

McLeod explained regarding delivery, it does depend on when the revenue comes in and if there is an opportunity to move forward.

Design-Build Contract for Lowndes County Animal Shelter

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County solicited for Design-Build contractors with proposals due on September 12, 2025. Seven Design-Build firms turned in a proposal. The scoring committee reviewed the proposals and scored each proposer on the specific information requested. The Design-Build firm of Kellerman Construction, Inc. lead all firms in scoring from the scoring committee. The breakdown of the contract is \$450,000.00 for sitework, \$4,050,000.00 for construction, \$200,000.00 for contingency, and \$300,000.00 for Architectural & Engineering. If approved, the design process will begin immediately and the Design-Builder will submit a final proposal for construction to Lowndes County for approval in April 2026. Mr. McLeod stated this is a design build in which a contractor is going to be hired, if the board approves, then the contractor hires the architect and begins the design process. This will be done within the five million allotted for the project. The contractor, architect and staff will be working together. Chairman Slaughter stated this is an effort to keep this project within the budget set and the contractor must work within that budget from a design standpoint and deliver the project. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding a completion date. Mr. McLeod responded that if everything moves forward and a final approval for construction is submitted, which will come before the board in April 2026, construction could begin in May 2026. This project will be completed within one year to eighteen months. Commissioner Smith asked how this is being funded. Mr. McLeod answered SPLOST VII and VIII.

Quit Claim Deed (QCD) for Navigable Waters, LLC at 4939 Bemiss Road

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Parcel 0145B 185B, owned by Navigable Waters, LLC on Bemiss Road, shows a drainage easement on plats dating back to 1968. Lowndes County does not have any record of any rights to the drainage easement. The owner has requested a Quit Claim Deed from Lowndes County stating that Lowndes County has not had or claimed, and does not now have or claim, any interest in said described property, including any interest in the "25' drainage easement."

Adoption of 2027 Budget Calendar

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the proposed budget calendar for fiscal year 2027. Ms. Black stated the Commission is required to adopt a balanced budget by June 30, 2026, adding the other dates are presented as guidelines for the process.

2026 Public Defender Contracts

Chairman Slaughter stated if there were no objections, he would like to let Public Defender, Wade Krueger present his item first, since he needs to leave for court.

Public Defender, Wade Krueger, presented the item. Mr. Krueger stated this is an ongoing renewal of the current contract required by the state with no changes to this contract. Mr. Krueger stated this contract has been in place for twenty years. Commissioner Marshall asked if there were any changes in twenty years that needs to be changed contractually or financially to improve the Public Defender's Office. Mr. Krueger responded as far as the contract, those are basic terms and are standard. Mr. Krueger stated continuing to keep the office fully staffed has been a challenge and possibly increasing the entry-level salaries will be an item to continually address. Commissioner Marshall wanted to verify, from a policy standpoint, that as times change, the Public Defender's Office is operating satisfactorily on a daily basis. Mr. Krueger responded that an ongoing effort by the state agency has resulted in