

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, October 27, 2025

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans and Commissioner Demarcus Marshall were not in attendance.

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work and regular session of October 14, 2025. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Beer & Wine License - Tara Kay Middleton of RaceTrac Inc, DBA RaceTrac #2666, 4541 North Valdosta Road, Valdosta, GA

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item stating this request is for a beer and wine license for consumption off the premises. This is a new establishment located on North Valdosta Road and all requirements have been met.

Section 125 Plan Document Renewal for 2026

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the item. Mr. Beals stated that approval of the plan would allow qualifying employee deductions to be withheld on a pretax basis, in accordance with the IRS guidelines. Commissioner Wisenbaker inquired who serves as the County's agent for the plan. Mr. Beals responded that the plan is administered through Taylor Insurance.

GEFA Loan for Lift Station Bypass Pumps

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated that Lowndes County has been preselected to receive a GEFA loan in the amount of \$2,812,500.00, which includes \$703,125.00 in principal forgiveness, for the installation of bypass pumps at lift stations currently lacking back-up capabilities. This project will provide redundant (back-up) pumping capacity at all county lift stations. Although the County has also applied for FEMA mitigation funding, accepting the GEFA loan will allow the County to lock in current pricing and potentially install equipment prior to the next hurricane season, enhancing system reliability during severe weather events. Commissioner Smith requested a description of a bypass pump. Mr. Stalvey explained that a diesel-powered pump has a suction hose that drops into the lift station wet well and the discharge hose ties into the bypass valve that goes back into the main line. These pumps are utilized if something happens to the electrical grid. Mr. Stalvey mentioned that the advantage of bypass pumps over generators is the bypass pumps turn on and off with floats as needed, while the generators run continuously.

BID

Demolition for Lowndes County Fire Rescue Station 3

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County advertised for bids to demo the former restaurant building (formerly Rascals) at 4875 U.S. Highway 41 South in Lake Park. In order for Lowndes County to begin the process for a new Fire Station #3, the demolition of this building is the next step. Six bids were received with two bids being disqualified due to incomplete paperwork. The four qualifying bids were: Standard Contractors in the amount of \$85,174.00, Complete Demolition Services in the amount of \$89,000.00, Kellerman Construction in the amount of \$123,240.00, and Killeen Construction in the amount of \$147,942.60. Commissioner Smith inquired how long demolition would be before the area is ready for construction. Mr. McLeod responded that there is a sixty (60) day time limit on construction.

Bid for Bemiss Road Right of Way Mowing

Purchasing Agent, Amy Woods, presented the item. Mrs. Woods stated bids were received for Right of Way Mowing on Bemiss Road. This mowing will include the initial clean up, full cuts and the median. Outdoor Living submitted the low bid in the amount of \$414,988.00 for a five-year contract. The State of Georgia Department of Transportation will be reimbursing Lowndes County for the entire cost of the mowing and the Public Works Department will be maintaining the contract.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, thanked Public Works Director, Robin Cumbus, for her efforts with the bid for the Bemiss Road Right of Way Mowing. Commissioner Orenstein asked if that included edging the sidewalks. Mrs. Dukes responded yes, it is more than eighty (80) miles of handwork. Chairman Slaughter asked if this continues to include trash pick-up. Mrs. Cumbus responded yes, and the median is included as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Commissioner Smith. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 8:37 a.m.