

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, December 12, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Vice Chairman Scott Orenstein
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of November 7, 2022 and the regular session of November 8, 2022. No changes to the minutes were requested.

APPOINTMENT

Greater Lowndes Planning Commission, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Franklin Bailey's term will expire January 7, 2023 and Mr. Bailey has expressed a desire to continue to serve.

PUBLIC HEARING

Beer and Wine License - Robert Sloper of Lake Park Billiard's Academy - 5129 Mill Store Rd., Lake Park, GA, Finance Accounts Receivable Technician, Lorraine Taylor, presented the item. Mrs. Taylor stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license at 5129 Mill Store Road, Lake Park, for consumption on premises. Mrs. Taylor further stated this is for a new establishment.

Beer and Wine License - John R. Williams of Williams Investment Co., DBA La Quinta Inn & Suites - 4610 N. Valdosta Rd., Valdosta, GA, Finance Accounts Receivable Technician, Lorraine Taylor, presented the item. Mrs. Taylor stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license at 4610 North Valdosta Road, for consumption on premises. Mrs. Taylor further stated this is for a new establishment.

REZ-2022-18 Hilton's, Chug A Lug Rd (Part of 0033 023B) E-A to R-A, Well & Septic, 8.29 acres, County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on 8.29 acres on Chug A Lug Road from E-A (Estate Agricultural) zoning to R-A (Residential Agricultural) zoning in order for the property to be subdivided into three new ULDC conforming lots. Mr.

Dillard stated staff finds the request consistent with the existing land use patterns and Comprehensive Plan. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission and the TRC approved the request with no conditions.

REZ-2022-19 Tripp Talley, 4088 Old Bemiss Rd., R-21 to R-10, County Utilities, ~0.8 acres, County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on approximately .8 acres from R-21 (Medium Density Residential) zoning to R-10 (Suburban Density Residential) zoning in order to put duplexes on the property. Mr. Dillard stated staff finds the request consistent with the existing land use patterns and Comprehensive Plan. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission and the TRC approved the request with no conditions.

REZ-2022-20 Teramore Development, LLC, ~3 acres at Hwy 122 & Skipper Bridge (Part of 0067 051), EA to C-C, Well and Septic, County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) zoning to C-C (Crossroads Commercial) zoning. Mr. Dillard stated the applicant is requesting approximately three (3) acres to be rezoned. Mr. Dillard stated the VALOR map did not show wetlands, but the survey does indicate their presence in the southeastern corner. Mr. Dillard stated the applicant has submitted a conceptual site plan for a Dollar General and this is a proposed site plan, not the final site plan. The Planning Commission recommended denial of the request and the TRC had no objectionable comments based on the conceptual site plan, noting that the minimum buffer between C-C and E-A zoning is 30 feet, but may be reduced to 15 feet with the addition of an opaque fence. Chairman Slaughter stated that after receiving a request from the applicant, the request is to table this item until the second meeting in January 2023. Commissioner Marshall asked what is the purpose of tabling, Chairman Slaughter answered the applicant would like the opportunity to speak to the citizens and also an advertising issue. County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated whenever the signage was originally put out, we were one day off, and letters were resent, signage reposted and readvertised in the Valdosta Daily Times. The Valdosta Daily Times said the ad would be advertised in time and it was not. Mrs. Dukes stated the County is required before the board can take action to advertise at least 15 days and because of the ad not running, it was 14 days. Vice Chairman Orenstein stated some of the concerns with residents is that this will give the applicant more time to come up with a better strategy. Vice Chairman Orenstein stated if the applicant has true intentions of meeting with the community, then he has no objections in tabling. Chairman Slaughter stated the applicant has requested to table. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if the main issue was the date/time issue needing to be corrected in order to be legal, Mrs. Dukes and Chairman Slaughter responded yes, it needs to be tabled. County Attorney, Walter Elliott, stated to clarify, tabling this item would require a vote tomorrow evening. Commissioner Marshall asked if the Planning Commission was aware of the time issue, Commissioner Evans stated some of the citizens had spoken to her after the Planning Commission meeting. Mrs. Dukes stated the applicant was notified and the issue was the Valdosta Daily Times not running the ad as required.

Addition to Basic Decorative Lighting District: Cattle Crossing Subdivision (24 lots), County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request has been advertised as required and staff recommends approval of adding the twenty four (24) lots of the Cattle Crossing Subdivision, into the County's basic decorative street lighting district.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Purchase of Between the Rivers, L.L.C. Property, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the County has the opportunity to purchase 71.47 acres owned by Between the Rivers, LLC, located at the confluence of the Withlacoochee and Little Rivers. Mr. McLeod stated the proposed purchase price is \$121,500.00, and an appraisal was completed by the County in September 2022. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the timeline, Mr. McLeod stated if approved, the closing on the property will be held Wednesday afternoon. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked what is the purpose of purchasing this property, Chairman Slaughter stated this is the property to develop a park used by the citizens for kayaking and outdoor activities. County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated this does support the master plan currently before the Valdosta-Lowndes Parks and Recreation Authority.

MyGov Intergovernmental Agreement, Director of Permits, Inspections and Code Enforcement, Mindy Bates, presented the item. Mrs. Bates stated the MyGov software package will be used by the Planning, Zoning, Inspections, Permitting and Code Enforcement departments. Mrs. Bates stated the MyGov software package was selected due to simplicity and cost. Additionally, Mrs. Bates stated it is a non-profit entity, making the fees lower. Mrs. Bates stated the total cost is \$22,894.96. Commissioner Marshall asked if this software was being used by the City of Valdosta, Mrs. Bates answered no. Chairman Slaughter stated there will be an extensive planning process with the development community and contractors when this process begins. Chairman Slaughter mentioned the goal is to better serve the citizens through the permitting process. Mrs. Bates mentioned that the customer support will have support for the end users as well.

Langdale Park Verizon Cell Tower Land Lease Agreement, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority negotiated the land lease agreement of a portion of Langdale Park to Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless for a cell tower. Mr. McLeod stated the Trust Deed of Langdale Park by the County to the Parks and Recreation Authority requires the County to consent to this land lease agreement. Additionally, Mr. McLeod stated the agreement has been reviewed by the County Attorney.

2023 Public Defender Contracts, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this is an ongoing renewal of the current agreement required by the state, adding there are no changes to the contract.

Approval of Solicitor General's VAWA Continuation Grant Application for 2023, Solicitor General's Office Representative, Karen Hayes, presented the item. Ms. Hayes stated the Solicitor's office has received the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant since 2018. Ms. Hayes stated this continuation grant award period begins January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023. Ms. Hayes stated the cash match required by Lowndes County is \$21,611.00. Further, Ms. Hayes explained if not approved, Lowndes County would need to pay a total cash match of \$36,266.00. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked regarding the cash match, Chairman Slaughter responded if the additional funding is not awarded, Lowndes County would be responsible for a total cash match of \$36,266.00.

Storage Area Network Replacement, IT Director, Aaron Kostyu, presented the item. Mr. Kostyu stated the Storage Area Network (SAN) is used to support 160 plus live production servers that run the departments. Mr. Kostyu stated one of the SAN's has reached end of life. Commissioner Marshall asked if ABM had looked at this issue, Mrs. Dukes answered this is not a part of that project, this is replacement of existing infrastructure.

Transportation Improvement Act (TIA) - Twin Lakes Road Local Delivery Agreement, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has approved the Transportation Investment Act Local Government Application for the Twin Lakes Road paving and drainage project. Mr. McLeod stated approval will allow the project to move forward. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked the timeline, Mr. McLeod responded within the next few months for surveying.

2023 Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Application, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated that as a result of the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program, Lowndes County has been allocated \$1,235,000.00 for FY2023. Additionally, Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County would be responsible for a ten percent match in local funding.

Consideration of TSPLOST II Resolution, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated that according to House Bill 170, counties within a Regional Commission District have the option to institute a Regional TSPLOST. The Georgia Department of Transportation is requesting action to be taken in favor of or opposed to a Regional TSPLOST. Further, Mr. McLeod stated if ten (10) of the eighteen (18) counties fail to get support for a Regional TSPLOST, individual counties can initiate an independent TSPLOST for their own county. Commissioner Marshall asked if this initiates the process, Chairman Slaughter answered yes, with ten (10) resolutions being the goal.

Carter Way and Pond Circle Private Road Advisement, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Carter Way and Pond Circle are currently private dirt roads located off of Old Quitman Highway. Mr. McLeod stated staff has received signed petitions from the owners of adjoining properties that Carter Way and Pond Circle become County roads.

Paymentus Master Service Agreement (MSA), Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, introduced Charlie Stachacz, an independent utility consultant, who has been helping since the ABM project started and has been helping locate the software programs being implemented. Mr. Stachacz has been in the utility business for many years. County Manager, Paige Dukes, added that Mr. Stachacz has been a tremendous asset to our team and it is nice to have someone that understands local government. Chairman Slaughter thanked Mr. Stachacz for his cooperation and help during this process. Mr. McLeod stated Paymentus is the new payment processor which will be used by utilities, as part of the mass meter change out for the ABM project. Mr. McLeod stated there is no cost to Lowndes County, there is a convenience fee if debit, credit card and e-check are used. Mr. McLeod stated this is not the customer portal, this is the payment processor.

FY 2024 Budget Calendar, Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the budget calendar. Ms. Black stated the Commission is required to adopt a balanced budget by June 30, adding the other dates are presented as guidelines for the process.

Contract for Probation Supervision and Rehabilitation Services, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this contract is for misdemeanor services in the Superior Court. Judge Cowart has asked for approval to renew this contract under the same terms. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the \$45.00 fee increase in 2023, Mrs. Dukes responded that the amount is paid to the provider.

Section 125 Plan Document Renewal for 2023, Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the item. Mr. Beals stated approval of the plan will allow qualifying employee deductions to be withheld pretax and in accordance with IRS guidelines.

2023 Holiday Schedule, Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the holiday schedule. Mr. Beals stated the holidays have been prepared in accordance with Lowndes County's Personnel Policy. Additionally, Mr. Beals stated there are ten holidays spanning twelve working days.

2023 ACCG Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal, Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the renewal in the amount of \$201,115.00 to include discounts and safety credits that reduce the annual premium to \$181,424.00.

2023 Commission Meeting Calendar, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated staff took into consideration the annual holidays and the ACCG Annual Training Conference when preparing the calendar.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, requested an executive session for the purpose of privileged attorney-client communication regarding acquisition of real estate. At 9:05 a.m. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of privileged attorney-client communication regarding potential or pending litigation, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:25 a.m. Chairman Slaughter reconvened the work session with no additional information being discussed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, Commissioner Orenstein second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting.