

2026 Lowndes County Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated at the board's direction staff has worked with the county attorney to make changes to the alcoholic beverage ordinance. There is a resolution included as well as a copy of the new ordinance. Ms. Black stated the relevant changes are Section 4-3(b) has been amended to change the distance for a church to six hundred (600) feet for distilled spirits and four hundred (400) yards for a school building. Ms. Black stated article 13 was added to this to handle establishments that are currently within or meet the distance requirements that would be outside the distance requirements under the new ordinance. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked to clarify, should a business owner sell his/her existing business to a new buyer, and it is continued to be used as a liquor store, there is no issue. Ms. Black responded yes, as long as the use remains the same, they would not be impacted by the new ordinance. Commissioner Orenstein then asked if the business was sold and was used as a hair salon and then the previous owner wanted to buy it back and change it back to a liquor store. Ms. Black stated he would not meet the requirements. Commissioner Smith asked to verify this only applies to the unincorporated areas. Ms. Black responded, yes, only the unincorporated areas. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the resolution as presented for the 2026 Lowndes County Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Smith. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the items below:

- Mrs. Dukes asked 911 Director, Tonya Davis, to provide an update to the Commission on a recent audit of the 911 Center. Mrs. Davis explained that every three (3) years the Georgia Criminal Information Center (GCIC) conducts an audit to ensure compliance with state laws, federal regulations and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) security policies governing access to criminal information databases. The audit was recently completed, and the Lowndes County 911 Center received a perfect compliance report. Mrs. Davis stated this was the first during her tenure and only the second in the history of the 911 Center. Mrs. Davis explained the numerous areas that this audit evaluates. Mrs. Dukes congratulated Mrs. Davis and her staff and stated that this was a tremendous achievement.
- Mrs. Dukes reminded those in attendance of the July 2nd, Time Capsule Unveiling at 6:00p.m. at the historic courthouse. Mrs. Dukes stated there is a plan to bury another time capsule with that being closer to the end of the year.

Vice Chairman Orenstein asked if any communication had been received regarding Coleman Road and the data center, Mrs. Dukes responded that there had been none. Commissioner Smith asked regarding Next Generation 911. Mrs. Dukes responded we are capable as far as texting where the current system is concerned, and SPLOST funding has been allocated if there is a mandate.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD

George Fisher, 5278 Hall Road, addressed the commission regarding his concerns and opposition to a data center in our community. Mr. Fisher spoke regarding sinkhole identification and mentioned he is available to present a presentation on sinkholes. Mr. Fisher asked for permission to see the Geohazards report on the Snake Nation Road sinkhole prepared by Jim Olson.

Michael Noll, 2305 Glynndale Drive, addressed the commission regarding his concerns and opposition to a data center in our community. Dr. Noll gave the commissioners a handout to review regarding data centers and a possible data center ordinance. Dr. Noll stated this is the time for the commission