

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, February 9, 2026

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of January 26, 2026, and the regular session minutes of January 27, 2026. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

REZ-2026-01 Williams Howard Property, 5905 Staten Rd., ~6ac, E-A to R-A, Well & Septic

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) to R-A (Residential Agricultural) in order for the property to be subdivided through Family Ties standards. This property is within the Rural Service Area and Agricultural Character Areas. There is an existing residence and accessory structure centrally located on the property and no wetlands or groundwater recharge areas that may impact well and septic viability. The Planning Commission and TRC recommend approval for R-A with no additional conditions. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the easement if this would be a county maintained road. Mr. Dillard answered that this is a proposed ingress/egress for access to the property. Chairman Slaughter stated that, if done correctly, there should be a perpetual easement that would allow current and future owners to access the property. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked County Attorney, Walter Elliott, if this was considered an easement. Mr. Elliott responded that the only item before the board now is the rezoning. An easement would be a future action.

REZ-2026-02 Bullard Property, 7270 Old Valdosta Rd., 1ac, E-A to R-1, Well & Septic

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this rezoning request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) to R-1 (Low Density Residential) zoning, in order to bring the lot and its allowable uses into conformity. The subject property possesses road frontage on Old Valdosta Road, a county-maintained local road and is within the Rural Service Area and Agricultural Forestry Character Area. TRC recommended approval for R-1 zoning to clean up the property and to be able to apply the ULDC to its current uses and future land uses. The Planning Commission also recommended approval of the request for R-1. Commissioner Smith asked a question regarding the location of the land and the house. Mr. Dillard responded

currently the tax card shows one acre with the house included, but when they looked back at the deeds and survey, they noticed that the one acre in question is just north of where the house is. With this being family land, they spoke to the aunt who owns the property and decided to move the one acre that was originally deeded years ago, to surround the existing house.

REZ-2026-03 Villanueva Property, 6201 Union Rd., 6ac, E-A to C-G, Well & Septic

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this rezoning request represents a change in zoning on a 6.0 acre property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) zoning to C-G (General Commercial) zoning. The main motivation for this request is to allow for a proposed office and storage facility on the subject property for Universal Roofing. The Comprehensive Plan Character Area map currently depicts the subject property within the Urban Service Area and Rural Residential Character Area. The following additional factors should also be considered in this case: the nearby existing residences, the allowable uses in C-C vs. C-G zoning, the property's development potential for non-residential development (especially considering its size, shape and wetlands), the proximity and visibility along I-75, the potential for economic development, potential aesthetic improvements, and the possible creation of additional commercial districts along Union Road. The applicant is proposing an approximate 6,000 square foot building in the northwest corner. Mr. Dillard stated staff identified concerns related to the subject property's location including, lighting (addressed by the ULDC), the aesthetic appearance and construction type, market and feasibility concerns, noise concerns, potential buffers, and the details and scale of the proposed office/business component of the proposed development as it relates to work vehicles and outdoor storage (Restricted by the ULDC). Mr. Dillard further stated the TRC recommended approval of the request for C-G zoning with the following conditions: 1.) A minimum 10' buffer shall be required along the eastern edge of the property along Union Rd. Breaks in the buffer to allow for ingress/egress along Union Rd are allowed. The construction of the buffer is allowed to be done concurrent with development of the property. All other buffer standards shall be governed by the Landscaping, Buffers, and Tree Protection Sections of the ULDC (4.07.00) e.g. types and amount of landscaping, the ability to utilize existing vegetation, maintenance, etc. and 2.) No clubs, lodges, meeting or event facilities, alcohol package stores, or gasoline stations (with or without a convenience store) are allowed on the subject property. Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission also recommended approval with those two conditions and spent a considerable amount of time discussing the existing fence along the western property line abutting I-75, shall be consistent with the color, materials, and design of buildings in the surrounding area. Chairman Slaughter asked a question regarding condition two, asking if they approve, will they be saying that any development on property on I-75 will consistently be the same green fence that the other building has. Mr. Dillard responded, that is what the Planning Commission recommended. Chairman Slaughter stated he has a concern about it because it seems as though the County would be getting into the area of design standards, telling someone what color their fence needs to be.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Loch Laurel Road Termination of Unused Utility Easement

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the County has been asked to release and terminate a utility easement located adjacent to Loch Laurel Road that the County is no longer using and that it does not have a known need to use in the future. There was formerly a booster station at the site, but it was removed in 2019. The present owner of the property encumbered by the utility easement is Mr. Tim Blanton, and the affected property is designed as tax parcel 0168 006 by the Lowndes County Tax Assessor. Staff recommends approval. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if terminated will this be returned to Mr. Blanton, Mr. Stalvey answered yes.

BIDS

PI #0016273, Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Orr Road Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the for item. Mr. McLeod stated that Orr Road is a TIA 1 approved project that is 1.65 miles long. The project begins at Staten Road and ends at Skipper Bridge Road. The project consists of resurfacing, striping, raised pavement markers, eight (8) concrete headwalls, new signage, and grassing. The contract time is 60 calendar days after notice to proceed. Bids were opened on January 22, 2026, and two (2) bids were received with Reames & Son Construction submitting the low bid in the amount of \$477,896.15. Commissioner Smith asked how many TIA 1 projects are left. Mr. McLeod responded Old Clyattville Road Widening, Twin Lakes, and Hall Road.

Consideration of Bids for Installation of Emergency Backup Generators at Pruitt Health Facilities

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item. Mr. Tye stated that in July 2019, the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners approved the submittal of a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) application to GEMA on behalf of Pruitt Health Corporation to fund the installation of emergency backup generators at five skilled nursing facilities in Valdosta. In January 2025, the grants were approved. Mr. Tye further stated following the award, Pruitt Health retained a Licensed Electrical Engineer to develop site specific designs, technical requirements, and detailed electrical drawings for each facility. Lowndes County took the specs and drawings and issued a request for bids. Lowndes County received five bids, but two of those bids were determined to be noncompliant because they did not meet all of the technical specifications. Current Edge Solutions (Savannah, GA) submitted two bids, one for \$1,420,148.00 (Winco Generators), with the generators taking about 12 weeks to arrive, and the transfer switches 18 weeks to arrive. Current Edge Solutions (Savannah, GA) submitted another bid for \$1,470,216.00 (CAT Generators), with the generators arriving in 30 weeks and the transfer switches arriving in 35 weeks. Cowart Electric (Valdosta, GA) submitted a bid for \$1,845,280.00 (Cummins Generators). After reviewing the bids, Pruitt Health's and staff's recommendation is to select the CAT Generators with Current Edge Solutions for \$1,470,216.00. Mr. Tye stated CAT has a larger maintenance network and they come with a five year warranty. Mr. Tye went on to say that 75 percent of the cost will be reimbursed by FEMA, 10 percent will be reimbursed by GEMA, and the remaining 15 percent by Pruitt Health. Any costs not reimbursed through FEMA or GEMA will be the responsibility of Pruitt Health. Lowndes County will receive 100 percent reimbursement for the project through the combined participation of FEMA, GEMA, and Pruitt Health, with no net financial impact to Lowndes County. Commissioner Smith asked for a total number of residents for all five nursing homes, Mr. Tye responded he believes there are around 500 residents. Commissioner Marshall asked if the type of generator was mentioned in the bid documents, Mr. Tye stated the County did not specify that it had to be a specific brand as long as it met the spec requirements. Commissioner Wisenbaker mentioned that there is a Yancey dealer here in Valdosta, and Mr. Tye stated they do not do generators. Chairman Slaughter stated this opportunity was offered to all nursing homes in Lowndes County as well as private well systems, and Pruitt Health was the only one who took advantage of the offer. Commissioner Smith thanked Mr. Tye for his effort, further stating this is a win for response and preparedness.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, asked 911 Director, Tonya Davis, and members of her team to come up. Mrs. Davis stated a call came in on January 31st from Hamilton County dispatch in reference to

an amber alert to help locate the victims, which were two teenage girls, and the offender's vehicle. Thanks to the teamwork and quick response of the 911 staff, Alex Couvillon, Deborah Wilcox, and Ben Renfro, this ended with the offender being arrested with no harm to the victims.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, seconded by Commissioner Wisenbaker. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 9:03 a.m.