

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
WORK SESSION  
Monday, July 10, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairman Mark Wisenbaker  
Commissioner Joyce Evans  
Commissioner Clay Griner

Commissioners Scott Orenstein and Demarcus Marshall were not present.

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

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session of June 26, 2023, and the regular session meeting of June 27, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**South Georgia Regional Library Board**

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the seats of Mr. Dwayne Johnson, Dr. Beverley Richardson-Blake, Mr. Thomas Lovett and Dr. George Gaumond have expired. All have expressed a desire to serve another three-year term. Additionally, Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Gary Wisenbaker has served two terms and is leaving a vacant seat with Ms. Catherine Ammons and Ms. Sarah Fitzgerald expressing a desire to be appointed to this board.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**TXT-2023-01 ULDC Text Amendments**

Projects Assistant, Jason Davenport, presented the item. Mr. Davenport stated the TRC considered the proposed amendments and found no technical objections. Mr. Davenport stated during the Planning Commission meeting, one citizen spoke in opposition declaring the County did not spend enough time notifying the general public and after much discussion, the Planning Commission recommended to table. Chairman Slaughter asked if public meetings were held for the ULDC Text Amendments? Mr. Davenport replied yes, more than exceeded the legal requirements for public notice. Mr. Davenport stated he believed the citizen opposing wanted more to be done for general public hearings. Chairman Slaughter mentioned there is a timeline to move the amendments forward. Chairman Slaughter told the Commissioners we'll make the decision to table at tomorrow night's meeting. Mr. Davenport stated staff is ready to move forward and if a preference is being asked regarding the concerns of the Planning Commission, this item could be tabled for two weeks. Chairman Slaughter stated he did not mind tabling the item for two weeks, but did not want to exceed that time. County Attorney, Walter Elliott, stated consideration of the notice of the meeting, if tabling

for two weeks, you would have to readvertise for the meetings. Mr. Davenport stated the recommendation is to hold a public hearing tomorrow, before the recommendation to table. Mr. Elliott responded if the public hearing is held and tabled, it needs to be tabled for two meetings instead of one. Mr. Elliott stated he would like to consult with Chairman Slaughter and Mrs. Dukes prior to the meeting tomorrow night.

**REZ-2023-09 – South GA Boat and RV Storage, ~22 acres, 6153 Inner Perimeter, from I-S to C-H, Well & Septic**

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is to rezone approximately twenty-two (22) acres from its current I-S (Intensive Services) zoning district to C-H (Highway Commercial) for semi-speculative commercial purposes. Mr. Dillard stated in 2009, the property was rezoned from E-A to I-S for a business fuel plant for a forty (40) megawatt biomass electric generating plant. Since that has not come to fruition, the applicant is now requesting to rezone to C-H (Highway Commercial) and the first phase, at least five acres will be used to construct an RV and boat storage facility, with the additional property being developed at a later date. Mr. Dillard stated it is within transportation and communication overlay, which allows for Commercial Highway zoning. Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments.

**FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Alapaha Plantation Cerafiltec Pilot Study Proposal**

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated at the last Commission meeting he gave information regarding this Cerafiltec Pilot Study Proposal. Mr. Stalvey stated Cerafiltec proposes to provide a ceramic flat membrane pilot unit at the Alapaha Plantation Water Treatment Plant for ninety (90) days, with an optional thirty (30) day extension. Mr. Stalvey stated the purpose of the pilot study is to determine the feasibility of removing organics and lowering the disinfection by-products to acceptable EPD levels. Mr. Stalvey stated the cost for the pilot study is \$10,000.00 for ninety (90) days and an additional \$3,500.00, if the extra thirty (30) days are added. Mr. Stalvey stated that staff recommends approval.

**Purchase of 412-416 North Lee Street Property**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the County has an opportunity to purchase the properties located at 412-416 North Lee Street, in Valdosta, from Ms. Shirley D. Joseph in the amount of \$75,000.00. Additionally, Mr. McLeod stated staff also proposed the County agree to pay the 2023 property taxes. Mr. McLeod stated the County Attorney is working on the title history and hopefully that will be completed today. Commissioner Evans thanked Mr. McLeod. Chairman Slaughter added if there is a title issue, we could approve the purchase pending the positive outcome of the title search.

**ACCG IRMA Property & Liability Insurance Program Renewal**

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the item. Mr. Beals stated over the last few years, we have experienced the impact that the pandemic, as well as inflation, has had on the economy, as well as the insurance industry. Mr. Beals stated in the last two months the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) has prepared the County for increases during the renewal process with the ACCG IRMA Board voting to pause the dividend disbursement process. Mr. Beals stated ACCG has provided information for different options for benefits.

Proposal #1 - Continue with the existing deductible: \$2,500 deductible with \$5,000 deductible on POL and LEL, Premium: \$1,212,786

Proposal #2 - Optional Proposal: \$15,000 deductible, Premium: \$1,066,238

Proposal #3 - Optional Proposal: \$25,000 deductible, Premium: \$996,417

Mr. Beals stated the recommendation is to proceed with the \$15,000.00 deductible, with no need to cover older vehicles with physical damage, just liability only. County Manager, Paige Dukes, added this is an increase not just facing ACCG, but an increase facing insurance overall. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Beals has looked for areas to continue to save and there will be an increase with the internal safety programs as well.

## **BID**

### **2023 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Resurfacing Bids**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the 2023 resurfacing bids presented include resurfacing 1.00 mile of Good Hope Circle (east), 0.76 mile of Good Hope Circle (west), 1.50 miles of New Bethel Road and 3.30 miles of McMillan Road. Mr. McLeod stated two bids were received, The Scruggs Company \$1,534,014.68 and Reames and Son Construction \$1,599,477.22. Mr. McLeod stated the bids were lower than estimated and staff renegotiated with the low bidder to go ahead and include 2' widening on McMillian Road, the amount for the widening is \$255,453.49, making the total amount \$1,789,468.17. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked regarding the budget impact amount of \$1,534,014.68? Mr. McLeod stated that amount would be adjusted to reflect the additional amount of the widening, making the total amount \$1,789,468.17.

### **REPORT - County Manager**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, deferred her report until tomorrow evening.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the work session at 8:45 a.m.