

**MILLER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR SESSION MEETING**

**08/09/2021, 6:00 P.M., Courthouse Courtroom**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairman Kreg Freeman, Vice-Chairman Ladon Calhoun, Commissioner Allen Worsley, and Commissioner Niki Nixon. Others Present: Sherrie Stewart, Faye Whittaker, Doug Cofty, Heather Trejo, Terry, Leroy Bush, Sheriff Rick Morgan, Andy Moore

Chairman Freeman calls the meeting to order. Regular session 8/09/2021, and called for a moment of silence and pledge of allegiance

Chairman Freeman states that there was an item that was turned in after the agenda, he stated it was about surplus vehicles at the sheriff depart and asked did any of the commissioners have anything else to add. Nothing else added, Chairman Freeman asked for a motion to approve agenda. Commissioner Worsley made a motion to approve agenda with Vice Chairman Calhoun seconding the motion, all in favor, motion carried

Chairman Freeman as if all commissioners read the minutes from previous meeting and if they looked in order. No objections, Chairman Freeman called for a motion to approve minutes. Commissioner Worsley made motion to approve minutes with Vice Chairman Calhoun seconding the motion, all in favor, motion carried

Chairman Freeman asked the board did they review the accounts payable and if there was anything that needed discussing. Chairman Freeman called for motion to approve accounts payable. Commissioner Nixon made motion to approve. Vice Chairman Calhoun seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried

Chairman Freeman asked the board if the financial reports looked in order and if anyone had any questions. Chairman Freeman called for a motion to approve financial reports. Vice Chairman Calhoun made motion to approve with Commissioner Worsley seconding the motion, all in favor, motion carried.

**APPEARENCES:**

**LEIGH RIBOLZI** - Chairman Freeman called on Leigh Ribolzi to present about the Senior Center. Leigh asked the board if where she was stand was good to talk to the board, they agreed. Ms. Ribolzi stated who she was and that she was with the Miller County Collaborative/Family Connections, she stated that there was one of her in every county in the state of Georgia and that they were state funded. She stated that they all do things different based on the local community. She stated every 5 years they do a community assessment to find out what the community needs are and to see what the strength and weaknesses are. She stated that the assessment help to find out what resources were available, she stated a lot of what they did in the state was leverage dollars and stated a lot of the communities didn't have the dollars to spread around and they try to figure out how to share resources, and to prevent duplication of services. She stated that they also write grants with different agencies to meet the needs of the community. Ms. Ribolzi stated she was housed at the school and the majority of their

program objectives were children oriented but that a lot of other stuff they do is geared toward the community, she stated that is where Shape up Miller was formed for the health initiatives and that there is tons of money out there for health programs, she stated that they partnered with Spring Creek Health and wrote a grant that has been going on for 5 years. She stated Russ Henley was the team leader responsible for physical activities and healthy eating as well as health programs. Ms. Ribolzi stated she received a call when the senior center was closing. She stated the county contacted her and she then call the legislators and they stated they had no clue what was going on. She stated that they had been in the process of meeting with the council on aging, they have had calls and have been asked for the coordinators to aid them. She states she was upset that our seniors had nothing to do and that in Albany they were expecting Miller County's seniors to get on tablets and smart phones knowing that the cellular coverage was bad not knowing what goes on in our communities. She and Early County called Albany stating they wanted to help because many of the seniors were lonely and depressed.

Ms. Ribolzi stated she just learned that the seniors had a board last month. She stated she had been meeting with them trying to figure out what they liked, she stated she was working with numerous agencies and that she was concerned when she found out they were receiving food on a busy street and that they moved that to the First Baptist church but was concerned during funerals and that if they could use the family resource center as an option and an alternate location where they could drive thru and pick up their food. She stated that they have been doing exercise classes at the Family Resource Center for the last 5 years and wanted to find out if that location could be used. She stated that they understood that sharing resources was needed and that Physical Therapy was needed in the community and that Deon was a valuable resource. She stated she is just trying to make everyone happy, the hospital, the county and the seniors. She understood we all needed to work together, share resources, and save money. She then said she wanted the board to know why her name came up a few months ago, she stated she was just trying to meet their needs. She asked if the board had any questions, Chairman Freeman asked that they were going to be getting the meals outside and that they would not be going inside.

Ms. Ribolzi stated that was correct and that the seniors were worried about COVID and that they haven't been getting out. She stated that it is only for 1 hour usually and most of the time the food is dispersed in 45 minutes. Chairman Freeman asked the board what their thoughts where, Commissioner Worsley stated he was ok with that, and Commissioner Nixon stated she was ok with that as long as they were not going inside and participating. Chairman Freeman stated there was a rumor that they went inside the Family Resource Center and was sitting around eating the dinner. Ms. Ribolzi stated they have never pick up a meal or ate it inside. They have been picking them up at Mural City, she stated that they were going to move it there but then talked with Doug Cofty and was told that the county offices maybe moving there because of a mold issue at the commissioner's office, she stated she called Mural City and said no to the resource center. She stated they would use the church and if there was a funeral, they were seeking to use the Family Resource Center parking lot. Chairman Freeman asked the board if that was agreeable. They all agreed, and Chairman Freeman stated they would go along with that.

**COOK REDLANDS** – Heather Trejo, Chairman Freeman stated that Cook Redlands was here about late property tax penalties. Ms. Trejo stated that the offices in New York FedEx the letter to Doug, Doug stated he received them and passed them to the board. Chairman Freeman asked if in the future did the letters need to go to her, she stated that she didn't know the address it was being sent to and that it needed to be sent to her so she could scan them in. Doug Cofty addressed the board and stated that the address on file was Cook Redlands agent, and that address was used since they incorporated and that someone from Cook Redlands needs to go to the tax assessor's office and change the address because he spoke to Cody Hamilton and that's the address that every letter has been sent to. She stated she would. Chairman Freeman stated that it doesn't justify the lateness. Commissioner Nixon asked if anyone in the New York office had gotten COVID, Ms. Trejo stated that they didn't get paid for 5 weeks because of COVID and that they didn't know if anyone in New York was sick because they haven't heard from them. Commissioner Worsley asked that Cook Redlands was behind in 2019 also? Vice Chairman stated that yes, they was behind and it wasn't the first time. Chairman Freeman states that they are already late from another year and if they had been current when this come about it might have been justified, but that he wasn't the only one sitting up there. Commissioner Worsley stated that if they had been current up to the COVID that would have been one thing but they were behind. Chairman Freeman stated they would do whatever to help them be current, and for someone to go down to the tax assessor's office to get the address changed. Chairman Freeman stated that they needed to vote on it to decline the tax relief on late charges and interest. Vice Chairman made a motion to decline the tax relief, Commissioner Worsley seconded it, all in favor, motion carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**COMMISSIONERS OFFICE DAMAGE** – Chairman Freeman advises the board that the building has been tested and the results has been received. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked was it bad or ok, Doug Cofty stated its was not black mold but that it was penicillium which was less dangerous, but it could cause problems, like cardiac, respiratory etc. He informed the board they had a quote of about \$33,000.00 but that Building Inspector Jerry McNease stated there was another company he has dealt with and would find out what they charged. Commissioner Worsley stated that Servpro was high and all agreed. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked should it be tabled until it a price can gotten. Doug Cofty stated that we need to get something done because it's a public building and people are coming in and it could cause legal problems. Commissioner Worsley stated that we needed to get them out of there because if someone gets sick this is going to be a drop in the bucket. Commissioner Nixon stated we need to get it fix. Doug Cofty stated we would come up with a plan to move and get it done. The board stated to move as soon as possible.

**FUELING STATION** – Chairman Freeman stated that they had already decide to do it but over time the cost has gone up because of unseeing things. Chairman Freeman stated the cost was \$413,000 that included the concrete drive all in and out, fence and shelter. He stated that we didn't need to do all that but that we need to move forward. She stated the county has no fuel reserve and with the attack on the pipeline, hurricanes, and such it would be a good thing. He stated that we could gravel the driveway and concrete the pad and do the other stuff later. Vice Chairman asked Andy

Moore what the cost of the crush and run was per ton, Andy stated he would have to get the price but that it would be the same thing we did at the helicopter pad. He said the mat under it was important and he need more of that. Chairman Freeman asked the board if they wanted to go with that. Doug Cofty then informed the board that the cost would be reduced to around \$361,000.00 and that we needed to know so Faye can go to the banks to get the financing. Faye Whittaker then stated she needed to know if it was going to be a yearly note and how would we be paying for it, would it be out of TSPLOST. Doug then stated that there would be an additional coast of a back up generator, discussion continued about the generator with the Chairman asking could we power the station with a portable generator. All agreed that it was possible. Commissioner Worsley asked was any other department going to use the station, Chairman Freeman stated that the school system and the City has expressed interest as long as it's a cost savings.

Commissioner Nixon stated that it was going to be a cost savings because we would be buying it cheaper. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked how many gallons we have used, do we have a total. Doug Cofty stated that is what he has been working on so far, an estimate for this past year is 65,000 gallons and that he would be working on a 5-year total. Chairman Freeman stated Doug went to Seminole County and looked at their fueling station, its under ground tanks but same setup. Discussion about the cost of fuel continued, Chairman Freeman stated we needed to have done this a while agree. He stated we need to go ahead that we can add the fence and shelter later. Commissioner Worsley asked Andy Moore if he was still having issues with the bad fuel and the filters, Andy stated he was, Commissioner Worsley stated that would even save cost having it and not having the bad fuel. Chairman Freeman asked was it agreeable to do this out of TSPLOST, Faye Whittaker asked to include a motion to be able to approach the banks for interest rates. Vice Chairman Calhoun made the motion, Commissioner Worsley seconded it, all in favor, motion carried. Chairman Freeman stated he wanted to go on record as in favor of it also.

**LANDFILL – SEPTIC/WATER** – Chairman Freeman stated that the water and septic tank was talked about doing it. He asked the board did they want to proceed with doing it or hold up. Commissioner Worsley stated with all that we had going on it might be good to table it then asked what cost we were looking at, Chairman Freeman states that it is listed on page 25. Doug Cofty states that Phillip Jones has stated it would take about \$1700.00 to fix the well. It has a submersible motor, and it has gone bad. The well is a 3" and it cost more than a 4", but he was told we would not be drilling a new well. Doug Cofty stated on the septic tank was around \$2000 to \$4000.00 but mostly \$2300, that Chad Spann quoted the price, also we were working with the health department to get a permit and waiting for a soil sample to be taken to see if we can put a septic system in. They would have to come out of Albany to take the sample. Doug stated that we needed to put a window unit in the building do to it being hot. Chairman Freeman stated that we need to go with the window unit and the porta potty until they could figure out what to do. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked if we were going to buy the air conditioner locally, was told if we could find one but more than likely would be Home Depot. Commissioner Worsley made the motion to go with the window unit and porta potty, Commissioner Nixon seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE APPOINTMENT** – Chairman Freeman stated that Sherrie came off and that Doug would stand in for her. Vice Chairman Calhoun made motion, Commissioner Nixon seconded, all in favor, motion carried

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT CREDIT CARD** - Chairman Freeman asked Sheriff Morgan if he wanted to talk to them about the credit card. Sheriff Morgan stated his administrative assistant contacted the county commissioner's office and asked about getting additional credit cards, whoever she spoke with he didn't know, said they did not have anything to do with that, they needed to contact the bank to get additional cards so that is what they done. Chairman Freeman states that there was a misunderstanding on that part. Sheriff Morgan stated he had one credit card and it got rejected at the sheriff's conference when he was paying for a 15.00 meal, he stated he was at Jekyll Island for 4 days at a mandated conference that was mandated by the state. He stated the time he was there he spent \$32.00 on food on the county in 4 days. He stated in the past that he has seen the bills and they can pull the records where what was spent was 600 and 700 dollars spent on meals in 4 days by the previous administration. Chairman Freeman stated he couldn't tell him about any of that. Sheriff Morgan stated anyway he got 2 additional credit cards, like the other day, they also were rejected because they had not been paid and that his card had not been paid in 3 months. Faye Whittaker corrected it as being only 2 months.

Chairman Freeman stated that they had a handle on all that, the person that was looking out after all that got behind that and that is neither here nor there and that he was not going back through that again. Chairman Freeman stated they got all that taken care of but that the letter that said about the other cards, Sherrie had called him about asking about opening an Amazon account. Sheriff Morgan stated he has an Amazon account, Chairman Freeman stated he can't, Then Sheriff Morgan interrupts with Kreg let me tell you something, and that he is not meaning to be loud but that he can do whatever he wants to do, he can enter into a contract for the sheriff's office, state law says that. Chairman Freeman advised the Sheriff that he talked to the county attorney and was told that the sheriff's department was not the taxing authority and that the bills have to come to the commissioner's office and that he can not enter into a contract the concerns money or business, that is why the bank a lot of the times asks for copies of the minutes to see where the commissioner's voted on it. Sheriff states he done what he was told,

Chairman Freeman states someone had to sign for the credit cards and Sheriff stated they were mailed, and nothing was signed, just 2 additional cards to the account. (This was a new account not an existing account) Chairman Freeman asked why they needed additional cards, Sheriff stated the reason he needed the card was a perfect example, he was at Jekyll Island and had someone going to school and they needed to buy a meal ticket, it was a lot cheaper than going to a restaurant. He stated he was trying to save money and he does everything he can to save money. He stated his card was at Jekyll Island and they needed one here. He stated there was plenty of examples as to why he needed a credit card. Commissioner Nixon started to ask a question as Chairman Freeman asked why they couldn't have an additional card on the same account, Sheriff stated that is just how they done it. Commissioner Nixon asked so it is 2 separate cards on 2 separate accounts it is not 2 cards on the same account, Sheriff

states he believes that its 2 separate accounts. Faye stated the letter sent to the bank stated they wanted 2 separate cards on an account with a 3500.00 limit. Sheriff questioned that and then was presented with the letter that came from his office. Chairman Freeman stated that no one was trying to get at odds with one another but asked the sheriff for everyone to have accountability and a track record to know what is going on that the sheriff department need to get POs for stuff ordered and that they needed itemized receipts for what they get. Sheriff stated he does and that they bring a receipt back or if there is no receipt, they are going to pay for it out of their pocket. Sheriff was told that we have receipts that are not itemized and that the county does not pay tips and we never have. Faye told the Sheriff that the auditor needed detailed receipts because people have taken their spouses and paid their meals before so detailed receipts were needed. Chairman Freeman stated that no one was trying to not fund the sheriff department for public safety, that wasn't the issue. Vice Chairman Calhoun stated to sheriff what they are saying is they want 1 account with multiple credit cards, not 2 accounts. Sheriff Morgan stated he had no problem with that, Chairman Freeman asked Sheriff Morgan if that was agreeable, Sheriff Morgan stated yes, that was fine.

Chairman Freeman asked Sheriff Morgan to help them out and that they was not being demanding, could the county only have 1 amazon account so that things could be simplified, Sheriff Morgan stated he wanted to keep his amazon account, he stated it was a pain in the butt trying to sit down with someone when you needed to order, Chairman Freeman stated you still had to get a PO when ordering from Amazon and gave the example of ordering a vacuum from amazon, you still have to call the commissioner's office for a PO, Sheriff Morgan stated of course. Sheriff Morgan asked if you use a credit card to pay amazon and was told no it is on PO system, we just used a PO then received an invoice. Sheriff Morgan stated OK, and that he would work with them but asked that please make sure his bills are paid on time. Chairman Freeman asked Sheriff Morgan could we have only one credit card account and the county have only 1 amazon account, that they never have been denied anything they needed in public safety. Sheriff stated he was concerned about the credit card because it had not been paid in 3 months, Chairman Freeman stated that was because they had no idea that the other credit card was in existence. Sheriff Morgan stated right, he stated that was the understand with the bank and what they did different he didn't know, he sated if the bill was paid monthly the 3500.00 was an acceptable credit line but if the bill and only the minimum payment is paid to get his active back, he wanted to know was the bill going to be paid in full on a monthly basis, Faye stated that the bill is always paid on a monthly basis and that this was the only time it wasn't due to employee turnover, she stated that everything is being caught up and that it will be paid on a monthly basis as is all the other bills for the county. Faye stated the only reason the minimum was paid was to get the card open again, Sheriff stated again that he only spent 32.00 of the county's money at Jekyll Island and that it was a major accomplishment, then laughed. Chairman Freeman stated he appreciated that but stuff like not knowing the other credit card was in existence, Sheriff stated that the card was known because the mail had come and someone told Jennifer your card came, Faye stated she did not know anything about a card. Vice Chairman Calhoun stated he didn't know anything about the card. Chairman Freeman stated if he had asked them for another credit card, they would have approved it, Sheriff Morgan stated that was his intentions to ask but was

told to do it another way, he stated that if he was told he needed to ask the county commissioners that is what he would have done. Chairman Freeman said OK everyone has the understanding and what they talked about was agreeable. Chairman Freeman called for a motion to allow a second credit card on the 1 account. Commissioner Worsley made the motion, Vice Chairman seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried. Chairman Freeman asked the sheriff if he needed anything between meetings to contact Doug and he would relay the message. Sheriff stated he thinks everything will run a lot smoother now. Chairman Freeman stated everyone would work together.

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT SURPLUS VEHICLES** – Chairman Freeman brought up the list of vehicles, he stated there was a list of vehicles before Rick Morgan took office and that they had the vehicles graded by the condition they were in. Sheriff Morgan stated that most of them were not running. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked if he could get them a better description example: If it had a million miles on the car, if it is not cranking, if the motor is bad, if the tires are good. Sheriff Morgan stated he understood. Chairman Freeman asked if he would start grading them if one had a brand-new motor or transmission it need to be listed. Sheriff Morgan stated his chief deputy created the list while he was gone and handed him the list Friday. Chairman Freeman stated they just need an idea of what they are worth, Sheriff Morgan agreed. Andy Moore asked that if they were creating a surplus list could the road department add stuff to it. He was told yes.

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT LAWSUIT** - Doug Cofty advised the board that the lawsuit doesn't really pertain to him but that the lawsuit is from an incident that happened in 2019, Sheriff Morgan agreed stating it happened in 2019. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked when the incident happened, Sheriff Morgan stated he thought it was October or November 2019. Vice Chairman Calhoun stated it was August 17, 2019. Chairman Freeman stated they have a letter from an attorney that is from January 2020 and that the board had no knowledge of that ever taking place. Sheriff Morgan stated he has never gotten any notification of it. He has nothing. Chairman Freeman asked the sheriff is there has been any correspondence with the deputy involved. Sheriff stated no there hasn't. Sheriff stated that he would never work for him. Chairman Freeman stated there was nothing for the board to act on, but it will affect his department. Sheriff again stated he never worked for him. He stated the lawsuit was filed prior to his administration. He stated he had been around for many years and usually they send a packet of requests and he had not seen any so someone had to have gotten that.

Chairman Freeman questioned why the letter was dated January 2020 and that none of the board had any knowledge of it had taken place, Doug Cofty stated that letter was found on the previous-previous clerks computer, the only why we knew about it was when the lawyer called and started requesting documents and body camera footage. Doug stated his understanding that they hand delivered the letter to the previous sheriff and that he handed Morgan and Morgan over a copy of the body camera footage but that we do not have a copy of it. Sheriff Morgan stated if he ever got informed of a lawsuit, he would contact the county manager and the county attorney. Chairman Freeman stated he would also let the Sheriff know if we received anything.

Chairman Freeman talked to the board about the fuel proposals and stated that it was documentation for them to look at. Doug Cofty spoke about the companies who were interested in putting in a proposal. He would update them as we go forward. The cost

of the fuel purchased at wholesale as well as the cost that would be applied for the school and city was discussed.

**SAFETY DISCOUNT FORMS** – This was an annual form that required Chairman Freeman Signature.

**CATERPILLAR LEASE CONTRACT** – This was a lease contract with Caterpillar for equipment that we have already received. Discussion took place on the warranty of the equipment with all commissioners being unable to locate any warranty information. Chairman Freeman asked for us to locate the warranty information and he would then sign the agreement.

**DISBURSEMENTS:** - Sales Ratio Report from the State of Georgia

Road department summary – No questions.

Chairman Freeman asked if there was anything else that needed to be discussed. If not, he called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Worsley made motion to adjourn, Commissioner Nixon seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried

Meeting adjourned.