

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, August 10, 2026

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Chairman Bill Slaughter was not present.

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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session meeting of July 27, 2026 and the regular session meeting of July 28, 2026. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2026-15 Mardun Ventures, LLC, 6434 Lake Alapaha Blvd, ~10.7ac, R-21 to E-A, County Water & Septic

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from R-21 (medium density residential) zoning to E-A (Estate Agricultural) in order to use the property for silviculture operations. Mr. Dillard stated the subject property possesses road frontage on Lake Alapaha Blvd. a county-maintained road and is within the urban service and suburban character areas and does contain wetlands. The property has recently been planted with pine trees. The applicant is using this property for silviculture purposes and intends to do this for the next twenty years or longer. Staff is recommending R-A zoning instead of E-A zoning with two conditions: (1) Stables and livestock, chicken coops, kennels and cemeteries shall not be allowed. (2) Compliance with any recorded Lake Alapaha/Hidden Cove HOA Covenants and Restrictions shall apply. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the two conditions given by staff. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker stated he was unfamiliar with silviculture and asked what that was. Mr. Dillard responded it is forestry management. Commissioner Smith stated at the Planning Commission meeting there was a concern about bird cannon noise and asked if excessive or constant noise could be restricted; if there was a future use on agricultural property that could disturb neighbors. Mr. Dillard answered he was unsure if you can restrict potential agricultural operations. Commissioner Smith asked if it could be restricted to just pine trees. Mr. Dillard stated he was unsure. Commissioner Orenstein asked to verify whether the applicant's request was E-A zoning and if the applicant is satisfied with the R-A zoning. Mr. Dillard stated the original request was E-A zoning and the applicant is satisfied with the R-A zoning. County Manager, Paige Dukes, added the priority of the conditions listed is #2.

Compliance with any recorded Lake Alapaha/Hidden Cove HOA Covenants and Restrictions shall apply. There could be a plan for improvements allowed within agriculture that the neighborhood is more concerned with than actual agricultural operations. Mrs. Dukes stated the #2 condition was provided at the recommendation of the county attorney.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Jail Door Locking Control System Replacement

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated a request from the Sheriff's Office was received for the locking control system for one of the jail pods which is not functioning properly and needs replacing. Jail personnel received a quote from Valdosta Technical Systems in the amount of \$62,440.00. Ms. Black stated this would be funded from SPLOST IX. Commissioner Marshall asked if the remaining cells were maintained by Valdosta Technical Systems. Ms. Black answered yes. Commissioner Smith asked will there be more to replace or is this due to age. Ms. Black responded that this is the only one not currently functioning properly and there is scheduled maintenance for these as well.

Jail Skylight Replacement

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated a request from the Sheriff's Office was received for the skylights in two of the halls of the jail which are leaking and need to be replaced. Superior Metal Buildings submitted a quote in the amount of \$64,302.26. Commissioner Marshall asked if any other bids were received. Ms. Black stated that this is the only quote received from the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Smith asked if additional quotes should have been received. Mrs. Dukes asked Mr. McLeod to respond. Mr. McLeod stated the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office can operate differently than the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners. The Sheriff's Office can operate on one quote under the Sheriff's guidance and Superior Metal Buildings does a considerable amount of the work at the jail.

Acceptance of Infrastructure for Hunting Lodge Trail Subdivision

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Hunting Lodge Trail Subdivision is located off of Copeland Road across from Lowndes Middle School and is adjacent to Lester Road. The subdivision includes forty-two (42) residential lots and one (1) stormwater lot. All construction and paperwork have been completed. Engineering and Utilities staff have conducted the final inspection of the construction. The developer has requested Lowndes County to accept the infrastructure, which includes the roads and right of ways, stormwater infrastructure, and utilities infrastructure. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this was the development which had the conditions on fencing and asked to verify if they were in compliance. Mr. McLeod responded, we will verify as fencing was being installed two weeks ago, and he was unsure if it was completed. Commissioner Smith asked if any houses were currently being built. Mr. McLeod answered that until Lowndes County accepts the infrastructure, no building permits will be issued. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked when Lowndes County accepts infrastructure, and building begins and the equipment tears up the road; is Lowndes County responsible to make repairs. Mr. McLeod responded that the developer has to put up a one-year maintenance bond and any repairs can be corrected by the developer.

BID

2026 Local Maintenance and Improvements Grant (LMIG) Local Road Assistance (LRA) Resurfacing Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the 2026 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Local Road Assistance (LRA) application was approved by the Commission on May 12, 2026. The grant was approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation, Lowndes County received the grant funds, and staff advertised the project for bids. The 2026 LMIG LRA Resurfacing bids presented are to include resurfacing the roads attached in the agenda packet. Bids were opened on July 30, 2026, and staff received two bids, the Scruggs Company in the amount of \$1,808,850.75 and Reames and Son Construction in the amount of \$1,829,678.40.

REPORTS - County Manager

David Crawford - Partnership Health Center (Work Session)

County Manager, Paige Dukes, introduced Executive Director, David Crawford, with the Partnership Health Center. Mr. Crawford stated that the Partnership Health Center serves the uninsured residents throughout Lowndes County. Mr. Crawford asked each commissioner to become an advocate for Partnership Health and asked regarding three specific actions. Identify three businesses or community leaders in your district, make an introduction and invite them to see Partnership Health Center's finished work firsthand and help Partnership Health Center increase awareness. Mr. Crawford asked that we turn countywide impact into countywide support. Lastly, he thanked the Commission for their leadership and support.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, seconded by Commissioner Evans. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker adjourned the meeting at 8:49 a.m.