



"You Are Why We Are Here"

FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
August 11, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Present: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen
MJ Kneiser, *WLHR (via Zoom)*

Staff: County Manager, Beth Thomas
County Clerk, Kayla Finger

Item 1: Call Meeting to Order - Chairman Bridges called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Commissioner Swails asked to amend the agenda to add the CARES Act as an item for discussion. Commissioner Macomson gave the second. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Macomson, Commissioner Wester, Commissioner Swails, Chairman Bridges, and Commissioner Franklin.

Item 2: Items for discussion:

- A. Finalized Tax Resolution:** County Manager Thomas stated yesterday the board voted to approve the incorporated and unincorporated rates, as well as the IBA - Industrial Building Authority. The Board of Education met earlier this evening and voted to approve a level of seventeen (17) mills. To be in compliance the Board of Commissioners must approve the tax resolution document where each component is listed: 10.553 mills for the unincorporated areas, 11.7 mills for the incorporated areas, .25 mills for the Industrial Building Authority, and 17 mills for the Board of Education. This tax resolution document also discloses the insurance premium proceeds which were utilized to rollback the millage rate. Of the total \$1,084,451.00, the county used \$631,404.00 to rollback the taxes and the remainder was used to fund fire &



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essential services for unincorporated areas. Chairman Bridges clarified with Manager Thomas that the .25 was from the rollback rate. Commissioner Macomson moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Wester gave the second. Commissioner Wester clarified that the Board of Commissioners are formally required by law to pass the school board tax. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Macomson, Commissioner Wester, Commissioner Swails, Chairman Bridges, and Commissioner Franklin.

B. CARES Act Discussion: Commissioner Swails reviewed that from his understanding there are limitations to the allocation of funds from the CARES Act to EMS/1st responders. Manager Thomas stated that was correct when it is regarding the salary or hazard pay. Updates are being sent daily regarding the CARES Act. As far as equipment goes, one suggestion is temperature devices for the courthouses. This money can also be used for salaries of those who have been quarantined. Manager Thomas expressed caution when choosing how to allocate funds so as not to "double dip" anywhere. Commissioner Swails asked if the funds could be split up. Manager Thomas stated they could. The total amount allocated would be \$873,212.00 and 30% of that would be available immediately in the amount of \$261,964.00. Manager Thomas stated she would have until September 1st to upload all documentation for expenditures. The remainder amount would be allocated on a reimbursement basis and the deadline for this portion is December 1st. Manager Thomas discussed options with the board regarding hazard pay and salary reimbursement. The county can use the money towards EMS Units. Manager Thomas stated that our EMS is in great need of new monitors, the existing ones are at the end of their life. Commissioner Macomson asked what the units consisted of. Manager Thomas explained it was the machinery used to hook up to patients for EKG's etc. to send the information to the hospital. Four units are currently being run and they cost approximately \$40,000.00 to replace. The EMS units (ambulances) currently run about \$160,000.00. Manager Thomas explained if they could use funds for a unit to be dedicated to COVID that would free up SPLOST money for other projects. It typically takes about 4-6 months to get an ambulance unit in. Manager Thomas reported they had recently ordered one and it should be in by Sept. 1st. She also noted that her recommendation would be to gather ideas and prioritize them. Commissioner Swails expressed the need to make this decision as quickly as possible because the deadline is soon



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approaching. Commissioner Macomson stated he felt it would be best to reimburse the salaries. Manager Thomas stated that reimbursing the salaries would give the most flexibility and mentioned doing more capital projects. She also spoke about the prior request from the coroner's office for more space. Commissioner Wester asked if we could use the funds to construct a building for the coroner. Manager Thomas stated they would have to justify that it is for COVID and she thinks she could do that, but the problem with constructing a building is it would have to be done by December 1st. Currently the coroner's office has three coolers but one is broken so technically they are currently operating with only two. Manager Thomas offered different suggestions such as rehabbing an existing building or buying a new cooler. It had previously been suggested that the basement of one of the existing county buildings could be used for coroner storage and Manager Thomas explained many employees have expressed discomfort at that idea. Manager Thomas stated that the temperature devices for the court system and the money that was spent on the tax commissioner's office and the tax assessor's office could be eligible for reimbursement to put that money back into the general fund. Commissioner Macomson asked if the replacement cooler would have 3 spaces and what the cost would be. Manager Thomas stated that question would have to be deferred to the coroner as he has looked at different options of buying versus building and she has asked him to gather that information. Commissioner Swails touched on the uptick of COVID cases and expressed his thoughts that the money should be used for what will do the most good for the citizens immediately. Manager Thomas noted that the board is not limited to just use the funds for ourselves. The county can partner with other governments such as the board of education, but she advised the board to be careful not to double dip. Commissioner Macomson reiterated his thoughts that the money be used to pay salaries for at least the next two months and to figure out how to help with hazard pay as well. He also mentioned purchasing needed equipment on a reimbursement schedule. Commissioner Franklin asked if the coroner had a place in mind, he would like to see the cooler. Manager Thomas stated there is a building that has been looked at as a potential location under a public partnership. She restated this would be a conversation to have with the coroner. Commissioner Macomson suggested an old restaurant building that had a freezer that could be retooled. Commissioner Swails remarked that there is one available now in Royston and that would be a potential option. Manager Thomas reminded the board



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of the mass casualty event that took place on the interstate not too long ago, and expressed how blessed we were by our neighboring counties: Hart & Madison, who generously allowed us use of their facilities since we were not properly equipped to handle that scenario. The building that Manager Thomas mentioned earlier is a viable option if the board would like to move forward with it. The coroner is actively gathering estimates and Manager Thomas thinks it could be completed by December 1st and approximates the cost at \$50,000.00. Commissioner Macomson suggested a shared space at the EMS building on Gerrard Road. Manager Thomas stated that she was unsure if they could meet the December 1st deadline with that option, but she would discuss it with the coroner. She also stated that they do have to be mindful that the medics do sleep there and may not be comfortable with that setup. Commissioner Swails asked about using the 30% for payroll and the urgency of the approaching deadlines. Manager Thomas stated she has another webinar scheduled for the next day and if any information changed, she would update everyone. Commissioner Macomson asked if we would receive something concrete in writing. Manager Thomas stated they would get guidelines and memos for support. Commissioner Swails asked when did Manager Thomas need a definitive answer from the board. Manager Thomas stated she would need to know by the work session and she would be working on the numbers until then. Commissioner Wester asked if it would be okay to wait until the work session to speak about the salary option and if that would give her enough time. Manager Thomas stated she could gather the numbers, since those checks have already been cut and paid.

3. Adjourn

Chairman Bridges thanked everyone for attending. Commissioner Swails made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Wester seconded the motion. All in favor. Chairman Bridges adjourned the meeting.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2020

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges



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Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Kayla Finger, County Clerk

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