

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, January 27, 2026

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not in attendance.

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

INVOCATION

Vice Chairman Scott Orenstein

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Vice Chairman Scott Orenstein

MINUTES

Chairman Slaughter introduced U.S. Congressman Austin Scott. Congressman Scott stated that he was unable to attend the Bicentennial Celebration on December 23, 2025, and asked to present and read an official resolution commemorating Lowndes County's 200th Birthday. Congressman Scott presented the resolution to Commissioner Evans, who accepted it on behalf of the Commission.

The minutes were presented for the work and regular session of January 12, 2026. There were no revisions to the minutes. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Evans. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Spring Creek Water Treatment Plant Design Build Project

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the North Lowndes water system was issued a consent order from Georgia EPD several months ago due to continued disinfection by-product violations. After discussions with our engineering firm and negotiations with EPD, a decision was made to upgrade the Spring Creek site. Staff advertised an RFP to add a new deep well, upgrade existing well, install nanofiltration water treatment skids including chemical feed systems and an operations building, add an emergency back-up generator, and add a lift station. Three firms submitted questions, but only one proposal was received from Reynolds Construction, LLC. We believe the size and specialization of the project limited the number of proposals we received. Reynolds Construction submitted a preliminary phase price of \$214,412.00. Reynolds has now presented the attached agreement between Lowndes County and Reynolds Construction of

Georgia, LLC. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve Reynolds Construction of Georgia, LLC in the amount of \$214,412.00, seconded by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Peterson Road Lift Station Pump Repair

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated that pump one at the Peterson Road lift station began running high amps. After troubleshooting, the pump was sent to Xylem for further diagnostics. After examining the pump, Xylem determined the cost of repairs would be \$24,400.00. The cost of a new pump is \$76,440.25. Staff recommends approval for the pump to be repaired for \$24,400.00. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve Xylem to repair the pump in the amount of \$24,400.00, seconded by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Resolution to Sell Surplus Water Meter Components

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated Lowndes County Utilities is replacing water meters that have reached the end of their useful life. The attached resolution will allow the Utilities Department to sell the brass components of the surplus meters under the best terms available at the time of the sale. Staff recommends approval and to authorize the Chairman to sign the attached resolution. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked if there were approximately 8,000 of these water meter components. Mr. Stalvey responded yes. Commissioner Smith made a motion to accept the resolution as presented, seconded by Commissioner Evans and Vice Chairman Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Twin Lakes Road Right of Way Purchase for Parcel 3 *Agenda Item Added*

Chairman Slaughter added this agenda item to the agenda, Twin Lakes Road right of way Purchase of Parcel 3. Chairman Slaughter asked that the item be added as agenda item 5D. Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated as part of the Twin Lakes TSPLOST project, staff has negotiated the purchase from the owners of Parcel 3 (i.e., tax parcel 0171 090) (i) certain areas of fee simple ROW totaling 0.15 +/- acres in the aggregate and (ii) a drainage easement that is 0.07 +/- acres in size. Parcel 3 is owned by Virginia G. Tyson, Charles F. Hobby, and Nancy G. Hobby. The attached purchase agreement identifies (i) the subject property, (ii) the cash consideration for the right of way areas and the drainage easement, and (iii) other consideration related to fencing and gates, the paving of an apron at an access point of parcel 3, and the moving of a security camera located on parcel 3. The cash consideration to the owners consists of \$1,280.00 for the right of way and \$280.00 for the drainage easement. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the item as presented, seconded by Commissioner Evans. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Condemning Right of Way and Drainage Easement for Twin Lakes Road TSPLOST Paving Project; Parcel 3

Chairman Slaughter asked to make this agenda item for Condemning Right of Way and Drainage Easement for Twin Lakes Road TSPLOST Paving Project; Parcel 3 a moot issue. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to make this agenda item moot, seconded by Vice Chairman Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Special Assessment Rate for 2026

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the Commission is required to set the special assessment rate every year to address paving and utility assessments that are not

paid within ninety days. Ms. Black further stated the rate is based on two percent above prime, with the current prime rate being 6.75%; therefore, the rate for special assessments should be set at 8.75%. The prime rate for last year was 7.5%. Commissioner Smith asked if you have ninety days before any interest occurs would you pay in thirty-day net terms. Ms. Black responded you can pay it off within the first ninety days and, after that, it becomes an assessment that will appear on your tax bill, and it will be paid over ten years off of that interest rate. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the special assessment rate at 8.75% for 2026, seconded by Commissioner Wisenbaker. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of the Solicitor General's FY26 VAWA Continuation Grant Application

Chairman Slaughter presented the item stating the Commission heard from Ms. Karen Hayes with the Solicitor's Office during the work session. No further discussion took place. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the FY2026 VAWA Continuation Grant Application with federal funding in the amount of \$79,112.00 and Lowndes County is responsible for \$26,371.00 in matching funds, seconded by Vice Chairman Orenstein. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the events below:

- February 6th: Ribbon Cutting at Quiet Pines beginning at 10:00 a.m.
- February 7th: A softball tournament which Lowndes County Fire Rescue started to benefit Toys for Tots due to the weather before Christmas, it was delayed and has been rescheduled for February 7th
- February 7th: Denise Peters, who is hosting this year's Community Mardi Gras celebration, will have a Golf Tournament at Stone Creek and will be hosting Community Day in the green space next to our building on February 14th from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm.
- February 11th: Lowndes County Bird Supper is being held with 225 RSVPs to date.

CITIZENS WISHING TO HEARD

Mary Roe, 4515 Jones Lane, addressed the commission regarding the paving of Green Road. Ms. Roe stated she has spoken to Commissioner Evans and has also turned in a paving petition to engineering.

Michael Noll, 2305 Glynnedale Drive, addressed the commission regarding data centers. Mr. Noll gave the commission a flyer and stated that he opposes data centers. Mr. Noll stated data centers use large amounts of water, high electricity demands, create noise pollution, and cause fewer jobs and loss of revenue.

Maria Chung Willoughby, 741 East Brookwood Place, addressed the commission regarding growth partnerships and community development block grant (CDBG) programs.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Evans. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.