

LAMAR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Business Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Administration Building

Present for the meeting were Chairman Traylor, Vice-Chairman Fletcher, Commissioner Lovett, Commissioner Gilles, Commissioner Boyle, County Administrator Townsend, County Clerk Davidson, and County Attorney Mayfield. The meeting was available via Teams.

Chairman Ryran Traylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Traylor

3. Invocation

The invocation was delivered by Rev. Rex Kessler of Lilla Baptist Church.

4. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the agenda. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Minutes Approval

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the following meeting minutes: Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- May 15, 2025 – Workshop
- May 15, 2025 – Special Called Meeting
- May 20, 2025 – Public Hearing
- May 20, 2025 – Regular Business Meeting

6. Old Business

1. Ordinance 2025-04 – Rezoning Request – Frances Street (Tax ID 049 095)

Justin Laney has requested to rezone property on Francis Street, Tax ID 049 095 from R-4 (Residential-4) to C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) subject to the following conditions which shall run with the land. The Joint Planning Commission Board approved the rezoning with conditions:

- Use of the property is for storage yard of materials and office for building accessory buildings offsite only.
- The property borders along Sudduth Road and Francis Street to be enclosed with an 8'tall opaque fence.
- A 25' treed buffer shall be planted along any property lines that adjoin residential properties along the property's south and west border.

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to deny the rezoning request. Vice-Chair Lovett seconded the motion to deny the request. Vice-Chairman Fletcher approved the request. The motion carried 3-1.

2. Ordinance 2025-06 – Rezoning Request – Community House Road (Tax ID 082 046)

This request is to change the zoning of 49 acres, outlined in blue below, from Estate Residential to Agricultural Residential for agricultural purposes. This property, along with multiple others in the area was rezoned from Agricultural Residential to Estate Residential in 2017 as part of the mass county rezoning. This area is considered Rural Residential in the Lamar County Comprehensive Plan which advises to strategically promote land preservation through the support of agritourism, active farming, and use of conservation easements. The Joint Planning Commission Board recommended approval with the following conditions:

- No retail sales from the property
- No commercial hunts
- 50' undisturbed buffer around pond
- No disturbance below the dam
- Ingress/Egress to farm will be on Community House Road
- No deliveries or pick-up of products on Sundays.
- Use of property is limited to crop farming and forestry only.
- No encroachment of taxi way
- Any future home will be site built and have a minimum of 2500 sq.'
- Any future split of the property will have a 10-acre minimum.

Vice-Chairman Fletcher noted recent but unconfirmed complaints, though not on this specific property. Commissioner Lovett denied the request. Commissioner Boyle seconded the motion to deny the request. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Safety Tower and Radio Communications Presentation

Commissioner Boyle presented a slide show showing the urgent need to replace the aging and failing tower infrastructure on hog mountain. The issues presented included rust, unstable support structure, inadequate generator, water leaks, and lack of consistent communication. A proposal was shared with Chris Murray (a radio owner) to build a new tower, with a lease

agreement through the City of Barnesville. The projected cost: \$50,000–\$60,000. The tower effects the Sheriff’s Office, Fire, EMS, Schools, and the bus transportation which require system integration for reliability.

7. New Business

1. Ordinance 2025-07 – Rezoning (Highway Commercial to Light Manufacturing and R-2) –Eleven Group LLC / Paul King

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-07- Rezoning (Highway Commercial to Light Manufacturing and R-2) with the following restrictions: 1.76 acres from C-2 to R-2 and 3.74 acres from C-2 to M-1 with the following conditions:

- Access for business activities must be paved or concrete for the first 50’ and must use Old 41 Highway
- All structures fronting Old 41 Highway will be setback at least 75’ from the front property line.
- When the two properties are under separate ownership, an 8’ opaque fence and a 25’ treed buffer is required along the joint property line. The owner of the manufacturing tract is responsible for the cost and construction.

Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. Commissioner Lovett abstained from the vote. The motion was approved 3-0.

2. Ordinance 2025-08 – Rezoning (Ag-Res to Manufacturing 1) – Micha and Buddy Patrick, Old 41 Hwy (Tax ID 017021)

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve. Ordinance 2025-08 – Rezoning (Ag-Res to Manufacturing 1) – Micha and Buddy Patrick, Old 41 Hwy (Tax ID 017021) with the following restrictions: From A-R to M-1 with the following conditions:

- Access for business activities must be paved or concrete for the first 50.’
- All structures fronting Old 41 Highway will be setback at least 75’ from the front property line.
- 50 ft. buffer shared with the cemetery.

Commissioner Boyle seconded the motion. Commissioner Lovett abstained from the vote. The motion was approved 3-0.

3. Ordinance 2025-09 – Rezoning (R-4 to Ag-Res) – Spencer and Jessica Young, 219 Rogers Circle (Tax ID 025 050)

The rezoning request for Ordinance 2025-09 has been postponed until a latter time.

4. Ordinance 2025-10 Lamar County Fire Prevention & Protection.

Fire Marshal Goen requested that Ordinance 2025-10 be tabled until a later time because he wants to get with the City of Barnesville regarding the fire hydrants.

5. Ordinance 2025-11 Outdoor Commercial Burning

Commissioner Boyle made a motion to approve the first reader for Ordinance 2025-11 Outdoor Commercial Burning. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Lamar County Fire Marshal Fees

Commissioner Boyle made a motion to approve the first reading of the Lamar County Fire Marshall fees for inspections including commercial buildings, sprinkler systems, alarms, and fireworks. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. FY2024 SAFER Grant Program

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the FY2024 Safer Grant Program which supports three new firefighter positions over four years at a funding rate of 90%, 75%, 50%, then fully County-funded. The estimated total is \$225,000/year including equipment, turn out gear and insurance. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. FP&S (Fire Prevention & Safety) Grant

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the FP&S (Fire Prevention & Safety) Grant for a grant that would provide funding for an outreach position for 4 years that allows the Fire Department to recruit high school students into EMS training programs. Commissioner Boyle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Surplus Declaration – Fire Trucks

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the surplus of the following vehicles. Commissioner Lovett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Engine 4 – VIN #6259
- Engine 7 – VIN #5180

10. Animal Shelter Agreement – Tyler White

i. Proposal for Partnership with Friends of Lamar County Animal Shelter

Commissioner Lovette made a motion to table the Proposal for Partnership with Friends of Lamar County Animal Shelter until the July meeting. Commissioner Gilles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Request for Additional Personnel & Supplies

Animal Services Director White addressed the board with his concerns about Staffing challenges, high adoption rates, and compliance with State standards discussed. Shelter operates 9–5 with limited 24/7 coverage. Vice-Chairman Fletcher and Commissioner Gilles expressed concerns with the architect (who passed away) and the repairs to the shelter not being under warranty. Commissioner Lovett stated that the animal shelter was budgeted for five days a week and not seven days a week and the scope of work is larger than what was budgeted.

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to approve the request for additional personnel and supplies listed below. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The funds will come from contingency.

- Kennel Technician: \$14,870.23
- Animal Control Officer: \$19,828.18
- Supplies/Food: \$20,000
- Repairs (not under warranty): \$70,000
- Total: \$124,707.41

8. Board Appointment

Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS)

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Annie Ruth Bush to the Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS) board for a term of 4 years with the term expiring on 6-30-2029. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Administrator's Report

County Administrator Townsend gave the May Report.

Revenue Update for May 2025

General Fund: \$1,058,629.07

Total Fiscal Activity: \$4,738,102.36

Expenditures: \$1,157,433.13

Total Expenditures: \$,6,523,922.75.

Cash Flow Update:

County Administrator explained that they spend more each month than they bring in. He said in the past the County had a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) but they do not have one now. The Property Taxes come in at the end of the year therefore the revenue is lower at this time of year. The higher invoices for the Liability and Worker's Compensation come in at the beginning of the year bringing up the expenses.

Grant Total of General Fund: \$3,290,557.46

Special Revenue Funds: \$74,263.28

Capital Project Funds: \$2,821,003.57

Debt Service:\$3,887,275.22

Grand Total of Governmental Funds: \$10,073, 099.53

Projects:

GDOT Project – Hwy 41 & Hwy 36 the signal arm has been ordered for the red light.

RFP for the R-cut and Atlanta Street curve modifications and culvert design. EXP will put bid out this month since they have had a delay.

Collection Disbursements

Local Option Sales Tax (LOST): \$ 145,378.61

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST): \$255,050.15

Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST): \$235,738,.43

AmeriPro Health Transports

Request: 289 Transport: 179 Refusal: 70 Cancellation: 40 Response Time: 6:32

Mutual Aid with Upson County: 15 Pike: 2

New Employees:

Logan Evans: Communication and Administrative Assistant who will be handling the Social Media on Facebook. He worked with the Upson County School board regarding their Social Media post. We are excited for him coming on board helping with Facebook and assisting County Clerk Davidson.

Melinda Corley: Human Resource and Payroll Director who is very knowledgeable with Human Resources, Payroll and Benefits.

County Administrator Townsend reported that the new PTO policy began on January 2025 and those that had excessive PTO based on the number of capped hours earned had to be used by June 30th, 2025 or that excessive time would be forfeited. He requested that they extend the PTO for those that exceeded this amount on June 30th, 2025. The accrual is as follows:

One year, but less than five years	320
Five years, but less than ten years	340
Ten years, but less than 20	360
20 +	380

County Administrator Townsend requested an extension of 60 to 90 days for those that are the maximum amount of time on June 30th, 2025. County Administrator Townsend explained that sick time was a max of 288 hours and no more hours were accrued after this. Those hours were carried over with the initial new PTO policy. He also would like for in the future any time left over could go towards their retirement.

Commissioner Gilles made a motion to approve an extension for excessive PTO usage for 90 days. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Additional County Administrator Report

County Administrator Townsend reported that there were places in the gym floor that had been reglued.

County Administrator Townsend reported that they have applied for several grants. One of them was for \$590,000.00 they received for Zebulon Road and another \$75,000.00 for Roger Brown Road for a culvert pipe. He is going to work with Recreation Director Lowe on grants related to the Recreation Department Comprehensive Plan done by the University of Georgia Engineers.

10. Public Comment

Elaine Hallada (131 Steeple Chase) – Praised the Board for their vote on the Community House re-zoning. Inquired about the issues with the animal shelter and asked if it was because of the architectural design and the reason for the \$70,000.00 needed for repairs. Suggested that they do a community and business fund raiser to help pay for this. Reported that the Solid Waste Authority (SWA) Meeting on Monday was terrible and cannot wait until the Special Council is finished.

Donald Hartman (507 Old Milner Rd) – Thanked Commissioner Boyle for the tower leadership. Suggested inmate trustees help at the animal shelter and for picking up the trash. Stated there have been a lot of water issues on social media and inquired about efforts that it would take to get the water fixed since it services the County and another City. Reported that flushing could have agitated the issue with the discoloration of the water. He said his refrigerator filter is clogging up as well. Wished Vice-Chairman Fletcher a healthy road to recovery and said they are always thinking about and praying for Linda Lovett.

Bonnie Martin (626 Piedmont Rd) – Thanked the Board of Commissioners for adhering to the land use plan. Encouraged better pre-recommendation from the Planning and Zoning (P& Z) and maybe they need to do their homework a little better since the Board of Commissioners overrode what the P&Z had done. Stated she was disappointed with the building issue and hopes that it will not fall on the County to pay for the mistakes and failures. Suggested they use volunteers and inmate labor for shelter upkeep since that was the original plan. Requested that they ask for community input on what needs to be done.

Diane Perry (101 Maple) – Asked the Board of Commissioners why they had not spoken to or got input from the City of Barnesville for the disaster response collaboration. She said it is an important issue, and it affects everyone. She said she would like to see both of them working together on this project. It was mentioned at the Workshop Meeting about them having comments to make during Round Table and she appreciates everyone making a comment when it was their turn to say something and hopes it will continue. She hopes each Commissioner will say something about what is going on in their District. Thanked them for knowing how to handle a meeting with dignity and within the law and do the job that is expected to be done. She said it was obvious in the SWA meeting on how a meeting should not be handled and the difference on how one is handled properly; Kudos to all of you for the hard work you have put into the job.

11. Round Table

Vice-Chairman Fletcher – Thanked the community for prayers during recovery. Discussed Juneteenth plans and the need for volunteers. Mrs. Sylvia Bush is in charge. He also reached out to Superintendent Watson regarding their participation in the tower collaboration.

Commissioner Lovett – Acknowledged the animal shelter repair and noted it would not be perfect to begin with even though the issues should have been in the original specifications. County Administrator Townsend did a fantastic with the Animal Shelter and the money allotted tonight to make the repairs would have been on the other side of the equation in the construction cost. Stated he still does not have a complete grasp on the zoning decisions, but he applauded work by the Planning & Zoning board and the Planning and Community Development Director Buice for their hard work and suggested people go speak to her because she is a wealth of information.

Commissioner Gilles – Thanked everyone for coming to the SWA meeting last night and tonight. Reported that work will be done on the Yatesville Road along with a traffic study for the intersection of Yatesville Road and Hwy 36.

Commissioner Boyle – Reported that the pipe issue at Steel Road was completed. The go-around work on Hwy 36 at Cole Forrest is ongoing. The Hwy 36 and the By-Pass at Jackson road has always been an issue with tractor trailers and the stop signs. He has been working with the GDOT to have blinking signs installed since this is a road issue. Stated that the SWA meeting last night was appalling and he was not allowed to make a motion for new business. He said it was rushed through, and he is at a loss for words on what to think about this happening. The Special Master should address this the first of July after he receives his report.

County Administrator Townsend- Reminded everyone the Administration Office would be closed on June 19th, 2025 for Juneteenth. Thanked County Clerk Davidson, Finance Director Johnston, and Accounting Technician Windle because the Administration Office had been short staffed for the last two months and they have all stepped up and taken care of the office.

County Clerk Davidson-Thanked the Constitutional Officers and the Department Heads for sticking with them as they have been through this over the last two to three months. Stated that they are extremely excited to have Melinda Corley and Logan Evans join their staff.

Chairman Traylor – Commented on rising construction costs for the blinking signs and at one time they were \$2,500.00 per light. He stated the voting turn-out was low and asked that the citizens continue to talk to their families about the right for voting. Stated that he is glad the Senior Center bus is back and noted the major recalls going on with vehicles. Stated that the animal shelter started out costing 1.3 million dollars and they had to figure out how to get it down to \$500,000.00. They looked at issues like they are having now and discussed solutions that they could do so that \$3,000.00 was not spent per kennel on a coating. The committee and County Administrator Townsend took this back to the State for her opinion, and she thought it would work but when they applied the cheaper project it did not work. Stated that they want the Facebook page to be a resource for the community and requested that citizens like the pages. Reported more car accidents in the community are happening and he noted more cars are on the road and requested that the citizens help with safety awareness. He reported that he was in a car accident as well and it is very blessed. He said suffering through the re-habilitation, the suffering that Vice-Chairman Fletcher and Linda Lovett are going through makes him want everyone to be aware of safety because these are life altering things.

12. Executive Session

No Executive Session

- Real Estate
- Litigation
- Personnel

13. Adjournment

Commissioner Lovett made a motion to adjourn the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m. Vice-Chairman Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lamar County Board of Commissioners

Ryran Traylor, Chairman

Jarrold Fletcher , Vice-Chairman

Jason Lovett, Commissioner

Ashley Gilles, Commissioner

Truman Boyle, Commissioner

Attest: _____ Carlette Davidson, County Clerk