

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, March 26, 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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of March 11, 2024, and the regular session meeting of March 12, 2024. 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 the seat currently held by Ms. Jill Maine has expired, and Ms. Maine has expressed a desire to be reappointed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to nominate Ms. Jill Maine for reappointment. There were no other nominations. Ms. Jill Maine was reappointed by acclamation.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Coleman Road NW Right of Way Purchases

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the request in the amount of \$63,176.00. Mr. McLeod stated staff has negotiated the purchase of right of way for parcels 1-37 for the Coleman Road North West TSPLOST project. Mr. McLeod also stated the attached detailed schedule identifies the property, the grantor, and the purchase price for each parcel. In addition, Mr. McLeod stated the agreements are in the room and the plans are on the table beside the podium. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Purchase of Property on Harbin Circle from Second Harvest; Short-term Lease to Second Harvest

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod presented the request in the amount of \$1,931,000.00. Mr. McLeod stated staff has negotiated the purchase of property located on Harbin Circle from Second Harvest for \$1,931,000.00, for use for recreational purposes. Mr. McLeod further stated that a short-term lease of the property back to Second Harvest is integral to the purchase of the property and the use of the property for recreational purposes. Second Harvest will use the sales proceeds to improve the new facility to which it will relocate. Mr. McLeod further stated the County will use the rent from the short-term lease to improve the property for use for recreational purposes. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked what are the recreational purposes, Mr. McLeod responded, currently with the redesigned layout, it can be used for basketball, volleyball, and other sports that can be held inside. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked about pickle ball and Mr. McLeod responded, that would be up to VLPRA. Vice Chairman Marshall stated he had the same question as Commissioner Wisenbaker. Chairman Slaughter responded that basically, the final decision regarding the recreational courts will be up to VLPRA and the discussions have been that they need indoor basketball facilities and volleyball facilities. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked about the square footage of the building, Mr. McLeod responded he does not know, but will get that information. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Speed Zone Ordinance

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Georgia Department of Transportation is in the process of updating the existing Speed Zone Ordinance for Lowndes County. Mr. McLeod further stated a copy of the updated Speed Zone Ordinance which includes adding all roads on the proposed existing City of Valdosta and City of Remerton radar permits is attached. Mr. McLeod mentioned that with the execution of this ordinance, the roads will be added, and a signed copy of the ordinance will be forwarded to the Department of Public Safety for the radar permit to be updated for Lowndes County. Vice Chairman Marshall asked in regards to roads that do not have signage how often does GDOT update the information for the purpose of GPS. Mr. McLeod responded he knows they have a program, he does not know the schedule, but he will get it for Vice Chairman Marshall. Commissioner Evans asked for a hard copy of the Speed Zone Ordinance, Mr. McLeod responded he will get one for her. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adopt the Speed Zone Ordinance and authorize the Board of Commissioners to sign it, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Georgia County Internship Program Grant for Summer 2024 Grant Period

Probation Director, Ferlisha Rountree, presented the item. Mrs. Rountree stated this is the Georgia Internship Program Grant through ACCG for the summer of 2024. Mrs. Rountree further stated the title of the project is Record Protection Program, and the primary objective is to establish a record protection program designed for Lowndes County Probation. She stated the program aims to safeguard essential records which will be crucial to the Probation Department and the Courts of Lowndes County. Mrs. Rountree stated it will address the vulnerability of records that were at risk of being damaged due to natural disasters or provide for loss or damage that could disrupt the function of the Probation Department or court proceedings. Mrs. Rountree went on to mention that the internship is covered 100% by the grant, and the internship could run from May until September 2024. She stated the intern must currently be in college. The approval of this grant will allow the internship to assist the Probation Department with the launch of the program and will also give the intern an

opportunity for future employment opportunities with Lowndes County and other Criminal justice Agencies throughout the state of Georgia. Commissioner Orenstein asked Mrs. Rountree if she sees this as only a one year opportunity. Mrs. Rountree responded ACCG created this grant to help departments, and even with it being only one year, it will help the Probation Department with scanning in documents. Commissioner Orenstein asked if there is a possibility that it could continue, and Mrs. Rountree responded no, she does not think so with her department. Vice Chairman Marshall asked about advertising the internship, and Mrs. Rountree responded, ACCG already has the job description and has already been taking it to job fairs, so it will not only be for local students, but for college students throughout Georgia. As soon as it is approved, she will work with Human Resources to list the position. Vice Chairman Marshall asked about the salary being \$15.00 per hour and Mrs. Rountree responded yes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the item as presented and authorize the Chairman to sign the grant documents, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Lowndes County Board of Health Environmental Health Fees

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item stating GA Code 31-3-4 (2016) empowers the county boards of health to establish fees for Environmental Health Services. Mrs. Dukes stated these fees have not been updated by the local Board of Health for more than ten years. Mrs. Dukes mentioned that the schedule before the commission would bring the fees more in line with today's costs. Vice Chairman Marshall questioned the market value of the fee increase. Mrs. Dukes responded it is a standardized fee, and Environmental Health County Manager, Mr. Kyle Coppage responded yes, it is standardized. Mr. Coppage further stated that all district boards of Health approved the fee schedule. He also stated the boards of health, with the County, determine whether they will raise fees or not. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Advanced Disposal Services Residential Solid Waste Franchise Renewal

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the item. Mr. Beals stated, Advanced Disposal Services is seeking to renew their existing Residential Solid Waste Collections Franchise. Mr. Beals further stated it is scheduled to expire March 31, 2024, and Advanced Disposal has provided their letter of intent to renew as well as their application and other documents. In addition, Mr. Beals stated they currently serve 8,517 residents and charge \$20.00 per month for their subscription. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Deep South Sanitation, LLC, Residential Solid Waste Franchise Renewal

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the item. Mr. Beals stated, the Franchise for Deep South Sanitation expires at the end of the month. Mr. Beals further stated they have provided their application and intent to provide services to the residents of Lowndes County, and all is in order. In addition, Mr. Beals stated they currently service 7,814 residents in the unincorporated area, and they charge \$20 per month. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Golden Oaks Subdivision Force Main Change Order

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item in the amount of \$42,652.50. Mr. Stalvey stated Holly Lane is located off of Shiloh Road near exit 22, beside Golden Oaks Drive, where James Warren and Associates (JWA) is currently installing E-one sewer. Mr. Stalvey stated this is a change order to the Golden Oaks E-One Project. He further stated there are twenty-five homes in the neighborhood

that have septic tank and drain field issues. Mr. Stalvey went on to mention this contract has unit pricing and mobilization is included. Staff requested pricing from James Warren and Associates, and James Warren and Associates submitted a price of \$42,652.50, which includes a 10% contingency. Mr. Stalvey stated staff recommends approval of the change order from James Warren and Associates to install E-one sewer on Holly Lane for \$42,652.50. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Hospital Authority Revenue Certificates

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Lowndes County has a history with the Hospital Authority issuing Revenue Certificates in 2011 and Refunding Certificates in 2019 to refund the 2011 certificates. Mrs. Dukes further stated the Hospital Authority is now issuing a not to exceed \$140 million in Revenue Certificates to finance improvements and construction at South Georgia Medical Center, including Women's Infant's, and Emergency Trauma Services. Mrs. Dukes mentioned that she sent out an email earlier today when all the pricing was complete, and the actual number is \$131,290,000.00, which is a little less than they expected. She also mentioned that based on the conversation with Raymond James, everything went favorably today. Mrs. Dukes father stated the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution on March 12, 2024, approving a similar Intergovernmental Contract to provide similar additional security for those 2024 Revenue Certificates. The Hospital Authority is requesting the County to approve a supplemental resolution approving the final terms of the 2024 Certificates and the final form of the 2024 Intergovernmental Contract. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Hospital Authority Revenue Certificates (TEFRA)

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated related to the issuance, the Internal Revenue Code and Treasury Regulations provide that the issuance of these revenue certificates must be approved by the Board of Commissioners since the facilities financed or refinanced with the 2024 Certificates are located in the County. Vice Chairman Marshall asked when they are supposed to break ground, Mrs. Dukes responded we have not gotten that far yet, and Chairman Slaughter stated he does not know, but they did mention they were going to start by taking down buildings that need to be taken down. Mrs. Dukes stated we will inquire about the schedule and as soon as we receive it, we will update the commissioners. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

BID

Bid for Quantity of 25 - 1/2 Ton Trucks for Various County Departments

Finance Director, Stephanie Black presented the item. Ms. Black stated Lowndes County solicited bids for 25 half-ton pickup trucks to be used by various departments. Ms. Black further stated these vehicles will primarily replace vehicles currently in use with the remainder being added to accommodate additional personnel. Ms. Black went on to mention that the County received three (3) bids that met specifications with the low bid coming from Langdale Ford in the amount of \$1,082,688.00. Vice Chairman Marshall asked if most of these are for Public Works, Mrs. Dukes responded Public Works, Utilities, and Engineering. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve and award the bid to Langdale Ford, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in Favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Bid for Quantity of 60 SCBA Cylinders for the Fire Department

Finance Director, Stephanie Black presented the item. Ms. Black stated Lowndes County solicited bids for the replacement of 60 SBCA Cylinders for the Fire Department. She further stated this is approximately one third of those that have a life cycle that will expire in the next three (3) years. Ms. Black mentioned that the County received three bids and the low bid is from Fisher Scientific in the amount of \$76,200.00. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes thanked Chief Young and Chairman Slaughter for their energy and effort being at Miller Hardware at 7:00 a.m. Saturday to prepare the smoker and ribs for Lowndes County to bring home the trophy. Lowndes County won the cookoff for the Boys and Girls Club. Mrs. Dukes went on to say that Commissioner Evans always comes out to support and she is on the Boys and Girls Club Board as well. Mrs. Dukes thanked Commissioner Evans for her time and resources and thanked the Board of Commissioners for allowing Lowndes County to participate. Mrs. Dukes encouraged everyone to go to the event next year.

Chairman Slaughter stated the event was a lot of fun and friendly competition between first responders. Chairman Slaughter mentioned that they had a great cook on the team, and they did an excellent job.

Mrs. Dukes stated on April 1, 2024, Lowndes County will have their one-year celebration and ribbon cutting at Quiet Pines at 9 a.m. She went on to say that there was no official ribbon cutting when the County took over Quiet Pines a year ago. In addition, Mrs. Dukes stated Quiet Pines is cleaned up, and it has been a labor of love by all departments. She thanked them for the time and resources put into Quiet Pines. Mrs. Dukes also mentioned that she hopes everyone can make it to the ribbon cutting on April 1st, and it is open to the public.

Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Derrick Dawson will be holding the Freedom to Grow Conference again this year at the Civic Center on April 2-4, 2024. Public Information Officer, Meghan Barwick is partnering with him on this initiative. Mrs. Dukes further stated this is an effort to expose high risk youth in our community to farming. She is asking everyone to support Mr. Dawson and his efforts. She went on to say this is a grassroots initiative that Mr. Dawson is doing a phenomenal job with.

Mrs. Dukes stated that on April 2, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. one of our Lowndes County Fire Fighters will be honored by the Elks Lodge for their Public safety Award Ceremony. If anyone is interested in attending let her know.

Mrs. Dukes mentioned that on April 6, 2024 at 7:00 a.m. they will step off at Grassy Pond for the Bataan Death March Tribute that is sponsored by Lowndes County Sheriff's Office. This was started by the Sheriff's office four years ago. She mentioned that Lieutenant Dukes has finished the 29 mile hike through parts of Cypress Lakes, Grassy Pond, and the spray field area all four years. Mrs. Dukes also mentioned that it is not mandatory to complete all 29 miles. She invited everyone to attend.

Mrs. Dukes stated all budgets are in and she and Ms. Black will be scheduling departmental meetings soon. They will have draft numbers for the commissioners on the budget.

Mrs. Dukes reminded everyone that Offices are closed Friday, March 29, 2024 in observance of Good Friday.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD -

Anita Armstrong, 2450 Gaines Lane, addressed the Commission regarding renaming Gaines Lane. She stated two residents have renamed it on their own by putting signs up. Chairman Slaughter asked Engineering Director, Chad McLeod, if that portion of Gaines Lane is a private road. Mr. McLeod responded the portion Ms. Armstrong is referring to was a private road, but was accepted into the road inventory. Mr. McLeod stated they recently went out and did grading work about a year and a half ago. Chairman Slaughter asked Mr. McLeod if the County can put signage up that says Gaines Lane, to which Mr. McLeod responded yes. Mr. McLeod stated they will have it taken care of.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Marshall wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular session meeting at 6:00 p.m.