

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING**  
**MARION COUNTY, GEORGIA**  
**MARION COUNTY ANNEX BUILDING**  
**March 10, 2020 - 5:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Those present were Chairman George Neal, Commissioner Steve Young, Commissioner Jody Grimsley, Commissioner Mathew Gunnels, Commissioner Norman Royal, County Attorney Wayne Jernigan, County Manager Justin Strickland and County Clerk Sylvia Russell.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Neal called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. Wayne Jernigan gave the invocation.

**APPROVE MINUTES:**

Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the minutes from the *February 11, 2020, Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.* Commissioner Gunnels seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- a. Michael Kirby – 2nd Amendment Sanctuary - 2354 GA Hwy 30  
Mr. Kirby asked the Commission to consider making Marion County a “Sanctuary County” which involves adopting a resolution to prohibit or impede the enforcement of certain gun control measures perceived as violations of the Second Amendment.
- b. Sammy Taylor – 2nd Amendment Sanctuary - 353 GA Hwy 137W  
Mr. Taylor cautioned the Commission on becoming a “Sanctuary County.” He said the resolution would not hold up in court and may have adverse results. He encouraged the Commission to not allow this topic to be used as a political tool for a candidate trying to get votes.
- c. Carol Streeter – Mobile Home and Roads - 778 Moody Road  
Ms. Streeter complained about the state of Moody Road. She purchased a mobile home and is now required to move it within 30 days; however, she is not able to move a mobile home on the dirt road (Moody). Her mail is not being delivered because of the road condition (Road Department Manager Shane Cox noted that her mailbox is on her driveway, not the road.) Ms. Streeter also asked the Commission to contact Governor Kemp to have Sheriff Neal investigated. Chairman George Neal, Jr., advised Ms. Streeter that the Commission has no reason to initiate an investigation.
- d. Marie Berlanga – Marion County VITA Program Update  
Ms. Berlanga reported that VITA office had processed 356 tax returns as of 3/10/2020, with total refunds of \$342,232.00.

## **PRESENTATION:**

### a. Mr. Jayson Griffin, Ameris Bank - Revenue Bond Refunding/Consolidation

Mr. Griffin reviewed the County's debt portfolio and offered to re-fund and consolidate to save the County \$3,000/month (\$900,000 over life of note). Chairman Neal asked County Manager Strickland for input. Strickland agreed the re-funding is a good opportunity considering the current low interest rates and, after consulting with County Attorney Wayne Jernigan, he suggested using a bond attorney to help place the bonds in the marketplace for a competitive bid process. The Commission agreed with the suggestion and asked County Manager Strickland to proceed with that process.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

a. Commissioner Grimsley made a motion to approve a resolution supporting participation in the 2020 Census. Commissioner Young seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Commissioner Gunnels made a motion to approve a resolution approving the change of a portion of the county Census Boundary and submission of same to the Census Bureau. Commissioner Grimsley seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

c. Commissioner Young made a motion to approve a memorandum of understanding with the Marion County Board of Education concerning the OneGeorgia Special Award for the purpose of erecting an agriculture building at Marion County Middle/High School. Commissioner Royal seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

d. Commissioner Gunnels made a motion to approve hiring Tripp Riddle as Marion County EMS Director. Commissioner Young seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

e. The Commissioners reviewed a bid for 5th Avenue Paint Company in the amount of \$41,500.00 for the purpose of painting the exterior of the Marion County Courthouse. This offer was the lowest bid but it did not include a warranty. There was discussion about the current exterior layers (brick, paint, stucco) and it was suggested that the quality of the paint be closely reviewed. The Commissioners directed County Manager Strickland to pursue a warranty with this vendor or ask what is needed to enable offering a warranty.

f. Commissioner Grimsley made a motion to award a contract to Barber Petroleum Equipment Company in the amount of \$7,104.70 for the installation of a fuel tracking system, with the condition that Barber agrees to a repair agreement and warranty. Commissioner Gunnels seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

g. Commissioner Grimsley made a motion to award a contract to Robinson Paving Company in the amount of \$501,798.20 for resurfacing Firetower Road through the 2019 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant. Commissioner Royal seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

h. Commissioner Young made a motion to approve purchase of a new 2020 Chevrolet 4500HD 4x2 Diesel Ambulance from Custom Truck and Body Works, Inc. in the amount of \$156,914.00 with the understanding that Marion County Hospital Authority will pay 25% of the cost. Commissioner Royal seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

i. Commissioner Gunnels made a motion to approve purchase of a new Powerload Stretcher and Powerload System from Stryker in the amount of \$40,507.20. Commissioner Grimsley seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:**

a. ClearWater Solutions Contract

At 6:27 PM, Commissioner Grimsley made a motion to open the floor to public participation after a 5-minute recess. Commissioner Gunnels seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

During the break, members of the audience who wished to speak were asked to sign up to speak during a Public Comments session.

Chairman Neal called the meeting back to order at 6:35 PM.

Listed below are the individuals who spoke, the road of concern, and whether they were for, against, or neutral with regard to renewing the contract with ClearWater Solutions, which is up for renewal in June 2020.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ROAD</b>	<b>FOR, AGAINST, OR NEUTRAL</b>
Dean Gemberling	President's Drive	For
Kenneth Grimsley	New Hope Rd.	Against
Cody Lane	Mt. Pleasant Rd.	Against
Ashley Morris	Mauk Rd.	Against
Ricky Maxwell	Power Station Rd.	Against
Kay Morgan	County Rd. 85	Against
Greg Fuller	Fuller Rd.	Neutral
Glenda Fuller	Fuller Rd.	Neutral
E. Cristen Jacobs	Ebenezer Rd. (spoke on behalf of citizens regarding several roads)	Neutral
Jon Payne	Edgar Jones Rd.	Against
Bill Addison	Backbone Ridge Rd.	Neutral
Frances Veal	Ft. Perry Rd. (requested repainting of lines)	Neutral
Barbara Heavlow	Mauk Rd.	N/A – asked who was liable for fixing her car after it was damaged from a large boulder left in road after scraping

The general consensus of the citizens who spoke is that ClearWater has the ability to manage the water system but does not have the skills to manage roads.

Clearwater President Rick Ailiff, Regional Manager Tim Mitchell, and Project Manager Shane Cox, responded to the concerned citizens by reassuring them they will work with the Commission to address their concerns and improve dirt roads in the County.

The Commissioners discussed holding a work session to discuss expectations with ClearWater and discuss options for County road maintenance.

**REPORTS**

- a. Elections Report – Sandra Brown
- b. Public Works & Water Department Report – ClearWater Solutions
- c. County Manager’s Report – Justin Strickland

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Gunnels made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 PM. Commissioner Grimsley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

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Chairman George Neal, Jr.

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Vice-Chairman Steve Young

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Commissioner Norman Royal

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Commissioner Jody Grimsley

Attest:

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Commissioner Matt Gunnels

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Sylvia Russell, County Clerk