MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 28, 2021
This meeting was held by Zoom due to COVID-19 for the public with Board Members and County Staff attending in Person

Commissioners Present: Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy, Commissioner Shirley Hines, Commissioner Rosla Plant and Commissioner Beth Neely-Hadley
Staff Present: County Administrator Michelle Irizarry, Director of Special Projects Theron Gay, Deputy County Clerk Allyson Stephens, Finance Director Bill Gregory, and County Attorney Michael Hill (by Zoom).
Staff Absent: County Clerk Beverly Thomas

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Threadgill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. **INVOCATION** – A moment of silence was observed for former School Board Member, Leon Coverson, and Former County Commissioner, Nancy Jones. Vice Chairman McCoy led the invocation.

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to adopt the Agenda and move items #15 and #16 from appointments to items #7 and #8 under New Business. All were in favor.

V. REPORT FROM FINANCE DIRECTOR

Finance Director, Bill Gregory provided the Board with finance reports and stated that the general fund was strong. He stated the County has not used much of the ARPA funds. Commissioner Neely-Hadley stated that some of the local municipalities had already received the supplemental grant from the State of Georgia and asked Director Gregory to check the progress.

IV. CITIZEN COMMENT

None

VII. MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to accept the minutes presented for the December 8, 2021, meeting. A second was made by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor except Commissioner Hines abstained. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant to accept the minutes of the December 14, 2021, Work Session. A second was made by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

Case# 26-2021 – Angie Hamilton request for a rezoning of 5.808 acres on 2939 Lone Oak Road, Tax Map and Parcel 024 064, LD 11, LL 51. Property is currently zoned LDR and would be rezoned NHC. The purpose of the rezone is to construct a 1400 sq. ft. office space that Ms. Hamilton will use for her Counseling Practice. District 1. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Rosla Plant to go into Public Hearing at 6:04 p.m. All were in favor. Jodi Sharpe, Planning and Zoning advised the Board that Ms. Hamilton is wanting to establish a counseling practice at this location. She advised she had calls of curiosity, however no opposition. She advised that Eugene Smenner at the Health Department had already assessed the septic system and is waiting on zoning approval from the Board before issuing a permit. Mrs. Sharpe also advised Ms. Hamilton that the ordinance states a commercial piece of property has to have 100 ft. undisturbed buffer between commercial and residential. Mrs. Hamilton owns property on two of the three sides of the property in question. Mrs. Sharpe stated that there was a meeting to hear the zoning request for the Planning and Zoning Board, however, there was no quorum. According to Mrs. Sharpe, it is the recommendation of Planning and Zoning to approve the request. Commissioner Hines asked if this NHC zoning would be considered "spot zoning". Planning and Zoning Director, Butch Oliver stated he would not consider this spot zoning because eventually that corridor would all be commercial. Ms. Hamilton stated she looked forward to bringing counseling services to this area of the county and appreciated the Board hearing her request. No one else signed up or requested to speak on the zoning case. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded Vice Chairman McCoy to go out of Public Hearing at 6:07 p.m. All were in favor. A motion was made by Commissioner Hines and seconded by Commissioner Plant to approve the request for rezoning of 5.808 acres on Lone Oak Road from LDR to NHC for Ms. Angie Hamilton to establish a counseling service. All were in favor.

X. <u>APPOINTMENTS</u>

1. A motion was made by Chairman Threadgill to appoint Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy to serve as the ACCG Legislative Coordinator for a 1-year term. This was seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.
2. A motion was made by Chairman Threadgill to reappoint Emmett Collins to the Board of Assessors for a 3-year term and allow the Chairman to sign the Resolution confirming the appointment. This was seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.
3. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy to reappoint David Caldwell to the Board of Elections for a 3-year term to the Board of Elections and all Board members sign the affidavit regarding the appointment. This was seconded by Commissioner Neely-Hadley. All were in favor.
4. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to reappoint Burns Bryan to the Board of Elections for a 4-year term and all Board members sign the affidavit regarding the appointment. All were in favor.
5. CAFI Board for a term that expires 1-10-2022 (1-year term). Commissioner Hines stated that Mayor Donald Cuttie who had previously served on the Board would not be able to continue and she would like to make a motion to table this appointment. This was seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.
6. Planning Commission for a term that expires 1-5-2022, District 2 (5-year term). Commissioner Plant made a motion to table this appointment. This was seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.
7. Recreation Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, District 1 (2-year term). Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated that L.O.S.T. would need to be negotiated and this would impact the Service Delivery Strategy. He suggested sitting down and speaking with all the cities and to hold the appointments to the Recreation Advisory Board for now. Mr. Gay advised after meeting with the cities there could be a change in the number of appointments as well as the bylaws. He stated he would hate for the Board to appoint someone and then have to ask them to step down. Mr. Gay felt it would be better to have the opportunity to negotiate L.O.S.T. and update the Service Delivery Strategy before appointments were made. Commissioner Hines asked if appointments were not made if the Recreation Advisory Board would be dissolved. Mr. Gay advised that there would be no quorum and the Advisory Board could not meet and make decisions until a later time. Mr. Gay also advised that advancements were not much farther than when the Advisory Board started 5-years prior. Commissioner Neely-Hadley advised she had no problem waiting as districts could change. Chairman Threadgill would not want to appoint at this time with L.O.S.T. negotiations coming up and then have to remove the appointment. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table the appointment for the Recreation

Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, District 1 (2-year term) to the second meeting in March 2022. All were in favor.

8. Recreation Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, District 2, (2-year term). A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to table this appointment until the second meeting in March 2022. All were in favor.

9. Recreation Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, District 5 (2-year term). A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table this appointment until the second meeting in March 2022. All were in favor.

10. Recreation Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, At-Large (2-year term). A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table this appointment to the second meeting in March 2022. All were in favor.

11. Recreation Advisory Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, School Board (2-year term). A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table this appointment to the second meeting in March 2022. All were in favor.

12. Three Rivers RDC Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021, Non-Public member (1-year term). A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to re-appoint Faye Perdue. All were in favor.

13. Two Rivers RC&D Board for a term that expires 12-31-2021 (1-year term). A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley and seconded by Commissioner Plant to reappoint Tyrell Johnson with Alfred McCoy as an alternate. All were in favor.

14. Zoning Board of Appeals for a term that expires 1-5-2022 (3-year term). A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman Alfred McCoy to reappoint Mike Womack. All were in favor.

15. Elect Chairman for 2022- *Moved to #7 under New Business*

16. Elect Vice Chairman for 2022- *Moved to #8 under New Business*

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Set 2022 Meriwether County Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule and 2022 Holiday Schedule. A motion was made to accept the schedules as presented by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.

2. Annual Report for Georgia Forestry Commission, Meriwether County Unit, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. Administrator Michelle Irizarry stated the report is in the package. She also advised that Chief Ranger, Jeff Mansour would be retiring on Friday, December 31, 2021, after serving as the Chief Ranger for Meriwether County for the last 8.5 years. Mr. Mansour, according to Administrator Irizarry had been with the State of Georgia for 16 years and has enjoyed serving the citizens of Meriwether County.

3. Request from Fire/EMS to proceed with pricing for the following vehicles: 2 Utility Vehicles (new or used Pick-up or SUV will be replacement vehicles) 2 Used Pumpers (one for new station and one to replace older Manual Transmission Pumper) 2 Used Tankers with 1000 gallon or more water tank (to replace older Manual Transmission Tankers with less than 1000-gallon tank capacity). Fire Chief, Alan Smith stated the reason for requesting pricing for the 2 Utility Vehicles is to replace Deputy Chief, Mike Nelson's vehicle and also the replacement of a Dodge Charger that was totaled in a storm. Chief Smith went on to explain the reason for requesting pricing on 2 new Pumpers was to place one in the new Greenville Fire Station and have one to replace an old Pumper that has a manual transmission. He will use the two older pumpers as reserve units. Chief Smith explained he needs pricing on two used tankers with 1000 gallons or more water tank to replace the two older Manual transmission tankers with less than 1000- gallon water tanks. He stated that one of the Tankers being used is a 1969 and the other is an early 1970's model and parts cannot be found. Chief Smith explained he is just wanting permission to look and if he is able to find a good deal before he brings it back to the Board. Commissioner Hines would like a spreadsheet of each vehicle in the fleet for Public Safety. She stated this way we are ahead of the game when needing to replace. Commissioner Neely-Hadley stepped out of the room at 6:26 p.m. Commissioner Hines asked when the last time the pumper was used. Commissioner Neely-Hadley

reentered the room at 6:27 p.m. Chief Smith stated that the 1969 Model and 1970's model are currently used as frontline equipment. Chairman Threadgill requested that Chief Smith and Administrator Irizarry schedule a meeting to bring her up to date on what is needed and the inventory and equipment that is on hand. Commissioner Hines would like an inventory of all vehicles and equipment at each station. Chairman Threadgill agreed that an inventory is needed to show current equipment and vehicles in each station. A motion was made to allow the Chief to look at pricing and also meet with Administrator Irizarry by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy. All were in favor.

4. Approval of Redistricting Map as presented by House Representative Debbie Buckner and prepared by the Reapportionment Office with minimal changes. Chairman Threadgill asked if any of the Commissioners had comments. Commissioner Hines thanked everyone for the Work Session. She explained she would of like to have had Town Hall meetings in order to get the input of the citizens. Vice Chairman McCoy stated that it is painful to lose some of the supporters that have placed him in office and to not have the area he resides in as part of his district going forward. Commissioner Neely-Hadley stated she lost a huge base of support and that she was advised that District 1 was set by the Department of Justice years ago possibly due to the school system. Commissioner Hines stated the population drop was around 2000 people from 22,000 to 20,000 and this will be something that we will have to deal with for the next 10 years. She went on to say that her main concern was there was no Town Hall to allow an opportunity for citizen feedback. Chairman Threadgill stated for the record that a request had never been made for a Town Hall meeting and that the map has to be approved by the second week of January. He went on to advised that had a request been made for a Town Hall it would have been discussed. A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to approve the Redistricting Map Meriwether CCSB-Draft 2-HD 137-2021 as presented by House Representative Debbie Buckner and prepared by the Reapportionment Office with minimal changes. Commissioner Plant seconded the motion. In favor of the motion were Chairman Threadgill, Commissioner Plant, Vice Chairman McCoy, and Commissioner Neely Hadley. Commissioner Hines was opposed. The motion passed. Chairman Threadgill asked the reason for opposition to the motion and Commissioner Hines stated she didn't feel good about it and what she stated prior.

5. Request to add speed bumps in the 1800 block of Beulah Evans Road and Turkey Court Trail, and Bob Cat Trail. Administrator Irizarry stated there was a request from Mrs. Marcelle Womack regarding rubber speed bumps in these locations. Administrator Irizarry stated that this would be $1,500 to $2,000 per speed bump. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated that it would minimize costs to install speed humps constructed from asphalt. He advised it would cost less than $500 and there would be speed humps installed in three locations for a total of 6. Commissioner Hines asked if the Board should wait until after the road was paved/repaired before installing the speed humps. Mr. Gay advised that we already have the materials and installation would provide a margin of safety until the road is paved. Mr. Gay also stated that Mrs. Womack has been very beneficial in helping to get the road paved and will help with obtaining signatures. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy to approve the speed hump installation. A second was made by Commissioner Hines. All were in favor.

6. Request to purchase parcel of property (Tax Parcel 164-004-001), declare surplus, and set minimum bid amount. Administrator Irizarry explained that the County already owns this piece of property through a tax sale, and it is a small drainage area that backs up to a subdivision. She requested the board declare the piece of property surplus and for bids to be accepted starting with a minimum of $650.00. Vice Chairman McCoy stated that he is not sure why we need this piece of property as it is near a swamp. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to declare the property surplus and set a minimum bid amount of $650. All were in favor.

7. Elect Chairman for 2022. A motion was made by Chairman Threadgill to elect Beth Neely-Hadley as the Chairman for 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hines. All were in favor.

8. Elect Vice Chairman for 2022. A motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy to elect Bryan Threadgill as Vice Chairman for 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.

XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Irizarry advised the Board that the GDOT Road Mileage had been submitted. She also advised the 2022 LMIG Application was complete. Administrator Irizarry stated COVID was again peaking and advised of precautions and social distancing. Administrator Irizarry congratulated Deputy Clerk, Allyson Stephens on obtaining two Associates of Art degrees from Point University in Business Administration and Organizational Leadership. She also advised that Mrs. Stephens will soon start school at Columbus State University to obtain her bachelor's degree in Business.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Neely-Hadley wished everyone a Happy New Year and that she was looking forward to a better year in 2022. She also advised that some cities had received money from the Public Safety Grant from the State of Georgia.

Commissioner Plant stated she was very happy about the construction ongoing on the new Fire Station in Greenville. She thanked all the Cities and the County for the extra work done and the Christmas trees being put up on the square. Commissioner Plant stated she attended the service for Mr. Leon Coverson on Sunday, and it was apparent his heart was education. She was very impressed with his life story and stated that Amy Dees who served on the State Board of Education with Mr. Coverson was in attendance. Commissioner Plant wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Commissioner Hines wished everyone a Happy New Year. She advised that the Salvation Army of LaGrange, in combination with United Way and Toys for Tots provided toys to 70 children in the Luthersville area and she wanted to thank them for the work done in the community. Commissioner Hines also stated the ARPA Grant provided over $8.4 billion dollars to the State of Georgia, and she would like to look at several projects that had been waiting on funding and look at opportunities to reach out to the State to fund these projects.

Vice Chairman McCoy wished everyone a Happy New Year and wanted to make sure that people like Mr. Leon Coverson were recognized more while they are living. He also gave a schedule of the upcoming events with the Manchester/Meriwether County Recreation Department. He advised Youth Basketball Ages 9-12 would have their first game on January 8, 2022, starting at 10:00 a.m. Youth Basketball ages 4-8 would have their first game on January 15, 2022, starting at 9:00 a.m. Old School Wresting will return on January 15, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. and a Family Circus on January 23, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Threadgill wished everyone a Happy New Year and stated the Omicron variant of COVID has a very high transmissibility rate and to visit the CDC website for quarantine parameters.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

County Attorney Michael Hill had nothing to report but stated there was a need for Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Litigation.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to go into Executive Session at 6:53 pm to discuss Personnel and Litigation. All were in favor.
Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of Executive Session at 7:16 pm. All were in favor.
Motion was made by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go back into Regular Session at 7:17 pm. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neely-Hadley and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy to allow for COVID time off in 2022 for those who had not already utilized the paid time off. All were in favor.

XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Threadgill announced future meetings.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Rosla Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Neely-Hadley to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 pm. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of commissioners

Attest: Beverly Thomas, County Clerk

Date: January 12, 2022