

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, April 23, 2024

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Wisenbaker

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Wisenbaker

Chairman Slaughter recognized Leadership Lowndes members who were in attendance.

MINUTES

Work Session - April 8, 2024 & Regular Session - April 9, 2024

The minutes were presented for the work session of April 8, 2024, and the regular session of April 9, 2024. There were no revisions requested. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT

Valdosta-Lowndes County Land Bank Authority

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated there is a vacant seat on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Land Bank Authority due to the resignation of Mr. Jason Dove. Ms. Debra White, Mr. Robert Green, and Mr. James Miller have all expressed a desire to serve. Commissioner Evans nominated Mr. James Miller for appointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. James Miller was appointed by acclamation.

FOR CONSIDERATION

FY 2025 Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item. Mr. Tye stated this is a continuation of the grant that Lowndes County has been awarded since 2014. If approved, this grant

will allow the County to continue to provide Functional Family Therapy (FFT) services through the Juvenile Courts. This funding will serve 60 youth during the class of 2025 cycle. Mr. Tye further stated the request is for the Commission's approval to authorize the Chairman to sign the grant documents including a Memorandum of Understanding to continue using Evidence Based Associates as the program manager. Vice Chairman Marshall asked what percentage of the families are single parent families versus families with both parents? Chairman Slaughter stated Mr. Tye will get the information for him. Vice Chairman Marshall stated that a lot of studies show that those who have both parents in the household, tend to have better outcomes. Chairman Slaughter stated we have come to realize from a social standpoint that single parents have not only the challenges of being a single parent, but the rearing of children makes it even more challenging. Mr. Tye stated he thinks that one of the things that makes this program so important, is that it provides an extra tool that helps single parent households. Chairman Slaughter asked Mr. Tye to ask the Juvenile Court about the statistics for Vice Chairman Marshall. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed, motion carried.

Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement Between Lowndes County and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item. Mr. Tye stated the current Statewide Mutual Aid Assistance Agreement expired in March and this is a continuation of that agreement for the next four years. He further stated there are no substantive changes to the agreement. Mr. Tye went on to mention that this is just a mechanism that will allow us to receive reimbursement should it become available if we provide aid or receive aid from another government organization. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Vice Chairman Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Acceptance of Infrastructure for SetterPointe Subdivision Phase 3

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated SetterPointe Subdivision Phase 3 is located in the western portion of Lowndes County, off of Old Quitman Hwy and includes 21 lots. Mr. McLeod further stated staff has made the final inspections of the construction, and all construction and paperwork have been completed. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

TIA Supplemental Agreement for Hightower Road/Cooper Road NE Paving and Drainage Improvements, P.I. 0016276

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the original agreement with the TIA Office has a not to exceed amount of \$3,750,000.00, and the project went over by \$102,417.03. Mr. McLeod further stated this is a Supplemental Agreement from the TIA Office to cover the cost. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Acceptance of the VAWA Competitive Grant Award for 2024

Chairman, Bill Slaughter, presented the item. Chairman Slaughter stated the Commission heard from Victim Services Director, Karen Hayes at the work session yesterday morning, April, 22, 2024. He further stated any questions from the Commission at this time should be redirected to County Manager, Paige Dukes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to accept the grant award and authorize the Chairman to sign the documents, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Beer and Wine License - John Fuller of Family Dollar Stores of Georgia, LLC DBA Family Dollar 23231 - 1006 Lakes Blvd., Lake Park, GA

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated this is for the Family Dollar Store in Lake Park, Georgia, and they are requesting to add beer and wine for consumption off premises. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

North Lowndes Data Center Switches

IT Director, Aaron Kostyu, presented the item. Mr. Kostyu stated this is to replace the network core for the North Lowndes Data Center. Mr. Kostyu further stated this is a planned and budgeted expense. Commissioner Griner asked for the North Lowndes Data Center's location. Mr. Kostyu responded he would be happy to discuss it with Commissioner Griner offline. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Proposed Sale of Danieli Drive Property

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the Lowndes County Utilities Department sought bids to dispose of property located at 5407 Danieli Drive. He further stated the Conditions of Sale in the Notice of Sale and Invitation for Bids and in the Bid Documents provided the County would sell the property for a minimum of \$47,000.00, which was the appraised value. There was one bid received for \$30,000.00. Georgia Statute provides the County shall have the right to reject any and all bids or cancel the sale, which was stated in the bid documents. Staff recommends the bid for the sale of property located at 5407 Danieli Drive be rejected as it did not meet the minimum bid requirement and the sale be canceled. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to reject the bid, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes reported the following:

Mrs. Dukes stated she, along with Finance Director, Stephanie Black and her team have made it most of the way through budget meetings with all the departments individually, and they will be scheduling the elected officials for May. Mrs. Dukes further stated they will provide the Commission with the schedule once it is completed. She went on to say that they are on track and moving toward presenting a balanced budget to the Commission by the first meeting in June. Mrs. Dukes stated this will allow the Commission enough time in between just in case they need to make adjustments.

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, has been recognized by the International Association of Emergency Managers as an Associate Emergency Manager. This is the second highest honor of professional achievement available from the association, and this designation is presently held by only 327 individuals in the Emergency Management profession nationally. Chairman Slaughter congratulated Mr. Tye. Mrs. Dukes stated, Mr. Tye continues to demonstrate fantastic leadership.

This Friday, April 26, 2024, Lowndes County will have our second "Lunch On The Lawn" at the historic courthouse, scheduled from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Staff has worked with three downtown restaurants, Mo's Mediterranean Table, Downtown Social, and Jesse's for grab and go. Mrs. Dukes stated she knows the Commissioners will be at the annual conference in Savannah on this day, but some of them were at the first one where there was a great turnout. Public Information Officer, Meghan

Barwick, Community Development Director, Rachel Thrasher, and Facilities and Marketing Coordinator for the Historic Courthouse, Jessica Ganas have worked hard on this event and gotten great feedback from downtown businesses and citizens. Mrs. Dukes stated she thinks this is a great precursor into the City moving into what we have known for many years as brown bag at Unity Park.

Next Tuesday, April 30, 2024, Governor Kemp will be here in Lowndes County around noon at the Civic Center to sign Agricultural (AG) Legislation that was approved during this past session of the General Assembly. This event is expected to follow the Arglass groundbreaking event.

May 2, 2024 there will be a ground breaking for our Windstream project at 10:00 a.m. at the Clyattville Community Center.

The Annual Hurricane Season Briefing from the National Weather Service will be held on May 22, 2024 at the Historic Courthouse in the courtroom because the EOC is being used by some of our other local Public Safety agencies for training on the same day. The National Weather Service will be in attendance. Lowndes County had a very active year last year, and the weather has been erratic since then. It is important that we are all prepared. Mr. Tye is working hard to make sure that we have lessons learned from last year, new partnerships, as well as additional duties for department heads and their staff in the event we should have significant weather that will result in power outages for multiple days. Chairman Slaughter and Commissioner Orenstein thanked Mrs. Dukes for her report.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD -

Geoff Hardy, 5065 Shiloh Road, addressed the Commission regarding the Shiloh Road Bridge at Franks Creek, asking for a temporary bridge during the replacement. Mr. Hardy stated they are concerned about the project and the redirection. He further mentioned the concern is not necessarily for their convenience, but for Emergency Services. Chairman Slaughter asked Mr. Hardy to stay after the meeting adjourned for the Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod to provide him with details and the timeline of the project.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Evans second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.