

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, December 13, 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 5:30 p.m.

INVOCATION

Vice Chairman Orenstein

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Vice Chairman Orenstein

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of November 7, 2022 and the regular session of November 8, 2022. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Greater Lowndes Planning Commission, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated the seat held by Mr. Franklin Bailey will expire January 7, 2023 and Mr. Bailey has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Wisenbaker nominated Mr. Franklin Bailey for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Bailey was reappointed by acclamation.

PUBLIC HEARING

Beer and Wine License - Robert Sloper of Lake Park Billiard's Academy - 5129 Mill Store Rd., Lake Park, GA, Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license at 5129 Mill Store Road, Lake Park, for consumption on premises. Ms. Black further stated this is for a new establishment. No one spoke for or against the request. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the beer and wine license, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Beer and Wine License - John R. Williams of Williams Investment Co., DBA La Quinta Inn & Suites - 4610 N. Valdosta Rd., Valdosta, GA, Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license at 4610 North Valdosta Road, Valdosta, for consumption on premises. Ms. Black further stated this is for a new establishment. No one spoke for or against the request. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the beer and wine license, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. No one spoke in opposition to this request. Madison Hewitt, 1921 Gornto Road, spoke in favor of the request as the realtor for the applicant. Ms. Hewitt stated the three lots would be subdivided into three parcels complying with the comprehensive plan to expand growth without jeopardizing the integrity of the area. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the rezoning request as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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 create two 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. Vice Chairman Orenstein, asked what the lot sizes were on Haydens Way, Mr. Dillard responded slightly larger than the minimum 10,000 square feet. No one spoke against the request. Tripp Talley, 113 Fairway Drive, spoke in favor of the request as the applicant and offered to answer any questions the commission might have regarding this rezoning. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the rezoning request as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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 is a request to subdivide three (3) acres of the thirty-five (35) acres in order to develop a Dollar General. 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 considered the request and had no objectionable comments based on the conceptual site plan. Chairman Slaughter stated that due to an issue with the advertising of the times of the meetings, the request is being asked to be tabled. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to table this item until the January 24, 2023 commission meeting, Vice Chairman Orenstein and Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Addition to Basic Decorative Lighting District: Cattle Crossing Subdivision (24 lots), County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated a petition was received and verified to add twenty four (24) lots of the Cattle Crossing Subdivision into the County's basic decorative street lighting district. Mr. Dillard stated the current charge for the basic decorative street lighting is \$61.50 per lot, per year. No one spoke for or against the request. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Purchase of Between the Rivers, L.L.C. Property, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated this is for the purchase of property, currently owned by Between the Rivers, LLC, for 71.47 acres in the amount of \$121,500.00. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the purchase of the depicted property in the amount of \$121,500.00, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried. Chairman Slaughter recognized Mrs. Helen Tapp and Mrs. Tapp addressed the commission to thank them for their leadership in securing the land and also giving special thanks to Chad McLeod and Rachel Thrasher for their assistance. Mrs. Tapp also shared the website address of: www.landbetweentheivers.com for viewing as well.

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. Mrs. Bates stated the total cost is \$22,894.96. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked to verify if this was an annual agreement, Mrs. Dukes responded yes. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the request as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of Solicitor General's VAWA Continuation Grant Application for 2023, Chairman Slaughter presented the item stating the Commission heard from Ms. Hayes with the Solicitor's Office during the work session. No further discussion took place. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the grant with a not to exceed cash amount of \$36,266.00, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Storage Area Network Replacement, IT Director, Aaron Kostyu, presented the item. Mr. Kostyu stated this is the Storage Area Network replacement for both the North and South Lowndes data centers. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Mr. McLeod responded to a question asked in the work session regarding the bid date, which is scheduled for June 2024. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the request as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Commissioner Marshall asked the anticipated date for McMillian Road resurfacing, Mr. McLeod answered hopefully by late summer, early fall of 2023. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the grant application as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Mr. McLeod stated staff is asking for approval of the resolution. Commissioner Marshall asked Chairman Slaughter the timeline in regards to the adoption, Chairman Slaughter stated ten resolutions are needed, with Lowndes County's resolution making the ninth resolution. Further, Chairman Slaughter stated there would be a regional referendum, there will be meetings held with selection of the projects and hopeful to be on the ballot of 2024. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein and Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried. Chairman Slaughter thanked the commission for their consideration of this TSPLOST Resolution. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked will collections cease, Chariman Slaughter answered once the money stops being collected in 2026, collections will be able to continue at that point. Commissioner Marshall asked if unsuccessful in that presidential election year would there be an option to try again, Chairman Slaughter answered yes.

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. Mr.

McLeod stated staff is asking for the direction of the County Manager to prepare and seek a quit claim deed from the owner of each adjoining property. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Paymentus Master Service Agreement (MSA), Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated this is the master services agreement for Paymentus which will be the new payment processor for utilities and finance as part of the mass meter change out project with ABM. Mr. McLeod stated there is no cost to Lowndes County, there is a convenience fee if debit, credit and e-check are used. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FY 2024 Budget Calendar, Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the Commission is required to adopt a balanced budget by June 30th, adding the other dates are presented as guidelines for the process. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the budget calendar, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Contract for Probation Supervision and Rehabilitation Services, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this is the current agreement with Georgia Probation Management and Superior Court for misdemeanor probation services in the Superior Court. Mrs. Dukes stated there is a slight increase to the fee of \$45.00 in 2023, to be paid by the offenders with no cost to Lowndes County. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the contract as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the renewal as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the holiday schedule, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

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. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the renewal as presented, Commissioners Evans and Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried. Chairman Slaughter thanked Commissioner Marshall for his willingness to serve on the ACCG Workers' Compensation Board.

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. Chairman Slaughter asked to change the regular commission meeting date on January 10th to January 9th, due to a conflict. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the commission meeting calendar with the adjustment of the regular session meeting being held on Monday, January 9, 2023, as well as the work session meeting, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated this is the season of giving and below are events Lowndes County employees attended since November:

- More than 35 employees assisted with the Second Harvest Thanksgiving event, with Lowndes County having the largest group from any employer there.
- This past Saturday, Lowndes County Fire Rescue organized a softball tournament for Toys for Tots, over 800 toys collected and \$3,000.00 raised.
- Employees baked cookies for the Airmen at Moody Air Force Base.
- Lowndes County Public Works won the Christmas Parade Float contest in the Greater Valdosta Community Christmas Parade held December 3rd.
- Chairman Slaughter, Commissioner Evans, Mrs. Dukes, Mrs. Barwick and Mrs. Thrasher were asked to judge in the Lowndes High School Door Decorating Contest.
- Mrs. Dukes stated all County departments painted Christmas cards and the cards were placed around the County Buildings. Mrs. Dukes thanked Mrs. Cumbus and staff for the decorations, mentioning the wreaths hanging above the two entrances, were fabricated by the Public Works Department due to the size and cost. Santa's helper, Chief Green's son, Rob Green has been available for pictures here at the Lowndes County Administration Building with dates and times available on social media.
- Lowndes County participated for the first time countywide in the Small Business Saturday.
- Farmer of the year was recognized last week; the large farmer winner was South Georgia Produce and the small farmer winner was Fifth Day Farms, with 70 nominations being received and those were sent out of the county to be blind judged.
- Chairman Slaughter, Mrs. Dukes and Mrs. Barwick interviewed with Georgia Trend and will be highlighted in their upcoming issue.
- The Lowndes County Employee luncheon will be held on Thursday, December 15th at the Lowndes County Civic Center.
- Mr. Beals has had a conversation with Waste Management regarding roadside litter and the landfill. A meeting will be held next week on how to help garbage trucks not drop the litter and a possible campaign for employees to bag trash before putting it in the garbage cans. Also, the landfill after January 1st, will not be accepting loads not properly tarped.
- Mrs. Dukes stated we continue to finalize details so the audit is on time; currently we have not filed yet.
- Lowndes County offices will be closed Friday, December 23rd and Monday, December 26th for the Christmas holidays.

Mrs. Dukes wished everyone a Merry Christmas and the Lowndes County Staff is excited for 2023.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD

Kelley Saxon, 8 Baldwin Place, addressed the commission as a resident of Lowndes County and the Chairperson of the Homeless Task Force. Ms. Saxon stated the County received \$22 million in ARPA funding and an investment of \$6.59 million is needed for affordable housing. Ms. Saxon mentioned

she had spoken to several state officials regarding the funding matter and had been redirected to speak to her local government. Ms. Saxon mentioned that with the addition of the Community Development department, the impression was given that housing would be a priority.

John Quarterman, 3338 Country Club Road, Suite LPMB336, addressed the commission regarding the Troupeville land purchase and wanted to congratulate the commission on this purchase. Mr. Quarterman thanked the commission for trying to help with the litter coming from the garbage trucks which may end up in the waterways.

Blake Robinson, 3819 Schroer Road, addressed the commission stating he is a Georgia Southern student and the younger generation does support and appreciate local government and the work that is being accomplished. Mr. Robinson stated he was a member of the Leadership Lowndes Youth Class of 2020. Lastly, Mr. Robinson mentioned that he lived in Commissioner Evans' district and thanked her for her continued service in our community.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marshall wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Chairman Slaughter thanked the Commission for their dedication and thanked the County Manager and her staff for their service and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Evans second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular meeting at 6:32 p.m.