

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, July 25, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Vice Chairman Orenstein was not in attendance.

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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of July 11, 2022 and the regular session of July 12, 2022. No changes to the minutes were requested.

APPOINTMENTS

Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated the seat that is currently held by Mr. John Hogan expired on June 30th and Mr. Hogan has expressed a desire to continue to serve.

South Georgia Regional Library Board

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated Dr. Elveta Miller's term expired on June 30th and Dr. Miller has expressed a desire to continue to serve.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2022-13 Hunter Property, Madison Hwy, E-A to C-C, County Water & Septic, ~7ac

Planning and Zoning Director, JD Dillard presented the item stating this request was tabled due to confusion about the actual property size. Mr. Dillard stated while the survey does indicate seven acres overall, the applicants are more or less interested in the two acres as shown on the survey submitted for the potential rezoning to C-C. In addition, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission voted to approve, with a 7-0 vote. Chairman Slaughter asked if the Commission is approving the two acre rezoning or the total seven acre rezoning. Mr. Dillard responded that the seven acres would be possible to rezone to C-C, but the applicant is fully comfortable with just the two acres being rezoned to C-C. County Attorney, Walter Elliott stated the two acres are what was advertised. Mr. Dillard responded that is correct. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if the two acres were specified on the public notice sign located on Madison Highway and Jumping Gully Road, to which Mr. Dillard

responded the specific acreage is not on the signage, just the overall rezoning request from E-A to C-C is listed on both Madison Highway and Jumping Gully Road signage.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Beer and Wine License - Ajaykumar Patel of Devapani, Inc., DBA Solar Food #16 - 3119 Madison Hwy., Valdosta, GA

Accounting Technician, Lorraine Taylor presented the item. Mrs. Taylor stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license at 3119 Madison Highway for consumption off premises. She further stated this request is due to a change in ownership.

ACCG IRMA Property & Liability Insurance Program Renewal

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals presented the item. Mr. Beals stated this is the annual property liability renewal with ACCG. This year's renewal has a rate credit of \$22,799.00, a safety credit of \$53,185.00, and dividend credits of \$88,855.00, totaling \$164,839.00, of program credits. Mr. Beals stated the request is to renew at the current deductible levels of \$2,500.00, per occurrence on all lines except Law Enforcement Liability and \$5,000.00, deductible per occurrence for Public Official Liability. Mr. Beals further stated that they evaluated whether or not the deductibles could be moved up to \$5,000.00 or \$10,000.00, and there was no measurable change. Mr. Beals also stated that this renewal also includes automobile liability and automobile physical damage, which represents 54% of the contributions. In addition, Mr. Beals mentioned that the County had a defensive driving course in June with Utilities and Public Works, adding that there is a program currently designed with Georgia Public Safety training, an online course for post credit for law enforcement. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if the defensive driving course is for all departments that have County vehicles. Mr. Beals responded that the main focus would be Utilities and Public Works based on the amount of driving that they do, but they are looking to have the training again so that other departments can participate. Commissioner Marshall commented that he recently attended a Board of Trustees meeting where they watched law enforcement take the online course, and mentioned that they will receive a grant if they complete at least 80% of the course. Mr. Beals responded that it would work well with safety credits and discounts. County Manager, Paige Dukes stated that Mr. Beals is going to break down the utilization/claims expenses over the last year and get that information out to those departments so that everyone can see where they are and have a conversation about how the County can collectively, in addition to driving and other areas, be more mindful and set a goal to come back to the commission next year with something that has a little less utilization. Mrs. Dukes stated this is important from an accountability standpoint for all the departments, especially with some of them being elected officials outside of the County's direction.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes deferred her report until tomorrow night's regular session meeting of Tuesday, July 26, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Marshall second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the work session at 8:37 a.m.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, July 26, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Vice Chairman Orenstein was not in attendance.

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

Chairman Slaughter recognized Leadership Lowndes members who were in attendance.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Wisenbaker

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Wisenbaker

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of July 11, 2022 and the regular session of July 12, 2022. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated the seat that is currently held by Mr. John Hogan expired on June 30th and Mr. Hogan has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Griner nominated Mr. Hogan for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Hogan was reappointed by acclamation.

South Georgia Regional Library Board

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented the appointment. Mrs. Dukes stated Dr. Eleveta Miller's term expired on June 30th and Dr. Miller has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Wisenbaker nominated Dr. Miller for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Dr. Miller was reappointed by acclamation.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2022-13 Hunter Property, Madison Hwy, E-A to C-C, County Water & Septic, ~7ac

Planning and Zoning Director, JD Dillard, presented the item stating the item was tabled from the previous meeting. Mr. Dillard stated the request is on a seven acre parcel. While the survey does indicate seven acres overall, the applicants are more or less interested in the two acres as shown on the survey submitted for the potential rezoning to C-C. In addition, Mr. Dillard stated it is within the Agricultural Forestry Character Area and within the Urban Service Area. Mr. Dillard further stated there are no wetlands on the property to inhibit any development. The two acre tract is being requested to be rezoned to C-C for future commercial development. The Planning Commission recommended approval (7-0), and staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and existing land-use patterns of the area. Mr. Lewis Hunter, one of the owners of the property, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Hunter stated that they surveyed off two acres to be sold, but then changed and requested rezoning for seven acres, which includes the two acres and five acres. He further stated the five acres adjoin a Dollar General, so they figured commercial zoning would be appropriate, but it seems to be a problem for some people. Mr. Hunter stated he is unsure whether they are talking about rezoning the two acres or the seven acres, but they would like to get it resolved tonight and to know what it is. He further stated he would like clarification. No one spoke in opposition of the request. Commissioner Wisenbaker stated there are two tracts, tract A, which is 5.11 acres, and tract B, which is two acres. Chairman Slaughter asked Mr. Dillard if that is what the tracts are, Mr. Dillard responded yes, that is the proposed tract's pending split, but as it is today, it is still one seven acre parcel. Mr. Dillard further stated they would only subdivide the two acres if approved. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the rezoning of the two acres to C-C and leave the remaining tract as it is, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Beer and Wine License - Ajaykumar Patel of Devapani, Inc., DBA Solar Food #16 - 3119 Madison Hwy., Valdosta, GA

Finance Director, Stephanie Black presented the item stating this is a request for the sale of beer and wine for consumption off premises and it is due to a change in ownership. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

ACCG IRMA Property & Liability Insurance Program Renewal

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals presented the item. Mr. Beals stated this is the annual renewal of property and liability. He further stated we are receiving rate credits, safety credits, and dividend credits totaling \$164,839.00. The request is to renew the property and liability coverage with ACCG at the current deductible levels. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request, Commissioners Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes reminded everyone that the pinning ceremonies for Lowndes County Fire Rescue are scheduled for Thursday, July 28, 2022, at the Rainwater Conference Center. Mrs. Dukes stated that the Lieutenants and Sergeants will be pinned and recognized at 10:00 a.m. and the firefighters will be pinned and recognized at 2:00 p.m. In addition, Mrs. Dukes stated that more than 100 people have already RSVP'd for the 10:00 a.m. ceremony. Mrs. Dukes went on to say that this is the first of many ceremonies to come and it is an opportunity for families to come in and for us to recognize our fire fighters, the rank they have worked so hard for, and start a tradition. Mrs. Dukes

added that the ceremonies are being held at the conference center this time because the historic courthouse is not ready, but in the future, the ceremonies will be held in the historic courthouse.

Mrs. Dukes stated that last week Fire Rescue participated in active shooter training with the Sheriff's Office and EMS. Through the leadership of the Sheriff's Office, Lowndes County has a very aggressive strike team component for our public safety to respond, that would allow EMS and fire departments to work with an armed officer to be able to get victims out of an environment faster and on to medical care.

Mrs. Dukes asked Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey to provide a report on the Nanofiltration system at the Alapaha Water System that the Commission approved last year. Although staff has worked hard to get this in place, unforeseen issues with the vendor and contract arose; however, Mr. Stalvey will present plan B. Mr. Stalvey stated the Nanofiltration pilot was delivered and hooked up. They attempted to run it but the ground water in that area has issues with filtering things that are hard to filter out, not necessarily contaminants, but organics. Mr. Stalvey further stated we have come to an impasse, and the wells need some attention, such as deep cleaning and removing. Mr. Stalvey added, the unit will be sent back, the work will be done on the wells, we will regroup and then determine if we will bring that unit or another unit back. Mrs. Dukes thanked Mr. Stalvey for the report.

Mrs. Dukes called Public Information Officer, Meghan Barwick up to update the Commission on public education and marketing campaigns for Lowndes County. Mrs. Barwick stated that the media coverage has been off the charts, adding there have been at least seven stories that have been featured on the front page of the Valdosta Daily Times. Mrs. Barwick went on to say that local news outlets have been picking up our press releases and running them on their social media. Mrs. Barwick also stated that ACCG featured the Lowndes County Probation recognition in their newsletter. She then provided the Commission with statistics on Lowndes County's social media to give them an idea of how much it has skyrocketed in the last two months. Lastly, Mrs. Barwick mentioned a fun initiative that she and Community Development Director, Rachel Thrasher have worked on with the Griner Property, that they will present to the Commission soon. Mr. Dukes thanked Mrs. Barwick for the report.

Mrs. Dukes asked 911 Director, Danny Weeks to share news on CALEA. Mr. Weeks stated he and his staff had just returned from Chicago after receiving their seventh reaccreditation from CALEA. Mr. Weeks also stated they have been accredited since 2003. In addition, he mentioned that it takes the entire staff and a lot of work for this accomplishment. It helps protect the community and it helps protect the County from liability. Mrs. Dukes thanked Mr. Weeks, and Chairman Slaughter congratulated Mr. Weeks and his staff.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD

Rebecca Beasley, 4813 Spring Brook Drive addressed the commission regarding rezoning case REZ-2022-14, which was denied at the previous Commission meeting. Mrs. Beasley believes all the information was not presented at the last meeting and she provided a survey to show what was already approved and what they want to have approved.

Benjamin Beasley, 4813 Spring Brook Drive addressed the commission regarding rezoning case REZ-2022-14, which was denied at the previous Commission meeting. Mr. Beasley does not believe that at their age, the great grandchildren are old enough to make decisions about the property, which is why they would appreciate the approval to rezone the property.

Ethel Floyd, 4521 Golden Oaks Drive addressed the commission regarding rezoning case REZ-2022-14, which was denied at the previous Commission meeting.

Marcus Campbell, 4386 River Road, approached the podium but did not make a comment.

Larry and Judy Chambless 4185 Addalyn Way addressed the Commission regarding lowering taxes for senior citizens. Chairman Slaughter stated he would speak to them after the meeting is adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular session at 5:54 p.m.