MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 10, 2024
9:00 A.M.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Gene King, Vice Chairman Adam Worsley, Commissioner Rosla Plant, Commissioner Emmett Collins, and Commissioner Bryan Threadgill
Staff Present: Interim County Administrator Theron Gay, Assistant County Administrator Blue Cole, Deputy County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director John Gorton, and County Attorney Nathan Lee

I. CALL TO ORDER
Commissioner Bryan Threadgill called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. INVOCATION
The Invocation was given by Jonathan Porter, Pastor of Greenville Baptist Church.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG
All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA
Interim Administrator Theron Gay asked the Board to remove the appointment of the Administrator and Assistant Administrator from the Agenda.
Motion was made by Commissioner Rosla Plant and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to remove the appointments of the Administrator and Assistant Administrator from Agenda and then adopt the Agenda. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Commissioner Rosla Plant to appoint Commissioner Bryan Threadgill as Chairman. There was not a second and the motion failed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Emmett Collins and seconded by Commissioner Adam Worsley to appoint Gene King as Chairman. Voting in favor were Commissioner Collins, Commissioner Worsley, and Commissioner King. Opposed were Commissioner Plant and Commissioner Threadgill. The motion passed.

Motion was made by Chairman Gene King and seconded by Emmett Collins to appoint Commissioner Adam Worsley as Vice Chairman. Voting in favor were, Chairman King, Commissioner Collins, and Commissioner Worsley. Opposed were Commissioner Plant and Commissioner Threadgill. The motion passed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to appoint Beverly Thomas as County Clerk. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to appoint Allyson Stephens as Deputy Clerk. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to appoint the Law Firm, Glover & Davis as the County Attorney. All were in favor.

V. PRESENTATIONS

Interim Administrator Gay stated Ms. Cherry Thomas had asked to come before the Board regarding her property at the Covered Bridge where the picnic tables are located. Ms. Thomas was not present.

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director, John Gorton stated the General Fund has close to $6M and all other funds are stable. We have received the SPLOST, LOST, and TPLOST payments and should receive the tipping and hosting fees next week. Mr. Gorton reviewed the SPLOST and TSPLOST commitments. SPLOST has almost $600K on hand and after $720,443.01 in commitments that include the Jail Roof, Courthouse Roof, and 2023 LMIG funds, we will have -$122,415.60. More funds are coming in to add to SPLOST. We have $2.7M in the TSPLOST fund account and after the commitments of $1.5M that include Thompson Trucking and Beulah Evans Road we have a balance of $1,228,184.51. As of yesterday, we have received $10.7M out of $18M with only $4M in expenses. We have collected 90% which is $7.3M collected. Assistant Administrator Cole confirmed this included the December, 2023 collections.

VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS

Assistant Administrator Blue Cole reported the Van that was donated to the Animal Shelter has been put to use. They have used it to make a trip to Auburn for spay and neuter and to four Pet Smart adoption events where 32 pets have been adopted out of that Van.

Finance Director, John Gorton, mentioned that the list of Banking institutions were provided to the Board and the signers include the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Interim Administrator, and Finance Director.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT

None

IX. MINUTES

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to approve the Minutes from the December 26, 2023, Regular Meeting. All were in favor.

X. PUBLIC HEARING

None

XI. APPOINTMENTS

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Emmett Collins and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to appoint Chairman Gene King as the ACCG Legislative Coordinator for a one-year term that will expire on 1-1-2025. All were in favor.

2. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to table the appointment to DFACS, District 1. This is a vacant term that will expire June 30, 2024. All were in favor.
3. Motion was made by Commissioner Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Worsley to appoint Wanda Sims to the Industrial Development Authority, District 2. This is a four-year term that will expire on January 9, 2028. All were in favor.
4. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley to table the appointment to the Planning Commission, District 4, to fill an unexpired term that will end on January 5, 2025. All were in favor.
5. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Rosla Plant to table the appointment to the Public Facilities Authority, for a term that expired on December 31, 2023. All were in favor.
6. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Worsley to appoint Bill Rollins to the Water & Sewerage Authority, District 4, to fill a vacant term that will expire on December 31, 2024. All were in favor.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Assistant Administrator Blue Cole stated Staff and others had worked on the 2023-2043 MC Joint Comprehensive Plan last year. This plan and Resolution is complete and the next step is that it needs to be adopted. Motion was made by Commissioner Emmett Collins and seconded by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill to adopt the 2023-2043 Meriwether County Joint Comprehensive Plan and Resolution. All were in favor.
2. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to accept the purchase of a 1996 Fontaine Trailer (Lowboy) Model TA50NGB, VIN #XXX4525 to use at Public Works. All were in favor.
3. Mr. Corey Gilbert, Key Assistant Location Manager, with Bridelake Productions, LLC, requested permission to film at the Red Oak Covered Bridge and to close the road from February 5, 2024 – February 27, 2024 to thru traffic, not to the residents. The areas for the road closure are full closure on Covered Bridge Road between Dan Stribling Rd. and Flat Shoals Road (1-mile) and a lane closure on the south east bound lane of Dan Stribling Road from Huel Brown Road to the Covered Bridge Road (1,900'). Mr. Gilbert has reached out to all property owners and everyone has been receptive. They will be filming a TV series at this location called "Cedar Lodge" and will have 24-hour security. Mr. Gilbert had spoken with landowner, Ms. Cherry Thomas, and she was on board. Commissioner Plant asked if the metal barrier that prevents large trucks from entering the covered bridge would be left in place. Mr. Gilbert stated it would and they had made arrangements to film around it by changing the filming angles. Commissioner Plant stated the Bridge must be protected at all costs. Attorney Nathan Lee advised their insurance is in place and there is a film location agreement for them to sign. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to move forward with the request and not to permit any moving of the structure barrier at the Covered Bridge and allow Attorney Nathan Lee to provide the Location Agreement for signature. All were in favor.
4. Assistance Administrator, Blue Cole, stated Staff had been looking at ways to maintain and replace our EMS fleet. We have two ambulances with approximately 400K miles on them.

Pricing for new complete EMS units are approximately $350K-$375K, with up to a one-year wait time. Staff proposed the purchase of an F450 chassis with a special package to mount our ambulance. Danny Stephens, Fire Chief/EMS has received some quotes. Staff recommended the purchase of two diesel chassis from two different dealers. One dealership is Akins Ford and the other one is John Megel Ford. The price is about $61,000 each. We would then remount the boxes with a local company in Meriwether County. We anticipate the mounting cost to be approximately $100K with boxes we currently own that are on the ambulances we are replacing. This would allow us to have a new ambulance for around $160K+ but will still be less than a brand new one. Quotes were received for both gas and diesel. Public Safety recommended the diesel due to mileage and durability. Because the ambulance mount package is a special order, payment is required a the time of order. We do not have a confirmed delivery date but it is expected to be less than a year's wait it would take on a new unit. We have two boxes available for remount, with an install time of about three months from receipt. The price to remount each box will be $100K, which is still lower than the price of a complete EMS unit. There was discussion and questions from the Board. The County will check to see if the box was previously remounted. Custom Trucks and Body Works in Meriwether County would do the remount. Vice Chairman Worsley wanted a physical detail quote. Assistant Administrator Cole stated the quote could change due to the time frame of receiving the chassis. Interim Administrator Gay stated the trucks are red and we may need to add stripes to the box instead of trying to match the red color. Commissioner Threadgill stated we could do a wrap. Commissioner Collins stated there is not a quote on the box due to what will be done and the cost will depend on the options such as the color, seats, etc. There was additional discussion of what to start with and the time. Assistant Administrator Cole stated our procurement policy requires us to come back before the Board for the remounts. This is just for the chassis. There was discussion on reaching out to dealerships out west to see if they could locate a chassis but the issue may be the cost of getting it here. Motion was made by Commissioner Collins to order two chassis from John Megal Ford. Assistant Administrator Cole stated one of the things that was discussed was ordering from two different companies may allow us to get one sooner than the other. Commissioner Collins again made the motion to go with two F450 chassis from John Megal Ford. There was discussion of which quote gas vs diesel. The price is $60,747.10 for the diesel from John Megal Ford. There was discussion of cloth vs. vinyl seats and how vinyl would save us an additional amount off the quoted price of $60,747.10. Commissioner Emmett Collins restated the motion to purchase two F450 diesel chassis from John Megal Ford with vinyl seats. Commissioner Threadgill asked if they could get two and was concerned if the dealership was only allocated so many by Ford Motor Company. Assistant Administrator Cole stated he thinks they can but is not 100% sure. There was discussion of reaching out to John Megal Ford to see if they could confirm the purchase of two. Commissioner Collins stated he thought John Megal Ford was located in North Georgia and owned land in Meriwether County. They have an interest in this County. The motion was restated by Commissioner Emmett Collins to purchase two F450 diesel chassis from John Megal Ford with vinyl seats and if they are not able to provide two then we will order one from Akins Ford and the box will come separate before the Board. Vice Chairman Adam Worsley seconded the motion and all were in favor.

5. Vice Chairman Worsley had asked to have quotes for Wrightsville Road added to the Agenda because it was a cheap option. This road is in Commissioner Threadgill's District but it was cheap enough that it was something we could do even though it was not a LMIG project. The request is to go out for a quote in order to get that done or whatever the Board would like to

do. Commissioner Threadgill stated it was an option on LMIG but was not voted on and Vice Chairman Worsley stated it was not in the approved options. Interim Administrator Gay recommended whether it was LMIG or not to include this road in the bid package because in putting this with more roads you will get a much better price. Interim Administrator Gay stated we do the same with the Cities and call it a LMIG package but it is actually a construction package. LMIG funds are not used for the entire construction package. Interim Administrator Gay recommended if the Board wanted to move forward with this project which he though was about $87K, to add it into the LMIG package to get a better price. Commissioner Collins stated this would be from the bridge to Hwy. 85 and asked about the other side of this road that was owned by the City of Manchester. Commissioner Threadgill stated he will talk with them to see if they were interested in paving their section. It could be if done separately it could come back at $100K. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he did not understand how the cost would be less which included the moving of the equipment if the other project is so far away from this one. Interim Administrator Gay stated they will charge you with moving some of the equipment but may not need everything on this project that they will use on Luthersville Road. You will be able to include the asphalt prices, etc. in with the million-dollar project as opposed to a small project which is something they have to bid out separately. If the City wants to do their portion of that road at the same time the County can include that in our Bid package and it would be seamless. That could save the City some money too. Assistant Administrator Blue Cole stated if there are other roads in south section to be done this one could be tucked into that. Motion was made by Commissioner Bryan Threadgill to include this in the LMIG quotes to be able to get it at that price. Commissioner Plant seconded the motion. Voting in favor were Commissioner Threadgill and Commissioner Plant. Opposed were Chairman Gene King, Vice Chairman Adam Worsley, and Commissioner Emmett Collins.

Commissioner Bryan Threadgill left the meeting.

Chairman Gene King asked if the Board could motion for this without adding it to the LMIG. Interim Administrator Gay stated, yes. If the Board wanted a separate quote, staff could do that but it will cost more money. Interim Administrator Gay stated LMIG is just a mechanism of funding. We call it LMIG but other projects can be added to this. LMIG is only $800K and the remainder would be County funds. Interim Administrator Gay stated we can do the wishes of the Board but could get a better price if you put them in together. There was further discussion on the bids and process. Commissioner Plant stated this is a process that is normally done and in place in November. Each Commissioner submits roads of concern from their area and allows input on roads that will be addressed. The Board relies heavily on the staff's recommendations since they are on the roads and know more about the conditions. Commissioner Plant stated it is disrespectful to her as a Commissioner that her road was not considered. With this coming up, Commissioner Plant cautioned the new Board Members of going forward and how will we address these roads. There is one road with 100% allocation of LMIG funds and while that is needed there are other roads that are also of concern. Commissioner Plant asked Vice Chairman Worsley what was his reason for not adding it on the LMIG list. Vice Chairman Worsley stated the Board met in a Work Session and agreed that we would close out projects and focus on the largest safety risk projects on the roads. Vice Chairman Worsley referred to a package that was presented to the Board that gives a grade of every road in the County. Wrightsville Road does not appear on this list. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he would not support LMIG State funding, a benefit asset to our County. Wrightsville Road did not show up as a recommendation from staff. Vice Chairman Worsley stated we need to finish projects that we start such as Luthersville

Road which has gone on for 5-6 years. Luthersville Road has the highest traffic in this County by double. Chairman King stated Vice Chairman Worsley is the one who asked to have this placed on the Agenda for a vote to get it done. He doesn't want to go back to when we had a Work Session and not everyone was in the Work Session. There was an opportunity to discuss this on December 26, 2023 as an open Board for any additions or changes. The final results was a 4-1 vote. Nothing was mentioned that night on why we didn't have Wrightsville Road on the list and Commissioner Plant supported the vote. Chairman King stated what Vice Chairman Worsley is saying is that we will go back and fix the road but he does not want to change the vote the Board previously did. Commissioner Collins had asked if this could be held to January to work all of this out but the Board was told that they needed to this by the end of the year. The staff had recommended three options. Vice Chairman Worsley motioned to go with option one to complete Luthersville Road which had been started but not completed and did not want to go back and change something that was supposed to be signed off of on December 31, 2023. Vice Chairman Worsley stated the Board was directed by staff on December 26, 2023 that this had to done and was time sensitive. As of today, it has not been signed and submitted. Vice Chairman Worsley stated the Board was misled. Interim Administrator Theron Gay states we as staff, did not mislead the Board. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he went with Option one on the LMIG because it had to be done on that day. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he was not being critical and was not attacking the character. Interim Administrator Gay stated there is work that goes on after it is approved. Everything is ready and all that staff is waiting on is a signature from the Chairman for us to submit. Interim Administrator Gay stated staff will do whatever the Board wants to do but it would be less expensive to add the additional requested road to the contract. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he agreed with that from a cost savings but there was a deeper conversation that he feels can be covered in Executive Session. The deep root was a peace-making offer to get it back on the Agenda today but in reality with some Commissioners traveling the road and not having it on the work sheet, it doesn't need to be paved. Chairman King confirmed they could add other roads into the contract from the December 26, 2023 meeting. Chairman King asked if the Board could get a quote to pave Wrightsville Road and then come back. Interim Administrator Gay stated staff put together the construction contract and the Board could add alternate one as Wrightsville Road and they can quote it in the overall package but with a separate price. At that time the Boad could decide to go with it or omit it. Motion was made by Chairman King to get a quote to do the repairs to Wrightsville Road. Interim Administrator Gay confirmed that the County would get a free-standing quote, a bid package just as we do on other roads and Chairman King acknowledged that was correct. There was discussion of a quote that was received in the past for around $80K+ and Interim Administrator Gay stated he feels it will be close to that cost today depending on the asphalt cost. Interim Administrator Gay recommended adding this as option one to the contract to look at and then if the Board elected not to proceed it could be removed at that point. Interim Administrator Gay explained the County would have the regular LMIG with everything the Board had approved so far and get a quote on that then we would have alternate one. If the City of Manchester wanted to consider having their portion of Wrightsville Road paved we could add alternate two and then everyone at that time could accept what they wanted done. Chairman King motioned again to add this to the list as alternate one. There was not second and the motion failed.

6. Interim Administrator Gay stated the County had an Emergency Declaration that was in place from the last storm declared as a disaster and he does not recall if the County relinquished

that Declaration. We need to close out any Emergency Declarations that are currently in place. Interim Administrator explained why you have an Emergency Declaration. A new Emergency Declaration would be added in the future if there is a need. Motion was made by Commissioner Rosla Plant and seconded by Commissioner Emmett Collins to close out any current Emergency Declarations. All were in favor. Vice Chairman Worsley asked how long it takes to have a new Emergency Declaration in place. Attorney Nathan Lee explained if there was need for an Emergency Declaration following a disaster then staff would ask the Board to have a Special Called Meeting to put an Emergency Declaration in place. With an emergency you can waive a 24-hour notice if needed. An example was given of a tornado that hit a while back. Sometimes you don't have time to give a 24-hour notice in an emergency like that and need to bring in outside forces to assist.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Interim County Administrator Theron Gay stated since the last meeting he had assisted the City of Greenville with their LMIG proposal, met with two departments regarding staffing, attended a meeting regarding recreation, had a conference call with the Board of Elections, met with the City of Hogansville, met with the Water & Sewerage Authority, had a meeting regarding the Industrial Park projects, helped with an Insurance issue, attended the IDA meeting, and worked with staff on the Work Session items for today's meeting

Assistant County Administrator Blue Cole stated he met with the IDA to help Ms. Fryer with a few projects. We have good news of KBS Driveway, we are making progress with the AT&T and a meeting was held with the project manager. Assistant Administrator Cole has followed up on fuel tanks in the City of Manchester regarding the process of removing the fuel farm. We have been working on personnel. Assistant County Administrator Cole is working on a grant that is 65% complete and should be 80-85% complete within the next two weeks. This grant will come back to the Board of review and approval. This is a large grant for road construction converting paving, repairing, culverts, and gravel. Assistant Administrator Cole offered to show Board members a copy of the rough draft that he has so far.

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Emmett Collins: thanked the staff for all they do. The County is getting work done on the dirt roads and still have more to do. The Lake Meriwether Advisory Board met last night and will move forward with the addition of some new picnic tables. Ronnie Heard has volunteered to build the tables if the County will furnish the materials. A site for the storage building has been selected but the construction has not started. Commissioner Plant asked if the funding for that would carry over from last year. Interim Administrator Theron Gay stated, yes, the funds for that project would carry over.

Commissioner Rosla Plant: nothing at this time.

Vice Chairman Adam Worsley: Thanked the staff for what they do. Vice Chairman Worsley stated a lot of the questions that he asks are driven by the citizens that he represents in his District. They are asking questions for things to be done and why some things are not done. They understand we are a small rural County and that we do not have the funding that some other surrounding Counties have. Most of what the issues are not personal preferences for Vice Chairman Worsley but what they ask. Some of it is mixed with his experience in business, common sense, not understanding and asking questions to get a better understanding. This is not personal to the Staff or Board. It is not intended to make more work for Staff but to get the answers to the questions from constituents and to help to move the County forward. Vice Chairman Worsley stated he hates that it is perceived as a conflict but does not get that from District 5. Vice Chairman Worsley stated if he does or says anything that makes anyone feel that way he apologizes.

The facial expressions are what they are and a family trait and not meant to hurt anyone. Everyone is going a good job but things just need to be faster which is an echo from the District. Vice Chairman Worsley thanked everyone apologizes if there was anything to make someone feel uncomfortable because it is not intent.

Commissioner Bryan Threadgill: not present

Chairman Gene King: hopes everyone is excited about 2024. Thanks were expressed to EMS and E-911. Yesterday they had to help a mail lady who was crossing over a bridge and got stuck and water stated rising. Thanks were expressed to Upson County for setting up their raft to help. Some had to wade out to the area she was in to get her out. Chairman King stated he is looking forward to 2024 and is honored to serve Meriwether County as the Chairman and will give 100%. Everyone thing comes from Chairman Kings heart for the best interest in the entire County.

XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

There was no report from County Attorney, Nathan Lee. Chairman King stated Executive Session would be needed to discuss Litigation, Personnel, Real Estate and Tax Matters.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Collins to go into Executive Session for Litigation, Personnel, Real Estate, and Tax Matters at 10:04 a.m. All were in favor. A motion was made by Chairman King and seconded by Vice Chairman Worsley to go out of Executive Session at 11:07 a.m. All were in favor. Motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Worsley to go back into Regular Session at 11:11 a.m. All were in favor.

There was no action taken in Executive Session.

XVIII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Gene King announced future Meetings and Notices prior to Executive Session.

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, motion was made by Vice Chairman Adam Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Plant to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

Attest: Beverly Thomas, County Clerk

Date: January 23, 2024