

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, June 27, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

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

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

Chairman Slaughter recognized one Leadership Lowndes member in the audience. County Manager Paige Dukes recognized Mrs. Rachel Thrasher's daughter McKenzie Noles, who was in the audience. Chairman Slaughter stated he was glad to have them with us.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Clay Griner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Clay Griner

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of June 12, 2023, the Special Called Meeting of June 12, 2023, the Regular Session of June 13, 2023, and the Budget Hearing of June 20, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Lowndes County Division of Family and Children Services

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the item stating the seat that is currently held by Mrs. Elsie Napier will expire on June 30, 2023. Mrs. Dukes further stated, Mrs. Napier has expressed a willingness to continue to serve another term on the Division of Family and Children Services Board. Commissioner Evans nominated Mrs. Napier for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mrs. Napier was reappointed by acclamation.

Valdosta-Lowndes Parks and Recreation Authority

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the item stating the term that is currently held by Mrs. Suzan Garnett will be expiring on June 30, 2023, and Mrs. Garnett has expressed a desire to continue to serve.

Commissioner Marshall nominated Mrs. Garnett to be reappointed. There being no other nominations, Mrs. Garnett was reappointed by acclamation.

Valdosta Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the item stating the seat currently held by Mr. Tripp Howell will expire on June 30, 2023 and Mr. Howell has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Orenstein nominated Mr. Howell for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Howell was reappointed by acclamation.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Lowndes County Accountability Court Grant Approval and Cash Match

Chairman Slaughter stated Mrs. Fabbri presented the item at yesterday's work session. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the continued funding and cash match of \$25,139.00, as requested, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Annual Contract Renewal with the State of Georgia Department of Corrections

Public Works Director, Robin Cumbus presented the item. Mrs. Cumbus stated this item is for three prison work details, one for the Engineering Department to meet state requirements for storm water and two for Public Works for the maintenance of drainage easements. Commissioner Marshall asked how many individuals the County gets for each detail, Mrs. Cumbus responded, since COVID we have been down to one detail, but according to the contract, we only pay for them when they come out. She further stated, historically, for the past two or three years, we have only paid for one detail. Mrs. Cumbus also stated the annual cost is for three details, just in case they are available. Mrs. Cumbus further stated there are anywhere from five to eight prisoners per detail and there is a lot of work that is completed for the price paid. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the contract renewal and authorize the Chairman to execute the contract, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Budget Plan for Hotel Motel Proceeds for Fiscal Year 2024

Finance Director, Stephanie Black presented the item. Ms. Black stated following state statute, this is the County Budget Plan for the hotel/motel proceeds for fiscal year 2024 as well as the Conference Center and Tourism Authority Budget Plan for their use to promote tourism, conventions, and trade shows. Ms. Black further stated it was adopted today by the Authority Board. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adopt the budget plan and authorize the Chairman to sign, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Adoption of Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget

Finance Director, Stephanie Black presented the item. Ms. Black stated following the public hearing on June 20, 2023, this is the operating budget for fiscal year 2024 for the general fund and all other operating funds. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adopt the budget as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Resolution Making Designations Required by OCGA 36-66-5.1(c)

County Planner, JD Dillard presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated the attached resolution that was drafted by the County Attorney's office is to help address specific applicable requirements from state law that go into effect on July 1, 2023 regarding appeals of certain land use decisions and this will be effective until amendments can be adopted in the ULDC at a later date. Commissioner Orenstein

asked if this is just a stop gap until we get the revisions done, Chairman Slaughter responded that is correct. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adopt the resolution making the designations required by OCGA, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes thanked the County attorney for the last item that was approved. It puts in place what the citizens need and also protects the County and staff from liability. Mrs. Dukes discussed a report that she received from the Conference Center and Tourism Authority meeting that she and Commissioner Evans attended earlier today and she thought that the Commission might find it interesting. Mrs. Dukes went on to mention that our property offer was accepted for \$75,000.00 for the Lee Street Property and that is moved to the County Attorney's Office. In addition, she stated, the County will be able to get those blighted houses down and then Chad McLeod and Rachel Thrasher will be making adjustments to our plan on the Griner property so that can be incorporated. It will also be important for future development where County offices are concerned. Mrs. Dukes stated the Honor Guard with Lowndes County Fire Rescue served in Waycross last week for a line of duty death. Tomorrow they will start a funeral watch for Mr. Bob Condrey, who is the stepdad of Sergeant Fischbach, who is currently with Lowndes County. He was also a 20-plus-year volunteer with LCFR. He served with the Eastside department, which has also been a very important department where volunteers are concerned, with tremendous leadership. We are extremely proud of the Honor Guard and Chief Green and his leadership. Lt. Jaime Gandy who works out of the Clyattville Fire Department, manages the Honor Guard Program. Our thoughts and prayers remain with the Fischbach family over Mr. Condrey's passing. Tomorrow are the stakeholder meetings at 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm with permits and inspections, mentioned at the work session meeting. On Friday at 10:00 am we will hold the Lowndes County Fire Rescue Birthday Celebration and the public is invited. Yesterday, we received notification from Senator Ossoff's Office that Moody is in line for the next F-35 A Mission. We are very excited and have several years to prepare the community. There will be an infusion into our construction and development community with some of the needs that will be needed there. This will bring an additional 500 personnel to Moody. Mr. Stalvey and his team have continued to work on a solution for the water issues at Alapaha Plantation. The trial with the Nanofiltration System did not work as we thought it would, because there was an issue with the provider that the County Attorney is currently working through; however, Mr. Stalvey has found an alternative and has reviewed it with our partners. Mrs. Dukes asked Mr. Stalvey to provide information for the Commission. Mr. Stalvey stated Cornerstone HTO out of Atlanta is a vendor that provides water and wastewater equipment to municipalities in industry and they reached out to Mr. Stalvey with a relatively new product called cerafiltec. They came out last fall and did a pilot study and there were good results. They offered it to the County at a very reduced rate. HTO will provide weekly visits and oversight to help us run it. The pilot was delivered last week and will probably be connected next week or the week after. This is a good opportunity to check out this new technology. Mrs. Dukes thanked the Commission for approving the budget. She also thanked Ms. Black, Mrs. Bowen, Mrs. RathKamp, and Mr. Beals for all their help in the budget process.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD - There were no citizens wishing to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:48 pm.