

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

December 14, 2022

9:00 A.M.

This meeting was held in person and by Zoom due to COVID

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, County Clerk Beverly Thomas, Finance Director Bill Gregory, Director of Special Projects Theron Gay, and Attorney Nathan Lee

Due to COVID these Minutes were prepared by Deputy Clerk Allyson Stephens.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Beth-Neely Hadley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. INVOCATION

Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

All

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

A motion was made to Adopt the Agenda with the following changes: *Removal of #2 under Public Hearing Case #2022-007 – request from Andre Jackson and Angelina Carilli to re-zone property from LDR to A-1 Agricultural, 45.34 acres. Property is located on Tax Map 184-019-009. Property address is 885 Dolly Harris Road, Senoia, GA. The purpose is to build a wedding venue and Removal of #3 under Public Hearing Case #2022-008 – request from Christopher McCullough to re-zone property from LDR to NHC. Property is located in Land District 9, Land Lots 40 & 41, 5.741 acres. Property address is State Route 362 at State Route 85, Gay, GA. The proposed development is for a County Store (Convenience) with Pavilion/Barn/Marketplace by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor. After the Service Award announcement, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to add #2 under Public Hearing Case #2022-007 – request from Andre Jackson and Angelina Carilli to re-zone property from LDR to A-1 Agricultural, 45.34 acres. Property is located on Tax Map 184-019-009. Property address is 885 Dolly Harris Road, Senoia, GA. The purpose is to build a wedding venue. All were in favor.*

V. PRESENTATIONS

1. 2022 Service Awards

In honor of working with Meriwether County, Service Awards were presented to Employees by County Administrator, Michelle Irizarry and Human Resources Director, Valerie Chambers. Being honored for 5 years of service: Ginger Farrar, Sheriff's Office, David Gross, Public Works, John Mayner, Recreation, Jamie Miley, Public Safety, Timothy Morris, Fire/Rescue, David Noles, Tax Assessors, Heather Purdy, Public Safety, and Allyson Stephens, Board of

Commissioners. Being honored for 10 years of service: Sandy Garrett, Fire/Rescue, Valerie Leverett, Sheriff's Office, Sue Gordy, Public Works, and Michael Sarno, Sheriff's Office. Being honored for 25 years of service: Katrina Owens, E-911.

A motion was made to Add #2 under Public Hearing Case #2022-007 – request from Andre Jackson and Angelina Carilli to re-zone property from LDR to A-1 Agricultural, 45.34 acres. Property is located on Tax Map 184-019-009. Property address is 885 Dolly Harris Road, Senoia, GA. The purpose is to build a wedding venue by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.

2. Special Recognition and Accomplishments

1. Randy Carter – Chairman Neely-Hadley presented Randy Carter with a special recognition of his work with Recreation and expanding Recreation programs and facilities in Meriwether County, acknowledging his unwavering commitment to the citizens of Meriwether County, especially the youth. Chairman Neely-Hadley on behalf of the Board thanked Mr. Randy Carter for his countless hours of service he has dedicated to the betterment of the community through his leadership in recreation. A framed award was presented to Mr. Randy Carter.
2. Theron Gay – A proclamation was read by Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley in honor of Mr. Theron Gay. The proclamation was to honor Mr. Theron Gay on his upcoming retirement and appreciation for his outstanding leadership and service to Meriwether County. Mr. Gay began his service on June 3, 2015, as Interim Administrator in which soon changed to County Administrator. Mr. Gay served as County Administrator until September 13, 2021, when he stepped back to take on the role of Special Projects Director. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that Mr. Gay had worked in Public Service most of his life, dedicating over 30 years in Coweta County and 7 years in Meriwether County. Mr. Gay has helped Meriwether County with tasks such as the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update, which saved the County over \$100,000, SPLOST, TSPLOST, Fire Bond and Fire District, which includes the building of 7 new fire stations and the remodeling of 1. Mr. Gay has also helped in obtaining the Grant for the Greenville Recreation Park, as well as utilizing a new treatment method for resurfacing roads that is lower in cost, allowing more miles of roadway to be resurfaced, helped to obtain emergency LMIG funds to rebuild and stabilize several culverts, including the Cove Road culvert and also oversaw the design, funding, and construction of the parking around the Courthouse, and the retention wall stabilization at the Court House. Mr. Gay oversaw the recodification of the Meriwether County Ordinance Book, as well as helping with numerous ordinances to implement policy. Mr. Gay was acknowledged for his tremendous leadership and service to Meriwether County and a framed proclamation was presented to him as well as a flag for his service to Meriwether County.
3. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley- A proclamation was read by Vice Chairman Threadgill to honor Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley for her outstanding service to the citizens of Meriwether County, representing District 5. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley was elected to serve as Commissioner during a Special Election held on March 16, 2010, to fulfill the remaining term of her late husband, former Commissioner Charles Neely, who passed away on December 1, 2009. During Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley's term in office, she has served as Chairman in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2022. She also served as Vice Chairman in 2019. During her time as Chairman, she served as ACCG Legislative Coordinator, served on the Community Action for Improvement Board, Three Rivers RC&D, and on the Camera-Ready Committee. Chairman Beth Neely-

Hadley has been married to her husband Byron Hadley for 8 years and together have three daughters, Lauren Allen, Brittany Carroll, and Shannon Neely, and three sons, Hunter Hadley, Remington Hadley, and Dalton Hadley as well as 13 grandchildren. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley has been a businesswoman in Meriwether County for 21 years and previously owned and operated Neely Investments, which included the Oil Drop, Tire Center, and Manchester Farm and Garden. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley also owned and operated Delano's in Warm Springs. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley is an active member of First Baptist Church in Manchester, where she serves on numerous committees, sings in the choir, and volunteers to be a servant in numerous church activities. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley also oversees the faith-based volunteer group, Operation Good Neighbor, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this month and assists with families in need with the donation of food boxes and children's gifts during Christmas. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley is the go-to for many who are seeking assistance with clothing, food, household items, and assistance with many other needs. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley's greatest strength is her strong faith in God and her desire to serve him through prayer and helping others. Chairman Beth-Neely Hadley continues as a strong community volunteer with the Warm Springs Merchant's group and volunteers with numerous activities, annual festivals, and is a huge supporter of tourism through the Chamber of Commerce. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley missed interacting with people after her retirement and took on a part-time job at Dinners Ready by Chad and enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, camping, biking, hiking, photography, flower gardening, and making family photos. Vice Chairman Threadgill read the proclamation recognizing and commending Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley for her outstanding service to the citizens of Meriwether County and best wishes were extended to Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley on her retirement. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley was presented a framed proclamation and a flag. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated to Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley that he truly cherished the friendship they had made over their term in office. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley was presented a flag. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay thanked Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley for being a great leader, and Commissioner and stated he has enjoyed working with her. Special Projects Director Theron Gay stated that Chairman Neely-Hadley had been involved with a little bit of everything and for the generations to come to know how important and involved Chairman Neely-Hadley had been, the Commissioners will be naming the nature trail at Lake Meriwether, the Beth Neely-Hadley Nature Trail. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley was presented a copy of a plaque that will hang at Lake Meriwether under the kiosk, including a picture of Lake Meriwether, a picture of the trail, along with the writing "Beth Neely-Hadley, Commissioner District 5, 2010-2022 and dedicated this 14th day of December 2022. Commissioner Hines thanked Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley for her leadership over the years and when she came on as a Commissioner, Chairman Neely-Hadley shared insight with her on how big the job really is. Commissioner Hines stated that during the process of it all, Chairman Neely-Hadley had always kept a very unique spirit about herself, even in the most difficult times. Commissioner Hines stated that even in the most difficult moments, Chairman Neely-Hadley kept a balance and had a kindred spirit. Commissioner Hines stated she appreciated being able to serve with Chairman Neely-Hadley over the past 8 years. Chairman Beth Neely-Hadley stated that she has enjoyed serving the citizens of Meriwether County. She stated that her grandchildren don't know her as anything other than serving on the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that she started serving just before Neely was born and everything for her grandchildren has been planned around the second Wednesday and fourth Tuesday of every month. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated her family is truly supportive including her husband,

children, grandchildren, and some of her dearest friends. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated the citizens of District 5 are absolutely the best and she has known some of them over 40 years and some later, and while we did not always agree on everything, they have always had a good working relationship. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that by being on the Board she has been able to meet people all over the County and cherished the friendships that they had made. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she has been invited into homes of citizens. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated it has been a true honor to serve the citizens of Meriwether County and she will still be involved in Meriwether County because she cares about Meriwether County, and it is her home just like it is yours.

4. Alfred "Buster" McCoy- A proclamation was read by Vice Chairman Threadgill recognizing Commissioner McCoy for his outstanding service to the citizens of Meriwether County as Commissioner of District 3. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy was elected to serve the citizens of District 3 and took office on January 1, 2015. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy has served as Chairman in 2018 and Vice Chairman in 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2021. During his time in office, Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy has served as the ACCG Legislative Coordinator, Airport Authority, Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, alternate to Two Rivers RC&D, and on the West Central Georgia Broadband Joint Development Authority. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy has been married to his wife Tressa for 18 years and have two daughters, Melanie London, and Amy Dees, and seven grandchildren, Allison Watson, Caleb London, Ansley Clark, Joshua London, Austin Dees, Hannah London, and Abby Dees. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy graduated from the University of West Georgia with a bachelor's degree in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Latin. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy also attended Emmanuel Bible College and studied Theology and worked as a Chemist for Georgia Power. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy also served as a field auditor for Southern Company and a field auditor for Mirant until his retirement in 2004. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy is a machinist, certified welder, certified professional association diving instructor, and earned his pilot's license in 1987. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy is a Veteran and served in the Air Force from 1971-1976 and is an active member of the American Legion Post# 186 in Greenville, GA and served as Post Commander from 2004-2015. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy is also a member of the VFW, Post# 4670 in Warm Springs, GA, member of the Aircrafts Owners and Pilots Association since 1987, and President of the Meriwether County Citizens Awareness Group until 2014. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy is an active member of the Mt. Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Haralson, Georgia, where he serves as President of the Church Council and has been a Baptist Deacon for 30 years. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy has a passion for reading, is a master of woodwork including milling lumber, aging wood, custom cabinetry, carpentry, creating blueprints, designing, and building layout, which was evident in the construction of the stage at Lake Meriwether. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy enjoys metal work and built an ultra-light airplane and rebuilt several aircraft. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy was recognized and commended for his outstanding work for the citizens of Meriwether County and best wishes on his retirement. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy was presented a framed proclamation and flag. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated he has enjoyed working with Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy and stated that he remembered their first Christmas Eve working together when floods came in and they were down in a creek trying to work. Mr. Gay thanked him for being one of his friends. Mr. Gay acknowledged Commissioner McCoy's love of Lake Meriwether and presented him with a copy of a plaque that will hang at Lake Meriwether. The

campground will be named the "Alfred "Buster" McCoy Campground. The plaque will include a family at Lake Meriwether and will hang under the kiosk and is dedicated to Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy this 14th day of December 2022. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated to Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy that it had been an honor to serve with him over the past 8 years and looked forward to the friendship they had built and the one that will continue. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy stated that he appreciated the opportunity to have served as a Commissioner and it has been a learning experience as well as a working experience. Commissioner McCoy stated as he leaves there are mixed emotions as there are things that he wished he had gotten done that he didn't, but there will be opportunities for those Commissioners in the future to drive forward things as they see fit. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy thanked the citizens of Meriwether County for the opportunity.

5. Commissioner Shirley Hines- A proclamation was read by Vice Chairman Threadgill recognizing Commissioner Shirley Hines for her service to the citizens of Meriwether County as Commissioner for District 1. Commissioner Shirley Hines was elected to serve the citizens of Meriwether County and took office on January 1, 2015. Commissioner Shirley Hines served as Chairman in 2019 and is well known by her townhall meetings in effort to share information with her constituents. Commissioner Shirley Hines was a strong supporter of the Fire Department, Public Safety, and transportation improvements of Meriwether County. Commissioner Shirley Hines served as the ACCG Legislative Coordinator and on the Community Action for Improvement Board. Commissioner Shirley Hines was born in Ft. Benning Georgia and is the eldest of three girls. Commissioner Shirley Hines grew up in Gary, Indiana and graduated from Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Education and retired as a Reservation Sales Agent with Delta Airlines in Atlanta, Georgia, following 22 years of service. Commissioner Shirley Hines and former Commissioner Freddie Hines have been happily married for 18 years and her close family members include her mother, Lucinda Irving of Indiana, sister Linda Wade of Texas, sister Deborah Holley of Indiana, nephews London Holley and Caman Holley, and niece Sydney Holley. Commissioner Shirley Hines is an active member of St. Paul CME Church of Lone Oak Georgia and serves on several boards including the West Georgia United Way and helps with several charities. Commissioner Shirley Hines served with the Salvation Army in the distribution of toys at Christmas for children in need. Commissioner Shirley Hines is the founder and president of the West Central Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce and is the owner and CEO of the Resource Exchange Management Group. Commissioner Shirley Hines enjoys entertaining friends and family, gardening, outdoor landscaping, and helping senior citizens. Commissioner Shirley Hines was recognized and commended for her outstanding service to the citizens of Meriwether County and best wishes on her retirement. Commissioner Shirley Hines was presented with a framed proclamation and flag. Commissioner Shirley Hines stated that it has been a pleasure working with the Board and it had already been stated there were times when they did not all agree but the most important thing is they have always been respectful of each other, and the important information brought to the group. Commissioner Shirley Hines stated it has been an honor to serve the citizens of Meriwether County and not just District 1, but the entire County. Commissioner Shirley Hines stated she is not a native of Meriwether County, but it is home to her and what she has learned the most is that the Board is here to serve and not be served. Commissioner Hines stated in saying this the Board is there to make the quality of life better for its citizens and she feels like she has worked hard to make that happen and is a strong advocate for transparency and people's voices being heard. Commissioner Hines stated she has

worked hard in her time on the Board to make sure that those concerns were made known and heard and hopes the citizens feel she has done that. Commissioner Hines stated that in her time on the Board, she probably has traveled more roads and knows more about roads than she would have ever known in her lifetime. Commissioner Hines stated that she felt that every citizen deserves the right to have safe roads to travel. Commissioner Hines stated the Board has done great in reference to roads and there is still a lot of work to be done. Commissioner Hines thanked everyone, who even though we couldn't get their roads paved, they appreciated the process put together to make things happen. Commissioner Hines stated she is so thankful and appreciated all the love and support and the biggest thing for her and important part for her being the Fire District and Fire Stations. Commissioner Hines stated that Primrose Fire Station hasn't been built yet and this makes her sad, but she will be a strong advocate to see that it does. Commissioner Hines again thanked everyone for allowing her to serve and supporting her over the years. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated that he always called Commissioner Hines the sponge, because she was always interested in learning all she could about roads. Mr. Gay also stated that one of the things that was near and dear to Commissioner Hines was the Fire Department. Mr. Gay stated that although the stations are not complete, he will be volunteering his time as well to see that it gets accomplished. Mr. Gay presented Commissioner Shirley Hines with a sample of a plaque that will hang in the Fire Department Headquarters in Greenville that states "Commissioner Shirley Hines, District 1, 2015-2022, in recognition of your support and the creation and expansion of Meriwether County Fire Department on this 14th day of December 2022. The plaque will also include a picture of a Meriwether County Fire Truck, Fireman, and Meriwether County logo. Commissioner Hines stated the presentation did her heart well and she does have a picture of herself in her gear. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated to Commissioner Hines that while they did not always agree, they agreed on a lot more than the citizens realize and he appreciates her time served on the Commission Board. Chairman Neely-Hadley also stated that she didn't think there was anyone else in the County that knew as much about grants, and she appreciated the information Commissioner Hines always brought regarding grant opportunities. Commissioner Rosla Plant stated that having served on the Board in 1984-1986, 2015 and 2016, and back on the Board now for the next two years, it has been a pleasure serving with the Board members. Commissioner Plant stated that the Board is like a family, and like any family they don't always agree, but diverse thought and input is needed on where we are as a County. Commissioner Plant stated from being on the Board in 84-86 things had come full circle because she was able to help with the dedication of the new Fire Station, but she was also able to be a part of the first fire station built in the County. Commissioner Plant stated that when everyone works together, they can get so much done, but sometimes there are controversies with half-truths and even personal agendas, the board doesn't get anywhere and constantly fighting. Commissioner Plant encouraged all the citizens of Meriwether County to work together to move Meriwether County forward. Commissioner Plant stated there is a wealth of knowledge on the Board and she is so happy that they are willing to continue their public service and willingness to continue to move the County forward. Commissioner Plant stated that there is a lot to offer in Meriwether County and thanked Commissioner McCoy, Chairman Neely-Hadley, and Commissioner Hines and stated they are each her friends and she looks forward to calling on them in the future. Commissioner Alfred "Buster" McCoy acknowledged his family that was in attendance including his wife Tressa, daughters, Amy and Melody, granddaughters Hannah and Abby and middle grandson Josh. Chairman Neely-Hadley introduced her family including her husband, Byron, oldest daughter Lauren, middle daughter Brittany, youngest daughter, Shannon

and grandchildren, Neely, Harper, Charleigh, and Truitt, dear friends, Vicky and Al Olivent, Lonyse Bridges, Larkin Cunningham and her some of her children and Carter Hudson. Chairman Neely-Hadley thanked them for being so supportive of her and stated some of them were with her in her first meetings for moral support and she appreciated them very much. Commissioner Hines thanked her husband former Commissioner Mr. Freddie Hines on being so supportive of her. Commissioner Hines thanked former Commissioner Mary Bray for being in attendance as well as her dear friend Susan Olvey for believing and supporting her. Commissioner Hines thanked her neighbor and friend Debbie Nelson and Virginia Hill and stated it was great to see so many beautiful faces in attendance. Family pictures were taken with each Commissioner and their families.

6. List of Accomplishments – Special Projects, Director Theron Gay presented a list of accomplishments including:

Accomplishments

- Created New Fire District
- Constructed 7 New Fire Stations
- Planned 1 additional Station, 2 Substations, and one Station remodel
- New Fire Trucks Purchased
- New Ambulances Purchased
- Updated Fire Equipment
- Fully Manned Fire Services
- Safer Grant
- Utilized Surface Treatment Resurfacing, which resulted in doubling our number of road miles resurfaced
- Safety LMIG program, which added road striping and new reflective signage.
- Acquired GDOT funding for assistance with culvert and bridge repairs and other road improvements totaling approximately \$1 million.
- Replaced numerous road culverts using County forces saving substantial taxpayer dollars – 11+
- New Courthouse wall completed, included new sidewalk, parking, and crosswalks
- Paved parking lot at Tax/Building Department building
- Completed a streetscape project in conjunction with GDOT in Greenville
- Worked to rebuild bridge and culvert structures damaged by storm events using FEMA funds
- New Public Works equipment purchased, including new motor graders and a Gradeall
- Worked with CSX and GDOT to repair several railroad bridges
- Improvements at Lake Meriwether
- New Electrical and Water service for events at Park
- New Electrical and Plumbing for existing camping area
- New Park Signage
- Expanded RV Camping sites with water and electric
- New Bathrooms and Showers
- New Sewer Dump Station
- New Security Gate
- New Stage for Events (Comm. McCoy)
- Paved Roadway over Dam
- Created ADA Trails with Grant funds
- Created a Nature Trail along Lake Shore
- New ADA Dock with ADA Parking
- Reworked existing Boat Ramp

- Worked with Georgia DNR to reconstruct Boat Ramp at Flint River
- SPLOST continued for additional term:

Roads and Bridges

Building Renovations

Recreation

- Prepared and Secured Grant for New Recreation Park on McLaughlin Road: Greenfield, Playground Equipment, Walking Trail Nature Trail, Pavilion, Bathrooms, and Dog Park

- New Shooting Range Under Construction
- Established New Inmate Crew
- TSPLOST Program established, approved by voters, and implemented
- Paved 3 Dirt Roads: Mt. Pilgrim Road, Peaceful Lane, and Tuskegee Lane
- Planning to Pave Beulah Evans Road in 2023
- New procedure for Criteria for Paving Dirt Roads
- Completed update of Comprehensive Plan in-house with assistance from Three Rivers Regional Commission. Saved over \$100,000 in cost
- Completed Service Delivery Strategy
- Short-term Work Program- Completed half of tasks in one year
- Recodified Code Books. First time in many years. Done in-house working with

Municode

- Developed New Subdivision Regulations, which included, New Paving Specifications and Bonding Requirements
- New Road Closure Procedures
- New Zoning Criteria to allow variety of Housing opportunities
- New Ordinance for Cell Towers that requires they set aside space on tower for use by Meriwether County Public Safety if needed, at no cost to the County
- Special Events Ordinance
- Farm Brewery Ordinance
- New Timber Ordinance – Model for State

Airport

With County Assistance, Airport Authority made great strides.

- Runway Improvements
- Obstruction Clearances
- New Fueling System
- Two New Hangars under Construction
- New Businesses attracted to Airport

Animal Shelter

- Constructed major addition to Animal Shelter using private donations and a GA Dept. of Corrections Construction Crew
- Updated Animal Control Ordinance to allow Health Department Board to hear dangerous dog issues

Water and Sewerage Authority

- Refinanced Water and Sewerage Authority debt to better manage debt
- New Sewer Ordinance adopted
- Water and Sewer Line expansion
- Exploring ways to further expand service
- Leased/Sold Gas Line

Finance

- Balanced Budget
- No Tax Increases
- No TAN for last 5+ years – Major Accomplishment

- Developed and Maintained a Good Working Relationship with all Municipalities, Elected Officials, and State Agencies
- Expanded I.T. Services
- Expanded Radio Communications
- Updated to E911 Facility and System

Industrial Development Authority

- Worked hard to locate new industry in Meriwether County
- New Industries in Industrial Park and McLaughlin Road
- Implemented Conditional Zoning
- Enhanced Benefits for County Employees to improve retainage
- Worked through COVID-19 without closing County Offices or providing County Services

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director Bill Gregory presented the finance reports to the Board and stated the General Fund was still very strong and there should be a sizeable amount of funds from coming from the Tax Commissioner in the next week. Mr. Gregory stated that some of that will be transferred to the State Treasury Local Investment Pool to taken advantage of the higher interest rates they offer. Mr. Gregory also provided TSPLOST and SPLOST distribution reports and stated that the amounts keep going up every month on both SPLOST and TSPLOST which is fantastic.

VII. CITIZEN COMMENT

None

VIII. MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the Minutes of the November 22, 2022, Regular Meeting, by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to accept the Minutes of the November 29, 2022, Special Called Meeting. Those voting in Favor were Commissioner McCoy, Vice Chairman Threadgill, and Commissioner Plant. Those abstaining the vote were Chairman Neely-Hadley and Commissioner Hines.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Neely-Hadley read the rules for a Public Hearing

1. Angela Hand – request to rezone .12 of an acre within 111 acres from A1- Agricultural to A1 Special Use (.12 of an acre). The property is located on Tax Map 077-012, 2005 Hwy. 100, Greenville, GA. The purpose of the rezone is for the Hand Family Cemetery

A motion was made to go into Public Hearing by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant at 10:01. All were in favor. Cassandra Sharpe, Director of Building and Zoning stating that Ms. Hand would like to rezone .12 of an acre within 111 acres from Agricultural to A1 Special Use for a Family Cemetery. The property is located on Tax Map 077-012, at 2005 Hwy. 100, Greenville Georgia. The purpose of the rezone is for the Hand Family Cemetery. Director Sharpe stated that the Zoning Ordinance does allow this rezone as a Special Use and Ms. Hand was there for any questions. The Board had no questions and Ms. Hand stated she was in no hurry to use the cemetery but would like to rezone for that purpose. There was not anyone signed up to speak for or against the rezoning request. Director Sharpe recommended the

approval of the request. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of the Public Hearing at 10:02. All were in favor. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant to approve the rezoning request. This was seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill. All were in favor.

2. Case #2022-007 – request from Andre Jackson and Angelina Carilli to re-zone property from LDR to A-1 Agricultural, 45.34 acres. Property is located on Tax Map 184-019-009. Property address is 885 Dolly Harris Road, Senoia, GA. The purpose is to build a wedding venue

A motion was made to go into Public Hearing by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go into Public Hearing at 10:02. All were in favor.

Building and Zoning Director, Cassandra Sharpe stated Mr. Jackson brought a request to her office requesting his 45.34 acres be rezoned from LDR to A1 for the reason of future use of a wedding venue. The property is located at Tax Map Parcel 184-019-009 and is bordered on the north side by Bryan and Crystal Young, westsides and southsides by LAP33 Properties, LLC and letters had been mailed to both adjoining properties with no opposition. Director Sharpe stated signage had been placed and advertising done in the paper. Director Sharpe stated under review of the Ordinance and Code it does not fall under any restrictions if it is allowed to be rezoned and the property is located in the northeastern part of the county and not near any other venues of this type. Director Sharpe recommended approval and Mr. Jackson is in the audience for any questions. Commissioner Hines stated that Dolly Harris Road has been one of the roads that there has been a lot of repairs and work done and is unfortunately one of the bad roads in the area. Commissioner Hines asked Mr. Jackson if he was on the paved end of the road near Coweta or the other end. Mr. Jackson stated they almost split the road down the middle and are about 1.5 miles from the Coweta side and just about 1 mile of the Meriwether side of the paved roads. Commissioner Hines stated that personally she felt that venues of this type are needed and are good at generating revenue, but her concern is the amount of traffic when there are events being held and the condition of the road is not being great. Commissioner Hines stated that in time the road will need to be addressed as business expands. Commissioner Hines stated she had been on the Board for the last 8 years and doesn't believe she has been one year without getting at least 10 calls on this road. Commissioner Hines stated her main concern was how to address the road, not because of the venue going up, but as well as helping the residents on the road. Mr. Andrew Jackson stated that they had been in the wedding industry for a few years and also run a photo booth company as well and have seen venues that have been on roads such as Dolly Harris before and knows that it can work and be successful. Mr. Jackson stated they had also discussed possibly budgeting in some of the bad spots if needed before popular wedding seasons, but they realize they would have to discuss legalities and things as such. Mr. Jackson stated there is a grading company on the road that he feels is probably causing a lot of the damage with the dump trucks coming in and out and knows that his neighbors did say they have had a lot of activity with the County with the road. Mr. Jackson stated as far as they are concerned, they have seen venues that are very successful with similar situations and don't see it as an issue on their side. There was no one signed up to speak for or against the request. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go out of Public Hearing at 10:07. All were in favor. A motion was made by Commissioner Hines to approve the request for the venue and rezone, this was seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill. All were in favor.

3. Removed: Case #2022-008 – request from Christopher McCullough to re-zone property from LDR to NHC. Property is located in Land District 9, Land Lots 40 & 41, 5.741 acres. Property address is State Route 362 at State Route 85, Gay, GA. The proposed development is for a County Store (Convenience) with Pavilion/Barn/Marketplace

4. Discussion of Meriwether County Planning Commission

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to go into Public Hearing at 10:08. All were in favor. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated that there is a lot of misunderstanding to what is being talked about and he would like to provide clarification on what Staff is asking. Mr. Gay stated that Meriwether County's Ordinance currently provides for a Planning Commission that currently hears rezoning requests and makes a recommendation only to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Gay stated the Planning Commission was likely established many years ago before Meriwether County had a professional Planning and Zoning office and staff. Mr. Gay stated that as of times in the past they were charged with reviewing plans for development and signing off on plans. Mr. Gay stated most of those old duties have been replaced and reassigned through the years to the County Staff. Mr. Gay stated today the Planning Commission only hears the rezoning requests and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission has remained in place in our Ordinances. Mr. Gay stated it is important to note that while it is called a Planning Commission, they in fact as a Board do not participate in County Planning, Future Land Use, or Zoning Changes, except that those they are hearing that are made by people or individuals, with the recommendation only coming back to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Gay stated the Comprehensive Plan Process opens the door for citizens to be able to participate in future growth, land use, and zoning for the County and again the Planning Commission has no responsibilities as a Board in that Process. Mr. Gay explained that as Citizens they can come and speak, but their job is not to plan for the County, their job is to hear a zoning request and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Gay explained the Board of Commissioners can then follow that recommendation, add to it, or delete it and don't have to follow it. Mr. Gay stated the Planning Commission's responsibility is to hold a Public Hearing and once they do that the Board of Commissioner's holds a second Public Hearing to hear the same request with the difference being that when the applicants come before the Board of Commissioners, they are actually speaking to the Board that can make that decision. Mr. Gay explained the first Public Hearing is not a decision maker and only a recommendation, so the applicant goes through two hearings, but the one that really matters and is emphasized goes before the Board of Commissioners as they make the decision, and they don't know what is discussed from the Planning Commission before it comes to them. Mr. Gay stated that if the Planning Commission makes a recommendation, doesn't make a recommendation, or doesn't have a quorum, the zoning application follows the same procedure, which is to come back to a Public Hearing before the Board of Commissioners for a decision. Mr. Gay stated that we have heard the argument that we are denying citizens the opportunity to be heard and this doesn't hold water as the citizens do have the opportunity to be heard and the ones that hear it last is the Board of Commissioners, which in his opinion should be the first to hear it, because they are the ones that have to make the decision. Mr. Gay explained that the citizens have all the opportunity to hear it, because the presentations come directly back to the Board of Commissioners, who is

the decision maker. Mr. Gay stated that while we have followed the Planning Commission process for many years, Mr. Gay stated that he would honestly say it has had little to no impact on the Board of Commissioners decision on rezoning or results, but it does have ramification. Mr. Gay stated he didn't know of anything that the Planning Commission has sent through that has been a strong recommendation, that the Board of Commissioners thought was really important that was followed. Mr. Gay explained that the Board of Commissioners looked at it from a clear sheet of paper as they should do. Mr. Gay stated that staff is okay either way, but some of the ramifications of the Planning Commission is it extends the process of rezoning by at least a month for citizens and property owners. Mr. Gay explained that a property owner comes in and wants to rezone property, such as the cemetery that was approved today, has to go through the Planning Commission, had to have advertisements, have meetings, wait until that is finished up and a recommendation is made, then come back to the Board of Commissioners to present it again before a decision was made for a simple cemetery. Mr. Gay explained another ramification is County taxpayers have to pay for additional advertising, have to pay the Planning Commission members that may attend or may not and fail to have a quorum. Mr. Gay stated that if all attend the Planning Commission meeting then business is done and that is great. Mr. Gay explained that there are two members that come and when there is not a quorum, he feels it is important to pay them for attending since they took their time and effort to be there, and yet we don't have a decision or recommendation to come back to the Board because there is no quorum. Mr. Gay explained that County staff time is used in the preparation and presentation of the requests. Mr. Gay stated in light of all these facts, the County staff has continued to schedule, advertise, and prepare presentations for the Planning Commission. Mr. Gay reiterated as he said earlier, staff really doesn't have a problem with either way the Board of Commissioners want to go. Mr. Gay explained that over the last two years, there have been numerous times where the Planning Commission has failed to have a quorum, leaving the applicant and citizens that come to speak without a Board to hear their support or opposition as there is no one here to speak to. Mr. Gay stated that staff doesn't feel this is fair to the citizens, the applicant, or the Planning Commission members who do take the time to show up for the meeting. Mr. Gay explained that Zoning Director Cassandra Sharpe goes through a lot to try to contact everybody as well as Butch Oliver, previous employee of Planning and Zoning, in the audience who will say the same thing. Mr. Gay explained it is difficult to get everyone in and a real effort is made by staff to get the Planning Commission to the meetings and schedule the meetings and it is difficult. Mr. Gay provided a chart to the Board of Commissioners to provide some examples. Mr. Gay stated the chart showed attendance of the Planning Commission members for meetings from December 2020 to December 2022. Mr. Gay stated there were 14 scheduled meetings during that time and only 7 times or 50% of the time did the Planning Commission have a quorum. Mr. Gay explained that 7 of those 14 scheduled meetings, citizens came to have their requests heard and there was no one there to hear them. Zoning Director, Cassandra Sharpe confirmed that since she has been the Director, there has not been one meeting where there was a quorum. Mr. Gay asked Director Sharpe how many members showed up for the Planning Commission meeting the night before and Director Sharpe confirmed that only two members showed up. Mr. Gay explained this is where the problem lies. Mr. Gay stated that considering the lack of attendance and, following the Code of Ordinances it states in the Ordinance staff or the Chairman needs to bring the issue to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Gay explained that they are asking the Board for one of two things: either appoint members to the Planning Commission who will attend or make changes to the Ordinance to prevent the continued waste of time and taxpayer money and have applicants

and citizens come and not have anyone to speak to. Mr. Gay stated that while reviewing the Meriwether County Code of Ordinances and in preparation for today's meeting a couple of things came up that we didn't realize and there are a couple of requirements that are in the Ordinance that address the problem before the Board today. Mr. Gay stated that the first item was #1 that states no member of the Planning Commission shall hold any elected public office within Meriwether County and is stated clearly on the first page that failure to attend three consecutive meetings or four meetings within the calendar year shall be considered automatic resignation. Mr. Gay stated considering the requirements of the Ordinance, only Mr. Charron and Mr. Trimble have met the criteria of the Ordinance. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked if this was the criteria to stay on the Board. Mr. Gay stated that is correct and they are the only two members that come and were at the meeting last night, came in November and unfortunately don't have the third member for a quorum. According to the Ordinance, Mr. Gay stated the remaining three members on the Planning Commission have resigned due to lack of attendance and in the case of Mrs. Nash, she does not meet the criteria of serving due to holding an elected office as the Mayor of Gay. Mr. Gay stated that Mrs. Nash has been on the Planning Commission for a long time, and we had not really read the criteria for being on the Planning Commission but assumed everything was good, but in fact, it states no member shall hold any elected office in Meriwether County. Mr. Gay stated as of the present we have a real problem. Mr. Gay explained we have a Board that's not attended with two members who attend faithfully, and he is afraid they are going to get frustrated and not come back because they come and there is not a quorum. Mr. Gay stated that 7 out of 14 times there has not been a quorum and this is interesting considering he has heard a lot of buzzing and people who have been outspoken about this and doing away with this or that. Mr. Gay stated there has been one member who has missed 9 or 10 of those 14 meetings and has served as Chairman and what we are facing is a Board that just does not show up. Mr. Gay stated that the job can't be done if they don't come and participate. Mr. Gay stated staff is fine with any direction the Board wants to go and our only recommendation is that you support either one of two actions: 1. Reappoint members who are serious about accepting this responsibility of the Planning Commission without their own agendas or 2. Make changes to the County Ordinance to bypass the Planning Commission process which is not required by law and is more costly and extends the rezoning time etc. Mr. Gay stated staff doesn't mind having a Planning Commission, what we do mind is making arrangements, advertising, paying the members, having the citizens and applicants come, and half the time there is no one here to hear the requests. Mr. Gay explained we are not about just doing away with the Planning Commission, but we are all about making it a functional board if that is a desire. Mr. Gay stated Mr. Butch Oliver is in attendance and feels he can speak as he had the same issue when he was working in Planning and Zoning. Mr. Gay stated he would be more than happy to answer any questions the Board has, but staff needs help in resolving the problem. Commissioner Hines asked what the stipend was for the Planning Commission members. Mr. Gay stated that he thought it was \$50 per meeting. Mayor Ruth Nash from the audience stated that was correct. Commissioner Hines stated so this Ordinance this is the first time that we've looked at this knowing that it states in here about an elected official and you are saying this is the first time we were aware of this. Mr. Gay stated that we review the Ordinances but never really got into the Planning Commission, because years ago it was working and we didn't realize there were those restrictions, or at least he didn't know. Commissioner Hines stated that she knows this has been discussed before and her main concern is when this was brought up, why did we not address it earlier with those who are on the Board. Commissioner Hines asked if

there was a process to say you've missed so many meetings and, did we reach out to them to find out why and this information to her, should have been brought so much sooner to the attention of this Board so it could have been addressed so much sooner. Vice Chairman Threadgill addressed Commissioner Hines comment and stated that it was brought to the attention of the Board of Commissioners that there was a lack of attendance on the Planning Commission and the responsibility falls back on the Board of Commissioners to look further into it because the Board of Commissioners appoints those individuals. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated he takes blame himself for not looking into the Ordinance when it was brought to his attention, and he feels that the Board of Commissioners as a whole has to take that responsibility and not put it back on Staff. Commissioner Hines stated that she wasn't putting it back on the Staff but as Vice Chairman Threadgill stated it was brought to the Board's attention, and once again when things are brought to the Board's attention, how do we prioritize and look into the issue more. Commissioner Hines stated that the information would have been so much better to have earlier. Commissioner Hines stated she wanted more clarity and there are a lot of reasons people can't serve, and she believes when people are assigned to a board, there needs to be some kind of follow-up. Commissioner Hines stated anytime she has appointed someone to a Board, she has always had their resume and information, because when she came on a big issue was not having a way to contact people. Mr. Gay stated in the Ordinance where it talks about the failure to attend, the Chairperson of the Planning Commission should inform the Board. Mr. Gay stated the Chairman of the Planning Commission has some responsibility to report these issues. Commissioner Hines asked who the Chairman of the Planning Commission is. Mr. Gay and Director Sharpe answered that the Chairman was Mrs. Nash. Mr. Gay stated that there is hardly ever a quorum, and he also wished it would have been noticed earlier too, but once we found out and understood we knew it needed to be addressed. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that granted we probably should have looked into this before now, as we knew there was an issue, but we know what the issue now is, and it is not always easy to remove someone from a Board. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated of course there are some things in place in our Ordinance, and all of the members may not fit in that, but what we need is an effective working board or we need to bypass it to the decision makers anyway. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated it can be a waste of time for the people who are applying. Mr. Gay stated there was citizens in attendance at the Planning Commission last night, but they couldn't speak. Commissioner Plant stated that she was not aware of some of the problems we were having with the Planning Commission, however in her talk with Cassandra last week, members may inherit issues that the Board of Commissioners is not aware of. Commissioner Plant expressed if you have reached a certain age and she is right there with it, you may not like driving at night, but the meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. and the other members are not aware of that. Commissioner Plant states there may be members that do not have access to a computer, and we assume that everyone is computer literate and get their emails, but there may be people that are old-school that don't want to use the computer and there may be other things that the Board is not aware of. Commissioner Plant stated she wanted to take it from the standpoint that this is being brought to the attention of the Board of Commissioners, but better to the citizens of Meriwether County, and stated that we need to be working together and if there is an issue, lets resolve it without making any blame. Commissioner Plant stated if you are willing to serve on a Board and have issues, make it known before going into that participation. Commissioner Plant stated when you are requesting to be a public servant, let us know if there's a problem. Commissioner Plant stated she very much appreciated anyone's willingness to serve on any of the Boards. Commissioner Plant stated if people are putting in

permitting requests, give them courtesy and the counterparts on that Board courtesy to let them know you can't attend. Commissioner Plant encouraged kindness to each other and courtesy. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that he doesn't think being on the Board for his 10th year that the Board of Commissioners has ever had to cancel a meeting due to not having a quorum and taken the responsibility well to show up whenever needed to serve the people of Meriwether County. Planning and Zoning Director, Cassandra Sharpe feels the reason that it might not have been brought up is there were several months where Planning and Zoning did not have meetings, and that could be the reason it wasn't caught or brought to the attention of the Board. Director Sharpe stated she emails, calls, messages, and packages have been mailed to the members. Director Sharpe stated that the Planning Commission has access to everything 2-3 weeks prior to the meeting and there should be no reason they wouldn't know about a meeting or contact her and let her know why they could not attend the meeting. Chairman Neely-Hadley confirmed there had been 4 meetings this year including the one last night. Director Sharpe confirmed that is correct and it is not that they have not known about the meetings or that they have not had the information for the meetings, it is just unfortunately, several are not showing up. Commissioner McCoy stated that the customer is the citizens who are using the office. Commissioner McCoy stated that a couple of years back, there was a citizen who attending a Public Hearing who was upset because he had started the process of his request back in June and it wasn't until November, the Board of Commissioners heard his request. Commissioner McCoy stated that the gentleman with the request had 50 acres and wanted to cut out 2 acres for his child to build a house. Commissioner McCoy stated that because it took 5 months, the gentleman lost his contractor and had to push building into the next year. Commissioner McCoy stated there is really no use in someone applying and having to wait 5 months to build a house. Commissioner McCoy stated how the Board wants to address this is wide open as far as he is concerned. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated even when there have been meetings where there was a quorum, he knows there have been several times when the current Planning Commission did not make a decision, recommendation, or do anything except pass that to the Board of Commissioners, because they did not want to give their opinion based on what was presented to them. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that not only is the Planning Commission not meeting, but it is also passing the buck to the Board of Commissioners instead of giving what as a Board they are responsible to do. Vice Chairman Threadgill also stated there has been a lot of social media posts since this Public Hearing was advertised and he wishes that the citizens of the County would take it upon themselves to reach out to the Board members, because they are not going to lie, they are going to tell them the truth. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that this has been so misconstrued and his sister who doesn't even live in Meriwether County has been receiving information from citizens of Meriwether County saying to please tell Bryan this is how we feel, instead of reaching out to me and lives one mile from his house. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated it has been blown out of proportion as to what the meeting is really about, and he will say as one of five, he doesn't want to take anything away from the citizens of Meriwether County, he just wants the Planning Commission to work.

Tim Brown of 5323 Alvaton Road stated that the Board of Commissioners pretty much covered his speech this morning regarding the responsibility of the Board of Commissioners to appoint new members to the Planning Commission. Mr. Brown stated the Planning Commission is almost a check and balance for the citizens to be able to speak about zoning issues. Mr. Brown stated every county surrounding us, Coweta, Pike, and Spalding have planning commissions, and yes, we have had issues throughout the years, but rather than doing away with it, he believes new

members need to be appointed to fix the problem rather than covering it up. Mr. Brown stated as of now he would like to volunteer his name to be put up to be on the Planning Commission. Mayor Ruth Nash of 19090 Hwy 85, Gay-- thanked all the Board members for being in attendance and especially thanked, Chairman Neely-Hadley, Commissioner Hines, and Commissioner McCoy for all their service as they are leaving. Mayor Nash stated that she also appreciated Mr. Gay and especially, Beverly. Mayor Nash stated the reason that the Planning Commission should go on is there is an extra layer of transparency and allows people to have more say. Mayor Nash stated as far as her serving on the Board and being an elected official, no one ever gave her any requirements for serving on the Board and she has served on the Board for about 20 years. Mayor Nash stated that one reason the people are not the meetings is the Ordinance says that the fourth Monday of every month is the meeting day and most people as herself plan their calendars a month ahead and a lot of times she is not getting the notices and did not know there was a meeting last night. Mayor Nash stated it is transparency, not knowing the things that should be known, and they have spoken with Three Rivers Regional Commission, and they recommend we have a Planning and Zoning Board.

Susan Olvey of 19075 Hwy 85, Gay stated the County Ordinance for Zoning was designed and created to provide procedures for implementing a reasonable path for approval. Ms. Olvey stated it was up to this Board to make sure the Commission is working, and it is the Board of Commission's job to make sure the Ordinance is followed just like the meeting scheduled the fourth Monday of every month. Ms. Olvey stated whether you as the Board of Commissioners has an Agenda for your meeting or not, you will be here on your same planned meeting dates and times. Ms. Olvey stated the same should apply to the Planning Commission, whether there is something before them or not, there still needs to be a meeting called on the planned date. Ms. Olvey stated the planned meeting schedule was basically thrown out the window and meetings scheduled whenever, and that in itself has caused a conflict with maintaining a quorum. Ms. Olvey stated for her it does add that extra element of time in the public forum for people to become educated and make an educated decision, whether they are for or against certain projects, construction, or rezoning. Ms. Olvey states it does state in the Ordinance that after something is presented to the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission has up to 45 days to present their recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Olvey stated that is very important time for the citizens and if it is eliminated that fosters knee-jerk reactions, when there wouldn't be any if people had the time to investigate and learn about what's coming. Ms. Olvey stated growth is coming and there is no doubt about that, but there needs to be as many safeguards in place to keep us from exploding like Newnan. Ms. Olvey stated a lot of the Board remembers what Newnan was like back in the day before the expansive growth happened. Ms. Olvey asked if that is what we want here and stated we are a country gem that is 30 minutes away from every convenience possible. Ms. Olvey asked if we necessarily needed those conveniences at our backdoor. Ms. Olvey stated the only way to effectively monitor what is coming to our County and is good for our County is public opinion. Ms. Olvey stated that the Board of Commissioners was elected to represent us and to please listen to us and respect what we have to say.

Ronnie Heard of 25073 Hwy 85, Gay thanked all the Board for their service, especially the ones leaving. Mr. Heard stated a Planning Commission affords a Board of Commission an opportunity to understand beforehand what zoning issues are the most troubling for the county and also allows these issues to be heard before a decision is made. Mr. Heard stated it also allows a community to hear from their neighbors at more than one Public Hearing, basically allowing the community to speak at more than one Public Hearing. Mr. Heard stated that even though this

may seem a little excessive, after a decision is made, there is less negative impact since a community has had an ample opportunity to speak and voice their concerns. Mr. Heard stated should the Meriwether County Board of Commission eliminate the Planning Commission, the workload burden of the Commission would only grow, with only 5 people making decisions for the entire County. Mr. Heard stated the Public Hearings would increase and probably turn into marathon meetings. Mr. Heard stated he would like to encourage the Meriwether County Commission to keep our Planning Commission in place with the pressure from the metro area coming into our County at an increasing rate, the positives of keeping this Planning Commission outweighs the negatives. Mr. Heard stated we should be installing more growth safeguards to promote and manage a healthy balanced growth in our County. Mr. Heard asked to please keep our Planning and Zoning Board in place and give them the support and resources they need to operate and serve our County. Mr. Heard stated if you can't find enough volunteers to serve to give him a call.

Scott Amerson of Lone Oak Tree Farm in Lone Oak thanked the Board for all the work that they do for the community and knows that it is a tiring and thankless job. Mr. Amerson stated that he and his wife have lived in the Lone Oak community for 6 years and in the short time they have been here there have been some changes that have taken place, some that are probably a little bit favorable, and a lot of cases that are not favorable. Mr. Amerson stated that he doesn't know if there was input from the Planning Commission or from the Board from the citizens input on this, but we have an RV facility that is close to them, a brake factory that is close to them, and the ballfields that went away that are close to them and they knew nothing about that as there were no signs posted or no zoning changes put out to say this is what this is going to be. Mr. Amerson stated he drives by these locations every day, and there has never been a sign put out there at one point or another. Mr. Amerson stated he didn't know if that commission of citizens could have helped that process or not, but he feels it is the right and responsibility of the citizens to be able to have a part of that and be that second layer of protection with the Board of Commissioners to make that work well. Mr. Amerson stated that if it is not working the way it is set up now and those people are not coming in and doing their part, don't change the system, change the people. Mr. Amerson stated if the people appointed are not going to participate, get new people that do want to participate and have input and try to help the Board of Commission on what is coming. Mr. Amerson quoted Commissioner Hines when she stated we needed transparency. Mr. Amerson stated without that second layer of citizens, we lose a little transparency and those citizens, who not only help the Board of Commissioners make their decisions they also get to go back to the people in their community and neighbors and talk about it. Mr. Amerson stated Commissioner Plant stated let's work together. Mr. Amerson stated we take that ability away when we lose that extra layer and other citizens to be there as well. Mr. Amerson stated that Meriwether County doesn't have a lot of money to throw these things out there and put people everywhere or have hundreds of staff members, but Mr. Amerson stated, what Meriwether County does have is the ability to have someone we don't really pay much at all to come in and try to help the Board of Commission out with the planning and what is coming up. Mr. Amerson stated that if the meeting dates are not working that is easy to change and the Board of Commissioners can change the dates and be flexible, it just needs to be published so that people can work. Mr. Amerson stated his recommendation is to keep the Planning Commission, instead of abolishing it all together, keep it, and make the people that are supposed to be there accountable for being there or they are gone. Mr. Amerson suggested having the meetings for the Planning Commission in conjunction with the Board of Commission meetings.

Susan Pritchett of 375 Quercus Farm Road, Gay stated that she is going to take a different approach and wished the Board a Merry Christmas. Ms. Pritchett stated that she did get an email about this meeting, but she did not even know Meriwether County had a Planning Commission until about a week ago when she received a letter that was negative. Ms. Pritchett stated that was alright and reached out to try to find out what was going on, and of course, she stated, she still doesn't have a clue. Ms. Pritchett stated based on what she has heard, and this is just her opinion, the Board needs to increase the number of members on the Planning Commission. Ms. Pritchett doesn't believe the Planning Commission should be eliminated, instead increase the number by one or two people so there is always a quorum, because it does happen that someone is out sick, and someone can't make it. Ms. Pritchett stated to parrot what was being said, get people that want to do it. Ms. Pritchett stated no offense to Mayor Nash, but she does think it needs to be citizens that are not elected officials or in any form of public officials. Ms. Pritchett stated to get the citizens involved. Ms. Pritchett stated she feels if the Planning Commission is eliminated, she feels it is cutting citizens involvement a little bit more. Ms. Pritchett stated a lot of the problem she sees the Board having is us as the citizens not doing their job. Ms. Pritchett stated eliminating this commission takes away another layer and she feels we as citizens of the community need to be more involved. Ms. Pritchett stated she is guilty as anybody for not getting involved. Ms. Pritchett stated keeping the Planning Commission is a way to keep the citizens involved. Ms. Pritchett stated that she was impressed with Commissioner McCoy's resume and did not know he knew woodworking. Ms. Pritchett thanked the Board and hoped they kept the Commission.

Phillip Dow of 7633 Forrest Road, Lone Oak thanked the Board for everything they do and did understand it was a hard job. Mr. Dow did not believe abolishing the Planning Commission was a good idea and feels there needs to be as much transparency as possible. Mr. Dow stated it was obvious there is disfunction in the Board and he feels the Commission needs to appoint people that can meet the requirements of attendance. Mr. Dow stated if they are not attending, the Board of Commissioner are the ones that appointed them, and they should call and find out why they are not coming. Mr. Dow stated if there is not a good reason on why they are not attending, the Board should ask the member to resign and replace them. Mr. Dow stated all other counties have a Planning Commission and there is a reason for it, and he doesn't believe it should be abolished.

Larry Dunaway of 3361 Wilbur Keith Road stated the Planning Commission is an important thing to have in the County and he has been on the Water and Sewerage Authority for 15 years. Mr. Dunaway stated it is a challenge for the Commissioners to find people to be on the committees. Mr. Dunaway stated that the Planning Commission needed to be kept and if changes needed to be made in the personnel, that is the way to fix it.

No others were signed up to speak.

County Attorney Nathan Lee stated that he wanted the Board to be cognizant that if they do choose to keep the Planning Commission, something needs to be put in place, because we keep hearing about transparency and the problem, we have is we are not being transparent because we are not having the meetings. County Attorney Nathan Lee stated we have citizens showing up, and there is a lot of talk about transparency, but it will only be transparent if the process works. Attorney Lee stated whatever is decided the Board needed to put something in place to make sure this doesn't happen again as this zoning is for land use and subject to a lot of litigation and if the commission is not functioning it will create more headaches than it is going to prevent. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked if what we have in place will work. Attorney Lee stated that

you would enforce your Ordinance is what you would do, for example you would say you have missed x number of meetings and you are off the Board. Attorney Lee stated the Ordinance is fine, but the problem is it is not being applied and that is where we are not being transparent, and you will have some headaches you don't want. Attorney Lee stated what is not going to fly when you go to court is excuses as they are not going to care why you didn't meet, they are only going to be interested that they have not been meeting. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated in terms of the times and dates of the meetings, November and December have been the only time those dates have been changed because of being in conflict of the holidays. Mr. Gay also stated that there have also been some called meetings, but they are generally the last Monday of the month and Board of Commissioners has set meeting times, but they also have called meetings. County Attorney Lee stated that made his point, if it is brought to Court, they are not interested in when you met, they only want to know did you or did you not meet. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated he did not want to see it go away and hoped it would make life easier for this Board of Commissioners to keep it in place, but he would like to see it work and function properly. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated it is obvious we don't have the right people in place and need to go ahead and enforce our Ordinance to make sure that we do. Vice Chairman Threadgill thanked each and every one that stepped up today and asked that their name be put on a list, as that means a lot. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that is what is needed in the community, as they can't go door to door as if they are running for election again and ask if a citizen would like to be on a board. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated we want the input of the citizens to be out there and their voices to be heard. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated as one of five he doesn't want to see the Planning Commission go away and wants it taken seriously and work properly, because there is a current issue. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that if anyone out in the audience follows or looks at our minutes or meetings online, we go meeting after meeting and have to table appointments because we can't get anybody to serve. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she just went through the same thing to appoint someone for Water and Sewer and had to go outside her district because she couldn't get anybody. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated we are divided into five districts and most of the boards should have an appointment for each district and encouraged those who wanted to volunteer to please turn in their name. Commissioner Hines also felt the Planning Commission needed to remain and felt listening to the citizens speak a lot of the things they had to say were valid and felt it is another layer but feels we may want to go back and look at the Ordinance itself to see if it needs to be revised and see what current counties are doing. Commissioner Hines stated that in Troup County, they have a list of the different Boards on their website that tells what the Board does and what is expected. Commissioner Hines stated maybe we need to have something to let the citizens know what we have and provide a way to fill out an application if it is an interest or expertise. Commissioner Hines stated for her personally she was looking for someone with the most qualifications and it didn't matter if you were in her district or not. Commissioner Hines felt this was a very vital board to have and the Ordinance may need to be tweaked as far as when the Board meets. Commissioner Hines stated that she feels we need to go back and look at Ordinances and thanked Mayor Nash for serving for 22 years and felt that is a long time not to know she was not able to serve. Commissioner McCoy stated that what leaps out to him is that there are three of them that are about to make a decision that will only affect them for about 2 weeks and the decision will affect the County for a considerable amount of time. Commissioner McCoy felt that we can go ahead and work with that or kick the ball down the road. Commissioner Hines stated that even though three of us are leaving, we always make decisions that will affect the County 10-15 years down the road, and she still feels that

even though they are leaving, they have a responsibility to do things that will enhance and help the County grow. Commissioner Hines stated she is not one to kick things down the road and feels that they are able to make a decision today that will help and show unity, as Commissioner Plant stated working together, she feels there is an opportunity to address this now. Commissioner Plant stated that she was on the Board in 1984-1986 when they reached out to Chatt-Flint Regional Development Commission where they actually developed or requested a land use plan. Commissioner Plant stated that one of her fellow Board members at that time stated that you "ain't gonna tell me what I can do with my land" and her response was, what would you do if a shooting range or a landfill wanted to come next door. Commissioner Plant stated that at that time being very young, she didn't realize how important that was and with that she has seen a lot of changes in Meriwether County and sees a lot of changes coming to Meriwether County. Commissioner Plant stated we have to work together and is not in favor of doing away with the Planning Commission but feels maybe what needs to be done is advertise the criteria for it and try to get people who are willing to serve. Commissioner Plant stated it will not always be a fun job, but the main thing is coming together and reaching a consensus for us to move forward together. Commissioner Plant stated there is a lot of things she sees on the horizon, but at the same time, we have come a long way. Commissioner Plant stated that the list of accomplishments Mr. Gay presented was from working together. Commissioner Plant again stated that she is not one to do away with the Planning Commission, but let's get people that are willing to serve, willing to show up, and participate. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill to go out of Public Hearing at 10:58. This was seconded by Commissioner McCoy. All were in favor. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill to enforce the current Ordinance that we have and do that as soon as possible so we can go forth with the Planning Commission and get new appointments on the that board. Attorney Nathan Lee stated that it is not a come and talk to us situation and the current members in violation are off the Planning Commission and the Board can go ahead and be looking for replacements for the Planning Commission. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated the Ordinance would be enforced. Vice Chairman Threadgill amended his motion to enforce the Ordinance and post for the positions needing to be filled. Commissioner Plant seconded the motion with the stipulation that the oncoming Board members be reviewing the requests on any that have come forward today that are willing to serve and start talking to them. All were in favor.

5. Discussion of the Meriwether County Recreation Advisory Board

A motion was made to go into Public Hearing by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant at 11:00. All were in favor. Director of Special Projects, Theron Gay stated the Board had a Special Called Meeting regarding the issue of the Recreation Advisory Board on November 29, 2022. Mr. Gay stated since the creation of the Board over six years ago, there has been a high turnover rate of membership and all current memberships have expired. Mr. Gay stated he doesn't believe they have met this year. Mr. Gay stated that before the Board of Commissioners moves ahead with reappointments, we believe it would be advisable to review the County Ordinance and establish this Board as well as their duties and responsibilities and to allow further discussion, which is the reason for the Public Hearing today. Mr. Gay stated this Board is also an Advisory Board and at times have been in conflict with what the Board of Commissioners wanted and feels there was a problem earlier on in determining what their role was and what they wanted their role to be. Mr. Gay stated it hasn't proven to be a very productive Board and again doesn't feel they have met this year. Mr. Gay stated before

reappointments are made staff wanted to bring this to the Board of Commissioners on the direction they wanted to go on Recreation. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she understood that every one's term was expired as of now. Mr. Gay stated this is a nine-member board that doesn't go by commission districts and goes by cities and one county appointment and is an odd configuration on the appointments. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that he knows that there were members added to the Board in the past and it started as a five-member board, and it is hard enough to get five members to serve. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that it is a current 9-member board and feels that will probably need to be lessened if we decide to continue with that Board. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that at this time until we have an established County-Wide Recreation that the Board is 100% accountable for, that it does not serve a purpose at this point because the entire reason the board was created was for the advisement of what the communities wanted. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that again there has been a failed situation with that Board and only had one individual who was the Chair of that Board that presented something to the Board out of the six years it has been established. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated it was a very good presentation and very much appreciated, but outside of that it has not provided this Board as he feels, any recommendations that are foreseeable for us to do at this point until we do have County-Wide Recreation. Commissioner Hines stated it is called an Advisory Board and that in itself did not make it easy for people to have an opportunity for input and we are the only county, as she has done her research to have a Recreation Advisory Board. Commissioner Hines stated you either have a Board or an Authority and there may be an advisory board within the board itself. Commissioner Hines stated that it is her personal opinion that the Board was not set up to be successful. Commissioner Hines felt the intentions were good, but the way it was designed did not set up for an easy process. Commissioner Hines stated in the beginning there were a lot of people coming onto the Board willing to serve but there was a lack of direction. Commissioner Hines stated that at the end of the day, Meriwether County needs a Recreation Board as it is an important part of any community and talks about the quality of life and is more than just ball and pushes in market communities where people determine where they will live based on the recreation and quality of life. Commissioner Hines feels that the way the Recreation Advisory Board is now will not be able to do the things it needs and that it should be revised or have a Recreation Board and do away with the Recreation Advisory Board. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked Commissioner Hines that on those counties that had Authority Boards, did those Counties have established Recreation Departments. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that if we had an established County-Wide Recreation Department that was established under the taxpayers, then he could see having the Board, but those counties that do have authorities, probably have an established Recreation Department throughout their County, where we do not. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that is why we placed this as an Advisory Board rather than an Authority, because we are in a contractual agreement with a City within our County to provide services throughout the County. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated this is where his thinking is coming from. Commissioner Hines stated initially when they looked at this, we had a board and discussed this with Johnny Kuykendall who came in more than willing to work with us, because Harris County had just put a program together that is maybe 10 years old and is state of the art. Commissioner Hines stated they have built buildings and added on a lot and started out with a Board. Commissioner Hines stated that even Johnny came onto the Board and stated, you are not giving these individuals any authority on decision making, and he felt like the Recreation Advisory Board was not the best move. Commissioner Hines stated initially the Board was supposed to work alongside Manchester and for some reason and this goes back to

clarity and the full description of what you are asking people to do. Commissioner Hines stated there was no good communication with that because they were providing the service, but they didn't understand how to get from point A to point B as that was never clearly explained. Commissioner Hines stated she is all about best practice and if someone is doing something really well, let's find out how successful they are and felt Johnny brought some really good ideas and suggestions and so did Nneka Carter. Commissioner Hines stated that you need a Board and not an Authority but a Board. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated her thought on this is one that probably needs to move to the new Board, because the contract for recreation is up this next year and the new Board will be the ones to decide which direction to go in. Commissioner Hines stated the board was larger, because the cities were the ones that had more facilities as the County only had two. Commissioner Hines stated there was a lack of communication and understanding of who is supposed to be doing what, and she feels this needs to be addressed moving forward. Vice Chairman Threadgill also feels there is a bigger situation as there have been no meeting of the Recreation Advisory Board for the entire year. Commissioner Hines asked is that because they were asked not to meet. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that he was not aware of that. Commissioner Hines stated there was a discussion not to move forward and we can go back and look at the minutes, but there was a discussion for them not to meet again. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated those are his concerns with the situation, if they are not meeting, if they are not providing us with anything we can actually move forward with, are they really serving a purpose at this point if we don't have an established County-Wide Recreation Department. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated if we do, then he feels we should continue and place that into an Authority Board instead of an Advisory Board when and if we get a County-Wide Recreation. Mr. Phillip Dow was signed up to speak but stated he put his name on the wrong paper. There were no others signed up to speak. A motion was made to go out of Public Hearing by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner McCoy at 11:10. All were in favor. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill to wait until the next Board comes on to decide about the Recreation Advisory Board. This was seconded by Commissioner McCoy. All were in favor. Commissioner Hines stepped out of the meeting. At this time there was a five-minute break.

IX. APPOINTMENTS

1. Board of Assessors appointment to fill a term that will expire on 12-31-2022

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to reappoint Mr. Greg Hobbs to fill a term on the Board of Assessors that will expire on 12-31-2022 and allow the Chair to sign. All were in favor.

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Meriwether County 2023 LMIG Projects

1. Mr. Bill Cawthorne with Public Works came up and stated in discussing the 2023 LMIG project, historically, Meriwether County has been putting \$1.2 million dollars into the resurfacing projects. Mr. Cawthorne stated that GDOT had given this year for LMIG \$716,917.00 and had also committed to another \$525,000.00 to go towards Luthersville Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated that the County will have to match both of those funds with a 30% match. Mr. Cawthorne stated the rough estimated amount to match those two funds is \$386,000.00. Mr. Cawthorne stated they were looking at recommending upping the contract for the 2023 LMIG to \$2,100,000.00. Mr. Cawthorne stated that would be putting up one mile of that to Luthersville

Road, the additional assistance for another mile, which won't cover quite a mile, but if the County Commission approved, it would take them to about 2,000 feet of Rocky Mount Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated they would recommend extending it at least 2000 feet to Rocky Mount Road at a price of \$1,515,000.00. Commissioner McCoy asked Mr. Cawthorne if this would be ½ mile from Rocky Mount Road. Mr. Cawthorne stated we would be short of about 2000 feet if we commit to the one mile that we have been doing historically for the past two years and then take the additional \$525,000.00 funds. Special Projects Director, Theron Gay stated it is important not to stop a project in the middle of a roadway. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked if that would take the County required match to \$630,000.00. Mr. Cawthorne stated that would be the case if they did the \$2.1 million. Mr. Cawthorne stated we have to match the \$386,075.00 and we could stop there, but their recommendation would be to bump the total project amount up to \$2,100,000.00. Mr. Cawthorne stated if they did just up to Rocky Mount Store, that would leave a balance of about \$500,000.00 to either continue another mile or select additional projects. Mr. Gay stated we have historically done more than the 30% match and have had about a \$1.2 million dollar project and this would be a local commitment of about \$810,00.00 out of SPLOST. He believes with the collections we are well ahead enough to do that. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked if this would get resurfacing all the way to Rocky Mount. Mr. Cawthorne stated this would get them all the way to Rocky Mount and if the Board approves to extend the contract to \$2.1 million, there would be another \$500,000.00 and if you continued that amount onto Luthersville Road it would get them another mile. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked Mr. Cawthorne if that would get the resurfacing of Luthersville Road to another intersection. Mr. Cawthorne stated that it would. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked how this would affect other districts. Mr. Cawthorne stated if you committed all this to the Luthersville Road program, there would be nothing left for any other district, and it would all be on Luthersville Road. Mr. Gay stated it would also include the safety overlay on Forrest Road. Mr. Cawthorne confirmed. Mr. Cawthorne stated that yes this would include the safety overlay on Forrest Road and another option would be to leave it as it is with the two miles of Luthersville Road and the safety overlay on Forrest Road and this would leave about \$500,000.00 to go to projects in other districts or could be committed to another long-collector road in the County that benefited the citizens. Mr. Cawthorne stated this is what is being brought to the Commissioners to get their input on. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated there are a lot of long roads in the County and only way we will ever get those done is if we put everything on one road, some point in time, similar to what they did with the road in the Cove to get that done. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that the work did cover three districts and there are some roads in his district that need to be redone. Commissioner McCoy stated that what is being presented will be for two districts. Mr. Gay stated that what they are looking at is some options such as adding some extra dollars and taking the extra \$525,000.00 from GDOT, and committing that to another on Luthersville Road, leaving enough dollars at the \$2.1 million to do the Forrest Road overlay safety overlay at \$85,000.00 and still leave about \$500,000.00. Mr. Gay stated what we are talking about is what do you want to do with that \$500,000.00. Vice Chairman Threadgill confirmed that the \$2.1 million dollars would be LMIG, and our part would be \$810,000.00 and if we did that particular one there would be \$500,000.00 to distribute out of it. Mr. Gay stated that is right if we stopped at Rocky Mount. Commissioner Hines asked if this was at the intersection of Rocky Mount at the store. Mr. Cawthorne and Mr. Gay confirmed that was correct. Commissioner Hines asked if these dollars had anything to do with the safety part as there are roads that need to be restriped. Mr. Cawthorne stated that in the contract they do restriping on the roads they resurface. Chairman

Neely-Hadley asked if Commissioner Hines was referring to additional roads. Commissioner Hines stated it was additional roads that had no striping and needed it. Commissioner Hines asked if it was a separate pool of money. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated it is part of a Safety LMIG. Mr. Gay confirmed. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that he is not ready to vote on this today, without looking at his district completely. Mr. Cawthorne stated he had been out and had several roads that would work for the resurfacing that they are doing. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated that is right, but he wanted to go out and look at his district. Mr. Cawthorne stated he had also looked at roads in District 5 and District 2 and found roads, but District 1 and District 3, he is having an issue with trying to find candidate roads. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she realized that time is of the essence in getting contracts out, but if this were voted on in the first meeting in January, does that create a problem. Mr. Gay stated that if we could just get direction from the Board to say you wanted to go to Rocky Mount on Luthersville Road and do the safety overlay on Forrest Road, and the other \$500,000.00 on other roads, we can put some options together. Mr. Cawthorne stated if the Board doesn't commit to the \$2.1 million dollars and just stick to the commitment for Luthersville Road. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that we need to get Luthersville Road done and now that we have the extra money from the State, it seems to be a good time to do as much as we can because they allowed the extra dollars. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked the Commissioner-Elects that were in the audience if they had any input. Commissioner-Elect Gene King stated they will decide when they are sitting there. Commissioner Hines stated that she has asked Administrator Irizarry to look into grants as there are so many trying to gather up funds. Commissioner Hines stated that Luthersville Road is so crucial because of the amount of traffic and that is not going to change, and the road needs to be addressed. Commissioner Hines asked that they please or if she needed to herself, she would speak to someone on the Senate level, because we need to pull more dollars in. Commissioner Hines stated she knows the State has funds and there are funds on the Federal level and at the end of the day, we have to be more creative on how we pull more dollars in. Commissioner Hines stated there is no way to not take care of Luthersville and Forrest Roads, not because they are in her District, but because they are so well traveled. Commissioner Hines stated the more people that come into our County, the more wear and tear for our roads and we have to figure out how to get this done. Chairman Neely-Hadley asked if it would be okay to allow them to go ahead with Luthersville Road up to Rocky Mount and the overlay on Forrest Road and talk about the remaining \$500,000.00 to the meeting in January. Mr. Gay and Mr. Cawthorne stated that you would need to commit to the amount of dollars. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she doesn't have a problem committing to the \$2.1 million dollars because our SPLOST and TSPLST dollars are up and way above projections, so we have extra dollars there. Mr. Gay stated that while you have the contractor there, they will do it as cheap as they ever would. Administrator Irizarry stated the due date for the LMIG to be turned into GDOT is February, but they are pushing for it sooner. Mr. Gay stated if we got approval for the \$2.1 million dollar commitment today, then we can get direction from the current board and new members on how the \$500,000.00 will cover additional roads. Chairman Neely-Hadley made a motion to approve the \$2.1 million-dollar LMIG. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked if they were certain that it would give an additional \$500,000.00 to be divided out, because they usually get about \$100,000.00 per district. Mr. Gay stated that until we do bids, we don't know, but we have always hit it close. Commissioner Plant asked if the main thing today was to commit the \$2.1 million dollars. Mr. Gay stated that is correct. Mr. Cawthorne stated the GDOT commitment is \$1.2 million and if you combine that together with their assistance and the LMIG you are right there at \$1.2 million,

and to get anything else you would need to up that total amount. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated her motion is to go with the \$2.1 million and have discussion with the new Board members on how to decide where the additional funds are spent. Commissioner Plant seconded the motion. All were in favor.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

2023 Worker's Compensation Proposal and Recommendation

1. Finance Director Bill Gregory stated that he has provided the breakdowns of the bids they received for the Worker's Comp renewal due on January 1. Finance Director, Bill Gregory stated through our broker, Chris Walker, with J. Smith Lanier, he obtained quotes from Bitco/Seville for \$182,440 and Encova Insurance of \$180,439.00, National Liability & Fire Insurance Company/AIA at \$178,585.00 and Key Risk insurance of \$174,566.00. Finance Director Gregory stated our current program is with ACCG's insurance pool and they provided an original quote of \$205,968.00 and after having conversations with them through Beverly, Michelle, and himself, they came back with a rate reduction to \$191,640.00 which is about \$10 to \$12 thousand more than Key Risk. Mr. Gregory stated there are some advantages and disadvantages of staying in the ACCG pool. The advantage is that we have been with in the current program with ACCG for three years and in two more years we would be able to participate in the dividends they pay out. Mr. Gregory stated that those dividends are not guaranteed, but they have received dividends the past 3 or 4 years. Mr. Gregory stated another advantage is all the programs we take advantage of. Mr. Gregory stated the disadvantage would be that they are \$12,000 more dollars than Key Risk. Mr. Gregory stated we have used Key Risk in the past and had a great relationship with them, but due to some the high claims we had, they were not competitive anymore and that is when we went with ACCG. Mr. Gregory stated the question is whether or not we want to stay with the ACCG pool or go with Key Risk. Administrator Irizarry stated that there had also been conversations with Key Risk regarding our current claims and there would be no additional expense to the County if we did change. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked if we stayed with ACCG would there be changes. Administrator Irizarry stated there would not be any changes if we stayed as they are our current provider, nor would there be any changes if we changed providers. Vice Chairman Threadgill stated it says Worker's Compensation Proposal and Recommendation and he is waiting on the recommendation. Administrator Irizarry stated that the recommendation from staff would be to go with the low bidder or lowest quote. Mr. Gregory stated this is just a quote and could go up the next year. Mr. Gay stated that he knows in the past we have used Key Risk and were very satisfied. Commissioner Hines asked if the advantage of being in the ACCG pool is because they are bigger, and it keeps the cost down. Vice Chairman Threadgill asked who the lowest bidder was. Administrator Irizarry stated it was Key Risk at \$174,566.00. Administrator Irizarry stated that is \$16,000.00 less than the reduced amount ACCG came back with. Administrator Irizarry stated the other companies also provide private insurance, and while ACCG may be the leader with government, because that is their specialty, these also provide for private companies and have a pool as well. Commissioner Hines thanked staff for putting the information together and she is like Vice Chairman Threadgill and stated if you brought all this information and don't have a recommendation? Administrator Irizarry stated her recommendation is the lowest quote, and there has been experience with Key Risk in Meriwether County without any negative comments. Commissioner Hines stated our biggest challenge is the number of claims we have. Administrator Irizarry states that varies year to year and is just part of workers comp. A motion

was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill to accept the lowest bid and allow the Chair to sign the binding agreement. This was seconded by Commissioner McCoy. All were in favor.

Set Special Called Meeting prior to January 1, 2023, to approve December 2022 Minutes

2. Administrator Irizarry stated in order for the current Board of Commissioners to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2022, Regular Meeting we are looking for a date to do so. A motion was made by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill to set a meeting for December 27, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

Set the 2023 Meeting and Holiday Schedule

3. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated that provided in the package was a 2023 Meeting and Holiday Schedule. A motion was made to accept the schedule as presented by Vice Chairman Threadgill. This was seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor.

Acceptance of ROW Deed and Bond for Chambless Village Subdivision, TRG GC Chambless Investors, LLC, and Paran Homes, LLC

4. Special Projects Director Theron Gay stated that they would like to continue this to the next meeting as staff had been working with them on the bond and they sent the bond back on what is considered Phase One and now they have completed Phase Two and feels like it would be best if they just bought and delivered one bond. Mr. Gay stated he felt this was best also and they are in the process of correcting the bond and he will have to write up the deeds to reflect the deed we already looked at as it is just for Phase One. He will have to add Phase Two and get that to County Attorney Nathan Lee and hopefully have all deeds and issue papers ready to go for the first meeting in January. A motion was made by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to table this to the first meeting in January. All were in favor.

Confirm purchase of vehicle for the Sheriff's Office to replace one involved in an accident

5. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she knows that everyone had received information on this purchase and need to confirm it. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to confirm the purchase of a vehicle for the Sheriff's Office to replace one involved in an accident. All were in favor.

River Cove Culvert Pipes Invoice

6. Finance Director Bill Gregory stated in the past we have covered several pipe replacements from the TSPLOST funds, and we do have a place in the budget of the General Fund for these pipes, but the pipes are \$30,000.00 and will eat up the budget we have, just two months into the budget. Finance Director Gregory would like the Board to consider covering the costs of the pipes on River Cove Road through TSPLOST. A motion was made by Commissioner McCoy and seconded by Commissioner Plant to approve the payment of the replacement pipes for River Cove Road out of TSPLOST. All were in favor.

XII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Irizarry thanked all those on the Board for working with her and stated she really appreciated it. Administrator Irizarry provided pictures and passed them around from Ms. Bo Kim from the Korean guesthouse who made a donation to the Sheriff's Office, Fire Department, and School System. Administrator Irizarry stated this is part of the community giving back to us

which she is very thankful. Administrator Irizarry stated they received an email from GDOT and will have a meeting with them tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. regarding a project on State Route 362 and the bridge over Red Oak Creek to discuss the detours and any impact it might have on the County. Administrator Irizarry stated the County is still looking for a Building Inspector and have many availabilities on our website and if the Board knows of anyone looking for a job, please refer them to our website. Administrator Irizarry stated we have a new Chief Appraiser, Mr. William Harris who will be starting on the 19th of this month.

XIII. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hines – asked if Skip could show her picture. Mr. Richmond stated it did not show up. Commissioner Hines stated it has been an enjoyable time serving as Commissioner for District 1 as well as for Meriwether County and she thanks God for the opportunity to be able to serve the past eight years. Commissioner Hines stated that even though she will no longer sit at the Commissioner position any more she is a servant at heart and will still be an active part of the community and whatever she can do to help to further positive growth and the quality of life for Meriwether County she will do.

Commissioner Plant – wished everyone a Merry Christmas and wanted to thank all the Municipalities and especially Beverly for organizing the trees around the court square. Commissioner Plant encouraged those who have not been to downtown Greenville to see the trees they are very pretty at night and again thanked all the Municipalities for their participation. Commissioner Plant stated this meeting is kind of bittersweet in losing three of her buddies, but she wishes them well and all the very best.

Chairman Neely-Hadley – thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve District 5 as it has been a great pleasure to serve. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated she does intend to stay involved and will always be concerned with what is going on with the County. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated to her fellow Commissioners that it has been a pleasure working with all of them and they have gotten a lot accomplished and there is still a lot to be done. Chairman Neely-Hadley wished the oncoming Commissioners the best in the new year and is sorry that the new Commissioner-Elect Adam Worsley couldn't be there, but she feels he will be good, and she will help him in any way. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Vice Chairman Threadgill – wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He has truly enjoyed serving with this Board and will miss everyone.

Commissioner McCoy – wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Commissioner McCoy stated that when he looks back over the years it has been a pleasure working with the other Board members and quite an experience that some don't get in a lifetime in serving in public service. Commissioner McCoy attended the Airport Authority meeting as a member of the Airport Authority this week and there are a lot of good things going on at the airport including new hangars going up and he hopes that progress continues. Commissioner McCoy wished those coming onto the Board the very best. Commissioner McCoy stated that Santa is supposed to fly into the airport on Thursday and if you can make it down there, there will be activities for the kids and the times are 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

Attorney Lee had no report. Commissioner Hines stated she would like to go into Executive Session to discuss Litigation. Attorney Lee stated he would need to leave at 12:00 p.m. Chairman Neely Hadley stated we would need to go into Executive Session for Litigation and Administrator Irizarry stated for Personnel.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to go into Executive Session at 11:51 a.m. by Vice Chairman Threadgill. This was seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor. A motion was made to go out of Executive Session at 12:05 p.m. by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant. A motion was made to go back into Regular Session at 12:06 p.m. by Commissioner Plant and seconded by Vice Chairman Threadgill. All were in favor. Chairman Neely-Hadley stated there was action taken in Executive Session. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill for two employees for an unpaid leave of absence. This was seconded by Commissioner Plant. All were in favor. Commissioner McCoy was not present after Executive Session.

XVI. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Future Meetings and Notices were announced by Chairman Neely-Hadley.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Plant to adjourn the meeting at 12:06. All were in favor.

Approved by: Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners

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

Date: December 27, 2022