

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
WORK SESSION  
Monday, January 13, 2020

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairman Demarcus Marshall  
Commissioner Joyce E. Evans  
Commissioner Scott Orenstein  
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker  
Commissioner Clay Griner

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

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session of December 9, 2019, and the regular session of December 10, 2019. No changes to the minutes were requested.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Valdosta Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority**

County Manager, Joe Pritchard, presented the appointment. Mr. Pritchard stated the seat currently held by Mrs. Molly Deese expired December 31, adding Mrs. Deese would like to be considered for reappointment.

**Lowndes County Board of Health**

County Manager, Joe Pritchard, presented the item. Mr. Pritchard stated the seat currently held by Dr. Frances Brown expired December 31, 2019, adding Dr. Brown has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Chairman Slaughter stated he serves on the Board of Health with Dr. Brown, adding she is very active and faithful in her service.

**FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Special Assessment Rate for 2020**

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the county is required to set the interest rate on special assessments each year. Ms. Black stated the rate is to be set at two percent above prime, adding the 2020 rate is calculated at 6.75 percent. Chairman Slaughter asked how many special assessments the county has at this time. Ms. Black stated the county has not approved a special assessment in the last twenty years, adding there are still some outstanding.

### **Pine Straw Harvesting Agreement**

Utility Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated staff solicited bids to harvest pine straw at the Land Application Site in south Lowndes County. Mr. Stalvey stated the highest bid submitted was provided by Southern Pine Needles of NC, LLC, in the amount of \$36,250.00.

### **Request to Purchase New Firefighter Turnout Gear**

EMA Director/Fire Chief, Ashley Tye, presented a request to purchase firefighting turnout gear in the amount of \$28,327.04, from Ten-8 Fire Equipment. Chief Tye stated the fire department recently conducted an annual gear inspection and identified 14 sets of gear that were near expiration or in poor condition. Chairman Slaughter asked if the turnout gear is custom fitted to which Chief Tye replied yes. Chief Tye explained that standard sizes may not fit as well and can work against firefighters, making it more difficult for them to move. Vice Chairman Marshall asked if the cost included helmets, to which Chief Tye replied no.

### **Standard Utility / Contract Item Agreement for Exit 2 Utility Relocation**

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the contract. Mr. Stalvey stated the agreement between Lowndes County and the Georgia Department of Transportation will provide for the relocation of county utilities for the Exit 2 realignment project. Mr. Stalvey further stated the work will be completed at no cost to Lowndes County.

### **Lease Agreement with the State Properties Commission for the Division of Family & Children Services (DFACS)**

Project Manager, Chad McLeod, presented a lease agreement between Lowndes County and the State Properties Commission for 26,500 square feet of space for the Division of Family and Children Services, in the amount of \$407,304.96. Mr. McLeod stated the agreement includes three additional one-year periods of lease if allowed to renew.

### **2020 Stop Loss Insurance Coverage Through Symetra Life Ins. Company**

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the annual Stop Loss coverage related to Lowndes County's self insured employee insurance plan, in the amount of \$906,684.00. Mr. Beals stated that after EPIC shopped rates for the new year, Symetra offered the best terms with the lowest available rate.

### **Set Qualifying Fees**

County Manager, Joe Pritchard, presented a resolution for consideration to set the qualifying fees for the 2020 election cycle.

## **BIDS**

### **Bid for a 3,000 Gallon Tanker for the Fire Department**

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented a bid to purchase a tanker for Lowndes County Fire Rescue.

Ms. Black stated Innovative Fire Group submitted the low bid, in the amount of \$399,414.00. Commissioner Griner questioned how long it would take for the apparatus to be delivered, to which EMA Director/Fire Chief Ashley Tye, replied one year.

#### **Paving - Quail Hollow Acres Subdivision**

County Engineer, Mike Fletcher, presented the item. Mr. Fletcher stated the project includes Grouse Road, Setter Drive, Bob White Drive, Pointer Drive, Covey Trail and .24 miles of Vann Road. Mr. Fletcher further stated The Scruggs Company submitted the low bid, in the amount of \$985,483.31. Commissioner Wisenbaker confirmed that the project is for paving and not resurfacing, to which Mr. Fletcher replied yes.

#### **REPORTS**

Chairman Slaughter informed the Commission that Mr. Stalvey and his staff are testing water samples at three locations in the unincorporated area on the Withlacoochee River in response to a recent sewage spill by the City of Valdosta. Chairman Slaughter stated the county will continue to test until acceptable levels are routinely collected.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the work session at 8:56 a.m.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
Tuesday, January 14, 2020

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairman Demarcus Marshall  
Commissioner Joyce E. Evans  
Commissioner Scott Orenstein  
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker  
Commissioner Clay Griner

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

District Census Representative, Thad Wright, addressed the Commission and those in attendance regarding the importance of being counted during the upcoming Census.

**INVOCATION**

Commissioner Griner

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Griner

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session of December 9, 2019, and the regular meeting of December 10, 2019. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Valdosta Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority**

Chairman Slaughter stated the seat currently held by Mrs. Molly Deese expired December 31. Chairman Slaughter nominated Mrs. Deese for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mrs. Deese was appointed by acclamation.

**Lowndes County Board of Health**

Chairman Slaughter presented the appointment stating the seat held by Dr. Frances Brown expired on December 31, 2019. Chairman Slaughter further stated Dr. Brown would like to be reappointed. Commissioner Orenstein nominated Dr. Brown for reappointment. There being no other appointments, Dr. Brown was appointed by acclamation.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Special Assessment Rate for 2020**

Finance Director, Stephanie Black, presented the item. Ms. Black stated the county is required to set the special assessment rate each year at two percent above prime, which is 4.75%. Commissioner Griner made a motion to set the 2020 Special Assessment rate at 6.75%, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Pine Straw Harvesting Agreement**

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, stated staff solicited bids for the harvesting of pine straw at the county's Land Application Site in south Lowndes County. Mr. Stalvey stated Southern Pine Needles of NC, LLC, submitted the highest proposal in the amount of \$36,250.00. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to accept the high bid as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Request to Purchase New Firefighter Turnout Gear**

EMA Director/Fire Chief, Ashley Tye, presented a request to purchase fourteen sets of firefighter turnout gear from Ten-8 Fire Equipment, in the amount of \$28,327.04. Commissioner Griner asked if it would be a problem to table consideration of the purchase until after the Commission discusses Fire Rescue at their upcoming retreat. Chief Tye stated it will take twelve weeks for the gear to deliver once ordered, adding it is needed. Chief Tye further stated the year is provided for in the current budget. Vice Chairman Marshall asked how many volunteer firefighters the county currently has, to which Chief Tye replied seventy-seven. Vice Chairman Marshall asked which stations the gear would go to. Chief Tye stated the order is based on replacement need instead of by station. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to table the purchase until the Commission meeting following the annual retreat, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Standard Utility / Contract Item Agreement for Exit 2 Utility Relocation**

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented an agreement between Lowndes County and the Georgia Department of Transportation for the relocation of county utilities impacted by the Exit 2 realignment project. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Lease Agreement with the State Properties Commission for the Division of Family & Children Services (DFACS)**

Project Manager, Chad McLeod, presented a lease agreement between Lowndes County and the State Properties Commission, in the amount of \$407,304.96. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **2020 Stop Loss Insurance Coverage Through Symetra Life Ins. Company**

Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the annual renewal in the amount of \$906,684.00. Vice Chairman Marshall made a motion to approve the renewal based on Option 2 and as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **Set Qualifying Fees**

Chairman Slaughter presented a resolution to set the qualifying fees for the 2020 election cycle. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the fees as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **BID**

### **Bid for a 3,000 Gallon Tanker for the Fire Department**

Chairman Slaughter presented the bid and asked the Commission if they would like to table consideration until after the annual planning retreat, during which Fire Rescue will be discussed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to table consideration until the meeting after the retreat, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Paving - Quail Hollow Acres Subdivision**

County Engineer, Mike Fletcher, presented the item. Mr. Fletcher stated the project includes Grouse Road, Setter Drive, Bob White Drive, Pointer Drive, Covey Trail and .24 miles of Vann Road. Mr. Fletcher further stated The Scruggs Company submitted the low bid, in the amount of \$985,483.31. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the low bidder as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **REPORTS**

No additional information was reported.

## **CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD**

Bob Dewar, 6720 Clyattstone Road, addressed the commission regarding his concerns related to the width of the right of way proposed on Clyattstone Road. Chairman Slaughter stated the Commission and staff will meet with Mr. Dewar and any other interested residents present immediately after the meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Orenstein second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular meeting at 6:06 p.m.