

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of the April 6, 2021

Regular Commissioners Meeting

6:00 P.M. Meeting

Present:

Greg Tapley, Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, Vice Chairman

Eddie Rowland, District 2

John Ambrose, District 3

George Emami, District 4-Not Present

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Ben Vaughn, County Attorney

Janet Abbott, County Clerk/HR

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Kelsey Fortner, Zoning Officer

Welcome

Chairman Tapley welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Commissioner Rowland gave the invocation.

Pledge

Chairman Tapley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

Chairman Tapley called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Tapley presented the agenda for approval with the following changes, remove item B and insert Board of Assessors appointment as item B; and remove item I and J from the agenda.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the agenda with the changes.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Approve Minutes-BOC Meeting-March 16, 2021

The March 16, 2021 minutes were removed from the agenda.

Board of Assessors Appointment

Chairman Tapley read a recommendation from the Tax Assessor Board stating Mr. Dennis Benson resigned his appointment on the Tax Assessor Board because he had recently moved out of county. The Board of Assessors recommendation was to appoint Gina Davies to serve out the remaining term which will expire February 15, 2022.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the recommendation to appoint Gina Davies to the Board of Assessors.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021-Jim Hedges

County Manager Jim Hedges presented the first item on the agenda stating, on March 11, 2021, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Mr. Hedges stated the law will provide \$65.1 billion directly to counties based on the county share of population of the U.S. population. Mr. Hedges stated Monroe County is estimated to receive \$5,348,583.

Mr. Hedges continued with a presentation on the use of recovery funds and the restrictions stating the deadline to spend the funds would be December 31, 2024. He continued with the U.S. Treasury will provide guidance on eligible expenditures.

Monroe County Roads 5-Year Projection-Jim Hedges

Mr. Hedges presented a 5-year plan for Monroe County Roads. Mr. Hedges stated at the February 12, 2021 Commissioner's Retreat a request was made to develop a 10-year road improvement plan that could be incorporated annually in the Public Works' budget. He continued with three plans have been developed, one plan assuming a 1.5 mil increase for ad valorem taxes, a second plan assuming the passage of a 1 cent TSPLOST sales tax increase or the third option is to reduce services.

Mr. Hedges gave a presentation outlining the details of all three options:

1. Increase in ad valorem taxes by 1.5 mils.
2. T-SPLOST brings in \$4.6 million more in revenue and one half or more comes from non-residents. 30 more miles of roads can be resurfaced with the additional TSPLOST revenue compared to an increase in Ad Valorem taxes.
3. To achieve an 8.75% reduction in the operating budget, or \$2,885,000, the Board of Commissioners would need to reduce services by closing Animal Control, defunding Recreation, closing of the library, elimination of Economic Development, closing all recycling Centers, and closing of the Convention Center and a shortfall of \$750,000 would remain that would need to be identified.

Mr. Hedges stated his recommendation was to proceed with the process of calling for a TSPLOST referendum for November 2, 2021.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Davis motioned to move forward with the process of calling for a TSPLOST referendum.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Courtroom Audio/Video Upgrade-Jim Hedges

Mr. Hedges stated District Attorney Johnathan Adams reported several deficiencies in the audio/video equipment used for jury trials in the courtroom. District Attorney Adams is requesting the installation of video equipment including a 75" wall mounted monitor for the jury which will replace the current monitor that is portable on a cart. Also requested are video equipment monitors for the Judge, District Attorney, and Defense table, two additional long throw court speakers as well as the installation of 26 sound panels to improve the audio within the courtroom.

Mr. Hedges stated Ken's Audio from Macon has submitted two estimates (attached) for audio/video, one including the long throw court speakers and one without, and an estimate for the sound panels. The estimate for the equipment and installation is \$18,937.99. Mr. Hedges stated this is an unbudgeted expenditure and requires the Board's approval.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the full set of equipment in the amount of \$18,937.99.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Discretionary Fund Expenditure-Lamarcus Davis

District 1 Commissioner Lamarcus Davis requested the use of \$2,000 of his discretionary funds to contribute to the Monroe County Sheriff's Office summer youth program.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the request.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Minor Subdivision Review-The Woodlands-Kelsey Fortner

Zoning Officer Kelsey Fortner presented The Woodlands subdivision for its initial review. Ms. Fortner stated the subdivision is being requested by Georgia Properties, LLC. and is located on Parks Road and Ingram Road in District 2, Map 017 Parcel 007. Ms. Fortner stated the property is 571 acres and the property owners are USC Timber Holdings LLC. Ms. Fortner stated the subdivision consist of 36 lots with a minimum lot size of three acres for each lot all the way up to 56. There will be three private roads created: Woodlands Trail, Woodlands Pass, and Woodlands Lane.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Rowland motioned to approve.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Subdivision Review-Maynard Woods-Kelsey Fortner

Zoning Officer Kelsey Fortner presented Maynard Woods Subdivision for its initial review. Ms. Fortner stated the subdivision is being requested by Southern Land & Conservancy, LLC and is located on Highway 42 in District 2, Map 44 Parcel 06A. Ms. Fortner stated it consist of nine parcels and is on 13 acres.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

P & Z-Hargett's South LLC-Kelsey Fortner

Ms. Fortner stated the applicant withdrew the variance application for 40 Natures Trail.

P & Z-David Bartram-Kelsey Fortner

During the agenda approval process, County Attorney Ben Vaughn requested to postpone this application. Mr. Vaughn stated at this time it has been determined the Solid Waste Management Plan is applicable to this application and he had spoken with the applicant's attorney and they would like to postpone the application.

P & Z-Dutch Creek LLC-Kelsey Fortner

Ms. Fortner presented a conditional use application for property owner Dutch Creek LLC., to have a private cemetery located on Allen Road (Hayes Farm Road), Map 035 Parcel 004A. Ms. Fortner stated the property is 54.73 acres and is zoned agricultural.

Ms. Fortner stated the Planning and Zoning Board had recommended approval.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to enter a Public Hearing at 6:47 p.m.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

The applicant Christy Jackson was present on behalf of the application.

No one was present opposed to the application.

The Board discussed the application.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to come out of the public hearing at 6:55 p.m.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the application with the stipulations of a 60 feet setback from the road and the southern property line and a surveyed plot for the cemetery to be no more than ¼ acre.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Old Business

There was no old business.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Executive Session (Legal)

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to enter an Executive Session for legal at 6:56 p.m.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to come out of Executive Session at 7:31 p.m.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Action from Executive Session (If necessary)

Commissioner motioned to authorize the Chairman to sign the consent order.

Chairman Tapley seconded for discussion. Motion denied 0-4.

Adjourn

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to adjourn at 7:37 p.m.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

County Clerk, Janet Abbott