

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, May 27, 2025 - 5:30 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Commissioner Scott Orenstein
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Michael Smith

Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans was not present.

Chairman Bill Slaughter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Orenstein

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Orenstein

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of April 21, 2025 and the regular session of April 22, 2025. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, second by Commissioner Marshall. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated Jeff Sikes' term expires May 21, 2025 and he has expressed a desire to be reappointed. Mr. Ben Hogan would also like to be considered for this appointment. Commissioner Wisenbaker nominated Mr. Jeff Sikes for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Jeff Sikes was reappointed by acclamation.

Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated the term of Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans expires June 30, 2025 and she's expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Marshall nominated Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans was reappointed by acclamation.

South Georgia Community Service Board

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated that due to Chairman Slaughter being appointed to the State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, he can no longer serve on this board. Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans has expressed a desire to serve. Commissioner Wisenbaker nominated Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans for appointment. There being no other nominations, Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans was appointed by acclamation.

FOR CONSIDERATION

2025 Local Road Assistance (LRA) Administration Funds Application

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Georgia Department of Transportation announced that the Governor included the Local Road Assistance (LRA) in the amended fiscal year 2025 budget. The LRA funds will be distributed using the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Application System and will require no matching funds. The fiscal year 2025 LRA amount for Lowndes County is \$1,677,028.92. If approved, the funds will be used for the resurfacing of Newsome Road, Radar Site Road, Coffee Road, Hemby Lane and Webb Road North. Mr. McLeod stated to answer a question from the work session, three roads will be paved the entire length, which are Newsome Road, Radar Site Road and Hemby Lane. Commissioner Marshall asked a projected start date, Mr. McLeod answered that if this application is approved, it will go out for bid in August. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, second by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Updated Debris Removal Contract Pricing with Ashbritt

EMA Director, Ashley Tye presented the item. Mr. Tye stated that last June, Lowndes County entered into an agreement with Ashbritt Environmental as the County's primary disaster-related debris removal contractor. As part of their contract renewal, vendors are allowed to request updated pricing based on the Consumer Pricing Index. Ashbritt has submitted a request with a 1.9% increase over the original contract. Additionally, Mr. Tye stated, as discussed at the work session meeting this morning, with the increase, it would not change the scoring and/or ranking of the other vendors. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve Ashbritt Environmental for an additional one-year term, to include the updated pricing schedule, second by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

BID

Bid for Mini Excavator for Public Works

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated Lowndes County has solicited bids for a new mini excavator for the Public Works Department. Ms. Black mentioned this equipment is being used to clean easements that are too small to reach with a larger excavator. Ms. Black stated in the range of excavators, this is mid-size. Ms. Black stated one bid was received from Yancey Bros. in the amount of \$171,453.00. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve Yancey Bros. in the amount of \$171,453.00, second by Commissioner Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes mentioned the items below:

- Mrs. Dukes stated work on Val Del Road began today and Public Information Officer, Meghan Barwick will update facebook posts with current information.
- There is a meeting scheduled this week with the city managers regarding the planning for SPLOST IX.
- A FEMA recovery workshop at the staff level will be held on May 28th at the EOC from 9:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.
- June 4th will be the next policy meeting with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) being held at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission office.
- On June 8th, the plans should be ready for the Lowndes County Civic Center roof with a few upgrades.
- On June 11th, there will be a NIMS training held at the Lowndes County EOC for our elected officials.
- Bicentennial events will be posted soon.

Commissioner Orenstein asked for an update on the Lowndes County Animal Shelter, Mr. McLeod stated that the RFP is ninety percent complete and will hopefully be ready to advertise by the end of next week.

Commissioner Marshall asked regarding social media updates regarding the Val Del Road Improvements, Mrs. Dukes responded that Mrs. Barwick will be updating social media with the most current information.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adjourn the regular session meeting. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:43 p.m.