before we will ever even get started on it and we have committed the money already that we can't go and do something that's got an immediate need because we are low on funds. Commissioner Worsley stated that's not fair to the rest of the County for the people that can't get in and out, for these people and they are not the only ones, there are other people who didn't come tonight. Administrator Gay stated that he understands that, and this was one of the five roads that was brought forth. The Board requested to look at completely reworking the road and that is why it was put together. It required a lot of work by County staff. Administrator Gay explained that you couldn't do a lot of work on the road during the winter, but you could do some, and what he is explaining with the gravel is that he would like to get as much gravel on the roads as possible before the winter months. Administrator Gay stated this would take a commitment from us to do the motor grading. Commissioner Worsley stated a commitment from who? The Board of Commissioners or who is us? Administrator Gay stated us is the County, but we need to Board to say go out and

do it. Administrator Gay explained that we can't go out and do it until the Board says go ahead and pursue it. Commissioner Worsley stated there are a lot of things that they said go out and pursue and they're not done. Administrator Gay stated that the Board waited until the middle of the year and then there is a list of 25 things to do and we end up going down the road and spending a lot of time on it then the Board changes their mind. Interim Administrator Gay stated we need to know what you want to do. Commissioner Worsley asked what they changed their mind on. Interim Administrator Gay stated Ellis Road. Vice Chairman King asked if the bid on Ellis road was to do from stop sign to stop sign. Administrator Gay stated it was to completely rework the road. Bill Cawthorne, Public Works Special Projects, stated that the bid request included replacing all the cross drainpipes, those that were not concrete, which is a lot of pipes. Mr. Cawthorne explained if you don't get the drainage right, it will mess up the road. Commissioner Worsley stated he understood what Interim Administrator Gay said and that they had asked for a priority of ranking of roads at the time and being new in the role trusted what the assessment was of the ranking of the roads, but either a whole lot has changed drastically in the last 8-9 months, or this road should have never been prioritized in the beginning. Mr. Cawthorne stated that Ellis Road is the road with the most complaints. Commissioner Worsley stated that if you can do 55mph or higher, how is it the road that needs the most attention. Interim Administrator Gay stated that Ellis Road is the number one complaint road and Mr. Cawthorne explained it has the most traffic. Vice Chairman King stated is it because of the subdivisions out there and not because it is cutting through? Mr. Cawthorne explained that you have 38 homes on the road with two paved subdivisions off of that and Trammel Bottom Road that cuts through as well and it has the most traffic on it than any of them. Chairman Threadgill stated that because this vote was 2 to 2 and he was to be the tiebreaker he would like to go out and look at the road, He would like to make a motion to table this to the next meeting. Vice Chairman King seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Jay Coogler of 1094 Findley Cato Road was allowed to speak again by Chairman Threadgill and stated to the Board that as long as there wasn't any gravel on the road you can run 30-40 mph on the road. Mr. Coogler stated that when the gravel is laid up on top of the road right in the center, you can't get over either way because the road is powder, with the ditches very deep you can turn a truck over. Mr. Coogler stated that when someone is sent out, it must be someone in training that thinks he knows how to run a motor grader. Mr. Coogler stated that a motor grader is a hard machine to run, and you have to get the hang of it and go slow. Chairman Threadgill asked that Mr. Coogler focus his statements onto a road. Chairman Threadgill stated that Mr. Coogler is making it about employees and we're not going to do that tonight. Chairman Threadgill stated we will listen to the road requests but not talk about employees, if he would do that, he would be allowed to continue. Mr. Coogler stated he is just saying to send someone down that knows how or has run one before and not somebody that is in training because it is like a washboard, and they are going so fast they can't wait to get done. Mr. Coogler stated that if you do go down there to go in a car that nobody recognizes, because when you see the Meriwether County trucks on the side of the driveway, all they are doing is riding and hiding.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Bill Cawthorne, Public Works Special Projects, presented the Board with a change order for some of the roads that were repaired during the flood in March and some other roads that have cross drainpipes replaced. Mr. Cawthorne explained that there was an addition to the 2023

servicing contract as there was a shortage in the amount of tonnage needed on Stovall Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated the change order is in the amount of \$376,541.64. Mr. Cawthorne stated there is a large section of Stovall Road where gravel had to be kept on it and it is very unstable, in a flood plain area and has a creek in the area. Mr. Cawthorne explained that you could go in and patch the small holes, but the rest of the area of road would not make it through the winter. Commissioner Worsley asked if this was for the resurfacing of Stovall Road from the railroad tracks to the county line. Mr. Cawthorne stated the additional amount of \$16,033.92 is to increase the tonnage that will be needed to do the resurfacing on that part of Stovall Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated the other part is a 2000 ft section that has fallen apart and a cross drainpipe is in the change order. Commissioner Worsley stated he was confused. Mr. Cawthorne stated this was a totally different area from the original request on Stovall. Mr. Cawthorne explained the original cost was \$114,528 and went up to \$130,561. Interim Administrator Gay stated that this was an addition that was not in the original contract and Mr. Cawthorne stated it just occurred in April. Mr. Cawthorne stated this was just his recommendation and if they didn't want to do that, they could do smaller patches, but you probably will end up with more of the road falling apart during the winter. Commissioner Plant stated she has had a lot of requests on Stovall Road, and it has been brought to her attention there has been a lot of logging and for every patch made it is getting torn up quite a bit. Mr. Cawthorne explained there are a lot of other issues, and it won't address them all but will get the main problem areas taken care of. Commissioner Worsley asked when the work can start. Mr. Cawthorne stated that it will be added to the existing contract and right now the company is working on Luthersville Road and will be moving to do deep patching next week on all the various projects. Interim Administrator Gay stated that the company needs a signed change order as they have already received a notice to proceed. Commissioner Plant asked if Forrest Road and Trammel Bottom Road were still on the list. Mr. Cawthorne advised it was. Chairman Threadgill asked if this would be funded out of TSPLOST. Interim Administrator Gay stated this was part of LMIG and would be funded from SPLOST. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant to approve the 2023 Resurfacing Project Change Order #2 in the amount of \$376,541.64 to be paid with SPLOST. Commissioner Worsley seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2. Interim Administrator Gay stated staff would like to hold off on the request from the Chamber of Commerce for a sponsorship in the amount of \$1,500 to the Reach Scholarship Program. The County will need to do more research on this program since the County has limitations on contributions to private groups. Motion was made Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Collins to table the request from the Chamber of Commerce for sponsorship for the Reach Scholarship Program in the amount of \$1,500. All were in favor.

3. *(This was omitted when the BOCC approved the Minutes on November 8, 2023. The Board then added this to the November 28, 2023 Agenda under Minutes and included this in the approval of the Minutes from October 24, 2023)*

Chairman Threadgill read a Proclamation for the Georgia Military Veterans' Hall of Fame, Inc. The Proclamation was in recognition of those who have served. Chairman Threadgill stated one name provided in the letter was Army Major Charles L. Kelly of Warm Springs, who was killed in action. The Proclamation deemed Saturday, November 4, 2023 as Georgia Military Veterans Hall of Fame, Inc. Day. The Georgia Military Veterans Hall of Fame inducts 15 Georgians each year into the premier Military Veterans Hall of Fame. Chairman Threadgill stated as of 2023, 177 Georgians have been inducted to include one former

Meriwether County, Warm Springs number 124, 2020 Army Major Charles L. Kelly who was killed in action.

Mr. James Clements of 2675 Primrose Road requested that the Board allow him to speak and thanked them for the Proclamation as he is a combat veteran of two foreign wars, equivalent to Major Stevens and requested that the Proclamation be placed in the local newspaper. Chairman Threadgill stated that after all had signed, they would do that and thanked Mr. Clements for his service.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Interim County Administrator, Theron Gay, reported since the last meeting he had met with the Board of Elections to discuss space, met with citizens to discuss various topics such as the Comprehensive Plan, met with proposed subdivision development, met with County Attorneys on the upcoming case in Federal Court from property owners and the IRS, met with the City of Manchester on service delivery of animal control and possible dispatch of non-emergency, and held a conference call with Attorneys on the ordinance changes that were on tonight's Agenda in terms of minor stuff. Administrator Gay stated what he would like to mention to the Board the need to have a couple of Work Sessions. Interim Administrator Gay stated he felt if we had some Work Sessions last year, we would all be on a straighter path. One of the items to discuss is the difficulty of getting people to work, the quality of work, and the need to come up with a solution. Interim Administrator Gay stated this coming weekend, on his own time, he is going to prepare a salary chart that will be the basis for discussion, and he would like to recommend that a Work Session be set for that as it is an ongoing problem. Interim Administrator Gay recommend a second meeting to determine where we are and where we need to go regarding roads as well as paths we do not want to pursue. Interim Administrator Gay would like to set a course for determining our work program and what we want to achieve for the upcoming year. Interim Administrator Gay stated he felt this year we didn't get that done and got started late on projects. We really need to know coming into January, what we are going to do and how we can move forward. Interim Administrator Gay stated he would like to ask if we could look at a time to set up two Work Sessions, one for staffing and one for projects for the upcoming year. Interim Administrator Gay felt if we could do that, we could make some progress and have a more productive year. Interim Administrator Gay suggested sometime between now and the first week of December, preferably before Christmas. Chairman Threadgill asked for some dates and the Board would discuss a good time. Chairman Threadgill suggested late afternoon or evening Work Session. Interim Administrator Gay stated he would also like to relook at the gravel program before the dead of winter.

Assistant County Administrator, Blue Cole gave an update on some of the grants staff has been working on and/or pursuing. Assistant Administrator Cole stated that he and Larry Dunaway attended a funders forum in Columbus last week to look at Water and Wastewater Funding and were able to speak with several different funders from State and Federal Agencies. Assistant Administrator Cole stated one of the grants they were looking into was a EPD grant which is the Georgia Regional Water Plan Seed Grant up to \$75,000 and there is also some Hazard Mitigation Grants they are looking into to get generators for some of the lift stations within the Water and Sewer Authority. Assistant Administrator Cole stated that he attended a presentation from EPD on their Solid Waste Fund and feels that this could be a good opportunity and wants to make sure the County is a right fit for it as this is more about reclamation and recycling than actual trash solid waste and wants to speak with Public Works and figure out what is wanted to be done with

Solid Waste as the amounts are for equipment and locations and can be up to \$1.5 million. Assistant Administrator Cole stated there has also been conversation with DCA regarding the CDBG Grant which is for facilities and big purchase items and having the Work Session to speak about projects would be a great opportunity to get direction. Assistant Administrator Cole stated that Public Safety has needs and grants can be written for heavy equipment like the ambulances, firetrucks, and additional training. Assistant Administrator Cole stated that Staff has been working with Public Works to clean up some of the junk that is behind the shop building and wants to scrap and recycle the items. Additionally, Assistant Administrator Cole will be working with Public Works on the total tickets they handled this year. Assistant Administrator Cole provided the Board with a printout of the total number of calls Public Works has received for the year. Since January there have been 2,041 requests for assistance from the Public Works Department. Assistant Administrator Cole stated designs were being finalized for the Greenville Recreation Park and we should have those in the next few weeks.

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Adam Worsley: thanked everyone for what they were doing and putting in and the accomplishments that are getting done and it is very challenging time for the County. Commissioner Worsley stated the work and the people that are trying to make a difference are really appreciated. Commissioner Worsley apologized to the citizens that were in attendance for having to live in certain conditions, as that is not the intention of himself or the Board for them to deal with those conditions at all or for that long. Commissioner Worsley stated he agreed with Administrator Gay that they need to have a Work Session and it needs to happen as quickly as possible. Commissioner Worsley thanked everyone again for what they were doing but we need to find a way to get that done faster.

Vice Chairman Gene King: thanked the staff and stated he is always thanking the staff when he goes into the different offices such as the tax building, making sure he stops and thanks staff and asks if they have any questions. Vice Chairman King stated he planned to do a lot of talking regarding his dirt roads, but that was pretty well covered tonight and stated he was glad to see some of the citizens there that had reached out to him. Vice Chairman King understood the situation of when a road is freshly motor graded and then it rains it is a mess, and somebody needs to watch the weather, because if that's the case we don't need to be motor grading prior to the rain. Vice Chairman King stated he keeps saying it needs to drain when it rains and until we get Public Works out to the job fixing the ditches and the culvert pipes first before anything is done, even if you are just spreading gravel because the water runs on top of it. Vice Chairman King stated he has been saying this since he first came on the Board and people will get sick of him saying it, but he will keep saying that if it rains it needs to drain because the citizens are not being respected or getting what they deserve and he doesn't care if there are 39 houses on the road or 5 houses on the road, if they are paying their taxes, they deserve to be able to drive in and out adequately. Vice Chairman King stated we can't help if their cars get muddy as they chose to live on a dirt road. Vice Chairman King stated that the citizens deserve to be able to go to work, come home and if somebody in that family has an emergency crisis, he does not want to be sitting up here as a Commissioner having someone discuss with us why we lost a citizen because our roads are not in good shape. Vice Chairman King stated he hopes and prays that never happens and thanked everyone again for attending the Meeting.

Chairman Bryan Threadgill: stated there is an Election taking place on November 7, 2023. The Meriwether County Board of Education wanted him to mention the Election is for the continuation of E-SPLOST. Chairman Threadgill stated November 16, 2023, is the County Thanksgiving Luncheon and there will be more on that later. Chairman Threadgill thanked everyone for attending the Meeting. It was nice to see the faces and this has been one of the biggest turnouts since COVID.

Commissioner Rosla Plant: thanked the staff and acknowledged the print-off that was provided which gives an idea of the amount of work being done by Staff. Commissioner Plant greatly appreciated County Staff. Commissioner Plant felt that one of the biggest problems, being new to the Board, is that we want things done quicker and faster. Commissioner Plant explained that when dealing with Taxpayers' money you are very limited as to what you can do and how you can go about doing it and Ellis Road is a good example. Commissioner Plant stated Ellis Road is a dirt road that has 36 houses coming off it and when it was asked earlier in the year for the dirt roads and privatizing some of the work, there is a way that you've got to go about doing it. Commissioner Plant explained that you can't just go out and hire your best friend to add gravel. Commissioner Plant stated there is a process and the handout presented to the Board shows the outline of that process which required a lot of staff commitment and time. Commissioner Plant stated it is discouraging to have the bid come in at half a million dollars and it is also discouraging when you have to pay full depth reclamation of over half a million dollars. Commissioner Plant stated there are over 200 miles of road in Meriwether County that are dirt and over 200 miles that are paved and there are limited dollars to go around on all of the projects. Commissioner Plant thanked Staff for the printout that shows the number of road requests that come in and apologized to the citizens for the situation they had on Findley Cato Road and Fern Road. Commissioner Plant stated it is unfortunate when things happen and it is also unfortunate when a tornado touches down and residents don't even have access to get out of the road. Commissioner Plant served on the Board when that happened and knows personally that the employees here, especially Theron Gay and another Commissioner went out and helped get elderly people out of their homes and across a no longer existing bridge to get them where they needed to go. Commissioner Plant knows for a fact that employees are going to do everything they can and do whatever it takes to get it done. Commissioner Plant stated she so appreciates County employees and wishes we had more money to deal with, but when you're dealing with an \$18 million-dollar budget, you've got Sheriff's Office, Public Safety, and Public Works, and all of these funds have to be allocated. Commissioner Plant stated it would be nice if all of the roads in Meriwether County were paved and maintained, but we're not there, with the growth that has been taking place in Meriwether County, we may get there. Commissioner Plant understood and stated if you live on a dirt road, and she had lived on a dirt road and would still be there, but when she remarried, her husband did not like getting his truck dirty. Commissioner Plant stated there are a lot of wonderful things happening in the County and she so appreciates the opportunity to sit on the Board. Commissioner Plant stated that she sat on the Board from 1984-1986, 2015-2016, and is now in her first full four-year term, and roads and bridges continues to be the number one problem. Commissioner Plant stated if you know of anyone that would like to work for Public Works and is willing to work for the salaries being paid, please contact us. We are trying to address salaries, and it is a problem in the labor force. Commissioner Plant thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Commissioner Plant apologized and stated the Board tries

their very best with what we have and she knows for a fact that Staff is going the extra mile to do whatever it takes to get it done.

Commissioner Emmett Collins: thanked the Staff and Employees and Public Works, as well as the Citizens for attending the meeting. Commissioner Collins stated, "believe me, we hear you and if there is anything we can ever do for you or there are any more problems, please don't hesitate to come back".

XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

There was no report from County Attorney, Michael Hill. There was a need for an Executive Session to discuss Litigation and Personnel.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gene King and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to go into Executive Session at 7:42 p.m. for Personnel and Litigation. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Commissioner Emmett Collins and seconded by Commissioner Adam Worsley to go out of Executive Session at 8:21 p.m. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Commissioner Emmett Collins and seconded by Commissioner Adam Worsley to go back into Regular Session at 8:23 p.m. All were in favor.

There was no action taken in Executive Session.

XVIII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

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

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, motion was made by Commissioner Adam Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

Attest: Beverly A. Thomas, County Clerk

Date: November 8, 2023
amended November 28, 2023