

Val Del Road at North Valdosta Road Intersection Improvement Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Val Del Road at North Valdosta Road Intersection Improvements include traveling south, one dedicated left turn lane, one dedicated left turn and straight lane, and one dedicated right turn all with a 500' stacking depth. When traveling north, two lanes for 500'. Included in this project is new drainage, site improvements, new guardrails, signal upgrades, new striping and relocation of utilities. Bids were opened yesterday, April 21st and staff received two bids. Reames and Son Construction in the amount of \$1,727,365.72 and the Scruggs Company in the amount of \$1,851,180.40. Mr. McLeod stated the 2024 LMIG Supplemental Grant will pay for \$1,500,000.00 and SPLOST VIII will pay for \$227,365.72. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if there was enough land, Mr. McLeod responded that no right of way was acquired, but there were a few construction easements and utility easements. Chairman Slaughter asked Mrs. Dukes to speak with additional comments related to this project. Mrs. Dukes stated Mrs. Barwick will take the social media pages and change the project name and that process will start tomorrow with detour information as well as updates on the project. Mrs. Dukes mentioned regarding the project timeline, this will start as soon as possible with school being out for the summer. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked where is the detour, Mr. McLeod answered a detour would be set up for commercial traffic, which will be Highway 122 to I-75. There will be no detour established for local traffic, only message boards on Val Del Road. Commissioner Smith asked who is responsible for the message boards and signage, Mr. McLeod answered we will use ours and if needed, the contractor will supplement. Chairman Slaughter mentioned he spoke to the Lowndes County Board of Education Superintendent, Sandra Wilcher, regarding bus routing and explained that our hopes are to have this done during the summer and impact bus travel the least amount as possible. Mr. McLeod responded in the bid documents it states that the road cannot be closed until May 27th. Mrs. Dukes asked if the Commissioners had any suggestions regarding this project, to please notify her. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the low bidder, Reames and Son Construction in the amount of \$1,727,365.72, second by Commissioner Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, reported the following:

- Mrs. Dukes asked Lowndes County Public Information Officer, Meghan Barwick, to speak about the county's role in the Bluesberry Festival and the Plein Air Art Competition, which was held on the lawn of the historic courthouse. Mrs. Barwick explained that the Plein Air Art competition allows artists to sign up and paint what they observe outdoors. There were twelve artists registered and ten completed their paintings. Mrs. Barwick thanked the sponsors - Miller Hardware, the Public Arts Advisory Committee and the Central Valdosta Development Authority, for donating prizes to the winners. The winners were: First place: Todd Wessel; Second place: Emme Shiver; and Third place: Daisy Taylor. Additionally, Mrs. Barwick mentioned that many blueberry pancakes were served and extended special thanks to the Quiet Pines staff.
- Mrs. Dukes asked Lowndes County Community Development Director, Rachel Thrasher to update the commission regarding the Quiet Pines Golf Course. Mrs. Thrasher reported that Quiet Pines has been open since the end of November. The original building was destroyed by Hurricane Helene, and the partnership with Moody Air Force Base (AFB) has been invaluable. Moody AFB has received an award from the federal government for disaster recovery funds. At the time, 400 facilities on base were damaged, and a priority list for repairs was created. Quiet Pines ranked among the top twenty facilities and ultimately made the top five on the list.