

Riley's Church Pew business. This is the second time that he has sold the property. When the current owner came in to take care of their occupational tax and other business, we realized that the property had never been subdivided from Mr. Riley's home to the business use. This rezoning clears everything up legally.

2026 Comprehensive Plan Kickoff

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), this is the five-year annual update of the Comprehensive Plan. Tomorrow will be the first official public hearing for this process. Mr. Dillard stated that at that time, Mr. James Horton with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission, who the Board of Commissioners approved to assist the County with the process, will give a presentation. Then five or six other work dates will be scheduled throughout the next 15 months as we develop the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Dillard further stated the Future Land Use Map is probably the most predominant aspect of the plan that comes before you, but there are other aspects regarding paving, utility projects, and how we want to see the County grow over the next five years. Mr. Dillard stated he wanted to give a heads up that the official presentation and kickoff by Mr. Horton will be tomorrow, August 12, 2025. Mr. Dillard mentioned that those work dates will be provided for the Board of Commissioners to attend and give guidance as we look at the County for the next five years.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) permanent easement at 503 W. Main St. Hahira, GA 31632

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item stating the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has a project in Hahira that is labeled SR 7/SR 122 from SR 7 to CS 38/Union Road in Hahira Sidewalks Lowndes. Mr. McLeod stated GDOT is requesting a permanent easement from Lowndes County for sidewalk construction and to maintain slopes on a parcel that Lowndes County owns, which is the Parrott Health Clinic at 503 W. Main Street, Hahira, GA 31632. The easement consists of 733.73 square feet. Mr. McLeod further stated GDOT has had the easement appraised and has offered Lowndes County \$2,600.00 for the easement. Staff has reviewed the easement drawing and visited the site, and does not see any negative impact.

FY2026 Joint Funding Agreement with USGS

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item. Mr. Tye stated this agreement is brought before the Commission each year to continue operating and maintaining two stream gauges in Lowndes County. Mr. Tye stated the first one is the stream gauge on the Little River at the Hwy 122 bridge west of Hahira, which the County has maintained since 2009. He further stated Lowndes County also shares the expense of the gauge on Skipper Bridge over the Withlacoochee River, which was previously maintained by the City of Valdosta several years back, but they indicated they would not be able to continue funding it, so Lowndes County worked with USGS to share the cost with the Suwannee Water Management District. These gauges are very instrumental in the National Weather Service being able to provide flood forecasts anytime we have significant rain or river flooding events. Mr. Tye stated the only change to the agreement is the cost increase to reflect the cost of staff coming out doing maintenance and the general upkeep. This agreement is \$1,900.00 more than it was last year, but due to the importance of these gauges, we recommend that the County continue to fund them. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if there was any negotiation with the cost if the County decided not to pay it, Mr. Tye responded, they would be cut off. Commissioner Smith asked if they should be looking at gauges on any other rivers, Mr. Tye responded that it is always worthy of