

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
Tuesday, June 10, 2025

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans  
Commissioner Scott Orenstein  
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker  
Commissioner Michael Smith

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not present.

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and thanked Vice Chairperson Evans for conducting the work session meeting in his absence.

Chairman Slaughter stated if there were no objections, staff would like to add an item to the agenda, the Emergency Repair of Fascia and Roof Replacement for the Hahira Health Department due to Hurricane Helene. There being no objections, Chairman Slaughter asked that the item be added as agenda item 8B.

**INVOCATION**

Commissioner Wisenbaker

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Wisenbaker

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session meeting of May 27, 2025 and the regular session meeting of May 27, 2025. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Vice Chairperson Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, second by Commissioner Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**APPOINTMENT**

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the term of Mr. Vincent Miller will expire June 30, 2025. Mr. Miller has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Mr. Samuel Clemons has also expressed an interest in serving on this board. Chairman Slaughter stated Mr. Miller attends the majority of the Parks and Recreation meetings and he is very active on this board. Chairman Slaughter nominated Mr. Vincent Miller for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Vincent Miller was reappointed by acclamation.

## **Lowndes County Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) Board**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mrs. Lynn Orenstein's term will expire June 30, 2025. Mrs. Orenstein has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Mr. Samuel Clemons has also expressed a desire to serve on this board. Mrs. Dukes mentioned Mrs. Orenstein is here in the audience if anyone has any questions. Chairman Slaughter nominated Mrs. Lynn Orenstein for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mrs. Lynn Orenstein was reappointed by acclamation.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **REZ-2025-08 Joseph Williams, 7219 Good Hope Rd., 2.5ac, E-A to E-A and R-A, Well and Septic**

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is a request by the applicant to subdivide the subject property of ten acres to a 2.5 acre tract and 7.5 acre tract. The 2.5 acre tract being subdivided as proposed to rezone to R-A zoning. This does stay within the agricultural character area and there are no wetlands on the property. The TRC and Planning Commission recommended approval of this request. No one spoke in opposition. Joseph Williams, 7209 Good Hope Road, spoke in favor of the request as the applicant. Mr. Williams stated he has spoken to all the neighbors regarding this rezoning request and there is no opposition. Vice Chairperson Evans made a motion to approve the request as presented, second by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **REZ-2025-09 All Metal Buildings, 2515 Madison Hwy, ~2 acres, C-G to C-H, Well and Septic**

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from C-G (General Commercial) zoning to C-H (Highway Commercial) zoning. The general motivation in this case is for the applicant to unify the commercial zoning on the properties for their expanding business. Mr. Dillard stated this property is within the Urban Service Area, Community Activity Center Character Area, the Valdosta Airport Overlay and a drastic groundwater recharge area. The TRC reviewed this request and recommended the following two conditions:

1. Any vehicular ingress/egress off of Poole Street or the unimproved portion of Cannon Avenue shall require the property owner/developer to pave the street from that ingress/egress to the nearest paved street. The property owner/developer will also be responsible for the design, any acquisition of necessary right-of-way, relocation of utilities, and construction costs for the paving of those sections mentioned above.
2. The eastern property line along Poole Street shall be required to have a landscaped buffer that meets or exceeds ULDC Section 4.07.06.

The Planning Commission recommended approval, with the conditions as stated above. Commissioner Orenstein asked Mr. Dillard to show the picture again of the proposed buffer, which is on Poole Street. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve this request with the two recommended conditions. (1) Any vehicular ingress/egress off of Poole Street or the unimproved portion of Cannon Avenue shall require the property owner/developer to pave the street from that ingress/egress to the nearest paved street. The property owner/developer will also be responsible for the design, any acquisition of necessary right-of-way, relocation of utilities, and construction costs for the paving of those sections mentioned above. (2) The eastern property line along Poole Street shall be required to have a landscaped buffer that meets or exceeds ULDC

Section 4.07.06, second by Commissioner Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Service Agreement with SGRC to Perform Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**

Ashley Tye stated Lowndes County received a grant to hire a contractor to assist with the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Southern Georgia Regional Commission will be used and they have done the last two updates for Lowndes County with no issues. Commissioner Smith asked how often we have to do this update, Mr. Tye responded every five years. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the item as presented, second by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Purchase of one (1) Sutphen Heavy Duty Custom Pumper**

Fire Chief, Billy Young, presented the item. Chief Young stated the Lowndes County Fire Department requests approval to proceed with the purchase of one Sutphen Heavy Duty Pumper. This apparatus will be placed in service at Station #9 (Westside) in the amount of \$1,063,876.64. This apparatus and equipment will be completed within approximately 36-38 months. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked how long is this truck, Chief Young responded it is the standard truck which has been purchased previously. Commissioner Orenstein mentioned the cost increase, Chairman Slaughter responded this is why we are trying to approve this now at today's pricing, not the cost in three years. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if this truck will fit in the station at Westside, Chief Young answered yes. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the purchase as presented, second by Vice Chairperson Evans. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Highway 94 East Property**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the County owns a 0.86-acre parcel of property located on Georgia State Highway 94 East. It is surrounded by property owned by the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority. The County is not using the parcel and has no plans to use it. If the County conveys it to the Industrial Authority, it will be combined with the adjoining Industrial Authority property and used for the Authority's purposes for the benefit of the public. The conveyance is authorized by Georgia law. A proposed quit claim deed of the property to the Industrial Authority is attached in the packet. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the proposed conveyance and authorize the Chairman to sign the proposed quit claim deed subject to acceptance by the Industrial Authority, second by Commissioner Wisenbaker. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **BID**

### **A New Facility for Lowndes County Fire Rescue No. 4**

Mr. McLeod stated a new facility for Lowndes County Fire Rescue Station No. 4 is a 13,296 sq. ft. building that is proposed to be constructed at 4111 Stewart Circle. The new facility includes Fire Rescue living quarters, EMS living quarters, four truck bays, and all site work. Lowndes County Fire Rescue currently operates out of the older volunteer station located at 4007 Old US 41 North, this location is temporary and not intended for long-term use. The new station is the next step in the previously approved expansion plan for Lowndes County Fire Rescue. Staff received five bids on May 23, 2025 and Kellerman Construction was the low bidder in the amount of \$4,767,660.00 in 270 days to complete the build. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the low bidder, Kellerman

Construction, in the amount of \$4,767,660.00 and authorize the Chairman to sign the contract, second by Vice Chairperson Evans and Commissioner Wisenbaker.

### **Emergency Repair of Fascia and Roof Replacement for the Hahira Health Department Due to Hurricane Helene**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the Hahira Health Department needs to have emergency repair of the roof and fascia replaced due to Hurricane Helene. This health department is being used, and final pricing was received today by Public Works Director, Robin Cumbus. Mrs. Dukes stated we can move forward under emergency guidelines and schedule this repair. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the emergency repair and roof replacement to the low bidder, Reliable Construction, in the amount of \$25,340.00, second by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **REPORTS - County Manager**

Mrs. Dukes recognized members of Kellerman Construction and Jimmy Cone in attendance tonight. Staff is excited to work with Kellerman Construction and Mrs. Dukes thanked Mr. Cone for his patience, leadership and guidance.

- On May 28th, Mrs. Dukes and County Department Heads attended the FEMA Recovery Planning Workshop held at the EOC. This was a government-level meeting led by FEMA bringing in all agencies involved with long-term recovery in Lowndes County.
- A report was given to the commission before the meeting and was created by Mrs. Barwick and staff showing the number of visitors and events being held on a monthly basis at the historic courthouse.
- Mr. Wesley Langdale called in to thank Public Works for a repair on Old Clyattville Road and the managing of the debris removal from the Kinderlou residential area.
- Mrs. Thrasher and Quiet Pines have landed an interclub group and will be at Quiet Pines on June 12th, with twenty-two ladies playing golf.
- NIMS training will be held at 8:30 am tomorrow at the EOC.
- On Thursday, Mrs. Dukes has a meeting with John Sparks with Partnership for Health regarding inmate medical care.

### **CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD**

Kelley Saxon, 8 Baldwin Place, addressed the commission regarding affordable housing. Ms. Saxon stated that with the start of the hurricane season, citizens are still in the recovery process and need the county's leadership and partnership in addressing their needs.

Gretchen Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, addressed the commission regarding a property purchase, Rascal's in Lake Park, for a fire station. Mrs. Quarterman stated that reconvening the meeting after an executive session to vote on this matter gives the impression that something is being hidden. Additionally, Mrs. Quarterman mentioned informing the citizens about what is happening with the fire tax and overall plan.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the regular session meeting. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m.