

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 25, 2022

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 Beth Neely-Hadley, Vice Chairman Bryan Threadgill, Commissioner Shirley Hines, Commissioner Rosla Plant and Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy.

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.

Staff Absent: County Clerk Beverly Thomas

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Neely-Hadley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION – Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Vice Chairman Threadgill made a motion to adopt the agenda with the following additions: *#5 under New Business – Professional Services Amendment- Meriwether County and Safebuilt, #6 New Salary Supplement for Superior Court Judges, and #7 Primrose Fire Station discussion.* Commissioner McCoy seconded this. 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 where it needed to be this time of year at \$2.9 million. He stated there was also a \$1 million supplement in the Local Government and Investment pool. Finance Director Gregory stated the funds looked good.

IV. CITIZEN COMMENT

None

VII. MINUTES

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to accept the minutes for the January 12, 2022, Regular Meeting at 9:00 a.m. All were in favor.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

None

X. APPOINTMENTS

1. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table the CAFI Board appointment, term expiring 1-10-2022 (1-year term). All were in favor.

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. County Administrator, Irizarry stated that staff like to request the revision of the Solid Waste Ordinance be placed on the April 13, 2022, meeting to allow staff time to gather information and complete the report for the Board. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to continue the Revision of the Solid Waste Ordinance RE: Franchise Fee Section 26-118 (7) and approval of the solid Waste Application to the April 13, 2022, meeting. All were in favor.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Revised Agreement between Meriwether County and the City of Greenville for providing Building Inspections and Permitting Services for the City of Greenville. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated the Board had already approved the agreement pending legal review and review by administration. Mr. Gay stated that upon review, there were a few typos that needed to be corrected, such as clarification that the County would issue the permit and notify the City. Mr. Gay advised that the County would issue the building permits and notify the City, and the City will do their own code enforcement. Mr. Gay stated that the City would need to adopt the County's subdivision regulations and they are willing to do that. Mr. Gay stated we would need to look at the County building setbacks as they will not work as the County is a 1-acre minimum. We will have to adjust the setbacks as they will be different. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to accept the revised agreement. All were in favor.

2. Request from GDOT for County participation in Local Bridge replacement project CR246/CR412 Flat Shoals Road at Flint River. Mr. Gay advised the county had received a memorandum of agreement and a letter from GDOT noting this bridge project. He stated GDOT ranked the bridge as a tier 3 bridge with a much more complex design. This is the new methodology to determine County participation. Mr. Gay stated GDOT is requesting \$100,000 worth of right of way contribution from the County. Mr. Gay stated the right of way is not expected to be acquired until fiscal year 2025 and the engineering is in fiscal year 2021, but engineering will not start until GDOT receives County funds. He stated we have until the end of February to determine what we will do. Mr. Gay stated he would contact GDOT to see what else we could do. He stated once the agreement is signed, the money is due in 30 days. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to hold the information regarding the bridge replacement from GDOT and put back on Agenda for the February 22, 2022, meeting. All were in favor. Commissioner Hines wanted information regarding the Coleman Creek Bridge project. Mr. Gay stated he would be glad to get their current dates on the project. Mr. Gay stated that concern has been continually expressed about an on-site detour, as the proposed route will be a difficult detour. If coming south on Roosevelt Highway out of Coweta and the detour route is to turn right onto Hwy 54, the turn radius will not allow the trucks to make the turn. He stated he would check with GDOT and report back to the Board. Commissioner Hines asked if this was a total GDOT project. Mr. Gay advised this was a total GDOT project as it was on a state route.

3. Budget Amendment 2022-01 – Merit Raises dated January 6, 2022, \$140,784.91. Finance Director, Bill Gregory requested the amendment in order to move money from line item for employee benefits to the individual departments to accommodate the 2.5% merit raise for employees. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to move the funds from the employee benefit line item to the individual department line item. All were in favor.

4. Revised Automatic and Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Pine Mountain. Administrator Irizarry stated that the agreement was to provide mutual aid for fire suppression and structure fires to the Town of Pine Mountain. A motion was made to accept the revised agreement by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.

5. Professional Services Agreement between Meriwether County and Safebuilt. Administrator Irizarry explained this is an amendment to the existing contract with Safebuilt to have a temporary permit and license technician in the office until someone is hired. She advised that interviews were being held tomorrow. A motion was made to accept the amendment by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Hines. All were in favor.

6. Salary Supplements for Superior Court Judges. Mr. Gay stated that a letter was received from Judge Emory Palmer regarding salary supplements for the Superior Court Judges. He advised the last time the salary supplement was changed was 2009. Mr. Gay explained there will need to be local legislation introduced and they are asking the supplement to be increased. Mr. Gay stated this is being requested from each county in the Coweta Judicial Circuit and Meriwether County's portion would be an additional \$2324.00 per year. He explained this was based on the current census. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked if we had to do anything on the legislation. Mr. Gay stated that we would only need to

approve, and they would draft the legislation. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to approve the supplement request. All were in favor.

7. Primrose Fire Station. Commissioner Hines stated the County was in the sixth year of building the new Fire Stations and she has received several calls from citizens in the Primrose/Zion Hill community regarding the status of the fire station in Primrose. Commissioner Hines would like the Board to provide information to the citizens. Commissioner Hines stated the citizens are wanting to know what is taking so long. Commissioner Hines stated she understood costs have gone up and she wants to make sure we will have enough money to complete the Fire Station in the Primrose area. Commissioner Hines also wanted more information on the fire station in Greenville, and what was actually bid and what has been paid to date. Commissioner Hines stated the fire station discussion started because of Primrose and it is going to be the last one built. Mr. Gay stated he would provide more information to the Board on the Primrose Fire Station at the February 22, 2022, meeting.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Irizarry stated 4-H is preparing for their District Project Achievement, which is their Public Speaking contest. Landin Cunningham is wrapping up her term as Northwest Junior Board President and will pass the torch in March at Rock Eagle. Administrator Irizarry stated that Mrs. Ashley is promoting Summer Camp and will soon be selling onions to offset the price of camp. The price is \$10 for 10lb bags. There will be a sign up for onions posted in the 4-H office as well as in County Clerk, Beverly Thomas' office. The month of December for Fire was an average of twenty-one emergency calls a day.

Administrator Irizarry stated of the forty-eight positions there are fifteen vacancies. She advised they are continuing to run ads to fill the positions and are preparing to begin a recruit school soon. Administrator Irizarry stated that the training will take approximately one year, however a contract has been put into place for anyone who takes the training in Meriwether County.

IX. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hines stated she did not have anything regarding the community but did need to get information regarding the vote in the last meeting to allow Piedmont Paving to pave the section coming into Chambliss Village. Commissioner Hines stated she had a citizen ask what the regulations are in order for the County to allow work to be done and what limits constitute a bid as this project was not bid out. Mr. Gay advised that this was added to a former bid and utilized the same unit prices as this can be done. Commissioner Hines wanted clarification and wanted to verify that someone had bought the subdivision. Mr. Gay explained that this was correct and there will be forty-eight new homes built. Mr. Gay stated eventually the Board will need to address the road when the traffic increases, but in the meantime almost fifty new homes would go onto the tax base. Commissioner Hines state she received a call from the citizen regarding the dip and there were actually two dips. Mr. Gay stated this was based upon the bidded quantities and there were no mobilization costs as the contractors were already in the area. Commissioner Hines still wanted to know the minimum amount to bid out. Mr. Gay explained the minimum amount is \$10,000.

Commissioner Plant would like to thank Mr. Bill Cawthorne and Mr. Gay for gaining approval for arrows around the Courthouse and more Do not Enter signs. Commissioner Plant stated that the red and white wall sections will be replaced on the Greenville Fire Station. Mr. Gay explained the original plan was for the station to be all red and one white stripe for the number, but this is not what happened. He explained the intent is to replace the red and there will be stone at the bottom, however not on the north side as the station is designed to allow for future expansion. Commissioner Plant also asked if there was still a delay on materials. Mr. Gay explained that there had been, however we have all of the steel. Commissioner Plant stated there was curiosity from the general public on the status and she appreciated his clarification.

Commissioner McCoy had no comments.

Vice Chairman Threadgill had no comments.

Chairman Neely-Hadley placed a handout regarding the Wreaths Across America Mobile Education Exhibit National Tour which will be coming to Warm Springs on March 11, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. as a way to recognize our veterans and a welcome home ceremony for our Vietnam Veterans as well as an educational tool for children. She advised there would be exhibits and this could be placed on our website. Chairman Neely-Hadley wanted this in the minutes.

Special Projects, Director Theron Gay- Appreciated all the work from Allyson Stephens. He stated we have been busy with plats and working with the city on permitting the Habitat House. Mr. Gay stated we have been working on business licenses and have several upcoming zoning requests. Mr. Gay stated we are gearing up for a busy season. He stated the LMIG contract has been drafted and we are getting ready to send it out. Vice Chairman Threadgill thanked Deputy Clerk, Allyson Stephens for going above and beyond this week and it was appreciated.

X. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

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

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go into Executive Session at 6:29 pm to discuss Litigation, Personnel, and Real Estate. All were in favor. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy to go out of Executive Session at 7:11 pm. All were in favor. Commissioner McCoy left the meeting at 7:11 p.m. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go back into Regular Session at 7:12 pm. All were in favor with a vote of 4-0 as Commissioner McCoy left the meeting.

Chairman Neely-Hadley stated there were a couple of actions taken in Executive Session. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to improve an increase in salary as discussed in Executive Session. All were in favor. A motion was made to accept the proposal of the engineering firm for Courthouse roof at 6% of the contract total by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor with a vote of 4-0 as Commissioner McCoy had the meeting.

XII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Neely-Hadley announced future meetings.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Hines adjourn the meeting at 7:13 pm. All were in favor.

Approved by: *Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners*

Attest: *Beverly A. Thomas, County Clerk, Allyson S. Stephens*

Date: *February 9, 2022*