

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, January 24, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Vice Chairman Joyce Evans
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Chairman Bill Slaughter, Commissioner Scott Orenstein and Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker were not in attendance.

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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of December 13, 2021 and the regular session of December 14, 2021. No changes to the minutes were requested.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Set Qualifying Fees

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented a resolution for consideration to set the qualifying fees for the 2022 election cycle.

Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Accountability Court Lowndes County DUI Court - Law Enforcement Subgrant– State Court

DUI Court Coordinator with State Court, Heather Harris, presented a request for grant funding in the amount of \$9,195.00, with no match required by the County. Ms. Harris stated this local law enforcement subgrant will assist with the surveillance officer curfew checks, drug and alcohol screens and surveillance duties for the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 31, 2022.

Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Accountability Court Lowndes County DUI Court - Enhancement and Innovation Subgrant Award – State Court

DUI Court Coordinator with State Court, Heather Harris, presented the item. Ms. Harris stated this enhancement and innovation subgrant award is in the amount of \$3,580.00, with no match requirement by Lowndes County. Ms. Harris further stated this supplemental grant has been requested for GPS Monitors and Document Translations into Spanish.

Nelson Hill Lift Station Pump Upgrade

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented a request to purchase two new pumps from Xylem, Inc., in the amount of \$45,742.00. Mr. Stalvey stated due to the growth in the area, the current 10hp pumps are at capacity and need to be upgraded. Mr. Stalvey stated to meet the expected capacity, the existing 10hp pumps will be changed to 25hp pumps.

Approval of DA's Federal VOCA/CESF Grant Application Renewal

Victim Services Director with the District Attorney's Office, Carla Williams, presented the request. Ms. Williams stated the application is a continuation of a VOCA grant that has been in operation since 1997 and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) has been given COVID emergency supplemental funding with the application deadline of January 31, 2022. Further, Ms. Williams stated the funds from the grant, along with "five percent" funds, pay for victim services.

Special Assessment Rate for 2022

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 set to be at two percent above prime, adding the 2022 rate is calculated at 5.25%. Ms. Black stated the rate for last year was 5.25%.

AT&T Switched Ethernet Circuit Continuation of Service

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented the item. Mr. Weeks stated this is an existing contract and the board is being asked to approve in order to keep the current rate for the next 36 months; if not approved the cost would increase 25%.

GDOT Safety Action Program Loch Laurel Road Project

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has identified Loch Laurel Road for a possible 2024 Off System Safety Project. The project will be 100% federally funded. Mr. McLeod stated the project includes audible centerline striping and audible edgeline striping. Mr. McLeod further stated since Lowndes County already has audible edgeline striping, new edgeline striping will be substituted for that item and the County will be responsible for clipping the shoulders. Commissioner Marshall asked if bike lanes have been mentioned to be installed with any of the safety projects, Mr. McLeod answered not to his knowledge, but he could verify with Georgia Department of Transportation.

FY 2023 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Application

Fire Chief, Lloyd Green, presented the item. Mr. Green stated the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program which provides funding for the hiring of additional firefighters. Lowndes County Fire Rescue is requesting to apply for a SAFER Grant which would fund the hiring of nine (9) full-time firefighters and fully fund their salary for three (3) years. Mr. Green stated this grant requires no matching funds, however, it provides funding for salaries and benefits only.

Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority Sales Tax Exemption

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated currently, Lowndes County is working with Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority (VLPRA) on some of their large SPLOST purchases, especially to handle those through the county to save on sales tax. Mrs. Dukes stated when the authority was created it was not taken care of legislatively, with regards to its tax exempt status. Additionally, Mrs. Dukes stated Representative John Corbett will carry legislation to hopefully get the General Assembly to approve for VLPRA. Mrs. Dukes stated this is not statewide, this is only for our parks and recreation authority in Lowndes County. Mrs. Dukes stated in order to move forward, a resolution that demonstrates the commission is in favor is attached.

Property Purchase – Building Valdosta, LLC

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this is a follow-up on the Building Valdosta, LLC property purchase. Mrs. Dukes stated the attorney has prepared the purchase agreement and we have communicated with the representatives of Building Valdosta, LLC and are in agreement with the proposed purchase agreement. Mrs. Dukes stated the price is \$568,971.00, which is for the purchase of the property as well as the development costs.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, requested an executive session for the purpose of attorney-client communication regarding pending or potential litigation and for the purchase of property. At 8:42 a.m. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of privileged attorney-client communication regarding potential or pending litigation and for the purchase of property, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:55 a.m. Vice Chairman Evans reconvened the work session with no additional information being discussed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, Commissioner Marshall second. Vice Chairman Evans adjourned the meeting.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, January 25, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Vice Chairman Joyce Evans
Commissioner Scott Orenstein
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Chairman Bill Slaughter and Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker were not in attendance.

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

INVOCATION

Commissioner Griner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Griner

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of December 13, 2021 and the regular session of December 14, 2021. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Evans stated if there were no objections, staff would like to add an item to the agenda, a Reapportionment Resolution. There being no objections, Vice Chairman Evans asked that the item be added as requested. Commissioner Griner made a motion to add the Reapportionment Resolution, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Set Qualifying Fees

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented a resolution to set the qualifying fees for the 2022 election cycle. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the resolution as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Accountability Court Lowndes County DUI Court - Law Enforcement Subgrant– State Court

Vice Chairman Evans asked County Manager, Paige Dukes, to present the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the request before the commission is for grant funding in the amount of \$9,195.00, with no match required by the County. Mrs. Dukes stated this local law enforcement subgrant will assist with the surveillance officer curfew checks, drug and alcohol screens and surveillance duties for the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 31, 2022. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the law

enforcement subgrant, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Accountability Court Lowndes County DUI Court - Enhancement and Innovation Subgrant Award – State Court

Vice Chairman Evans asked County Manager, Paige Dukes, to present the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this enhancement and innovation subgrant award is in the amount of \$3,580.00, with no match requirement by Lowndes County. Additionally, Mrs. Dukes stated this supplemental grant has been requested for GPS Monitors and Document Translations. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the enhancement and innovation subgrant award, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Nelson Hill Lift Station Pump Upgrade

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented a request to purchase two new pumps from Xylem, Inc., in the amount of \$45,742.00. Mr. Stalvey stated due to the growth in the area, the current 10hp pumps are at capacity and need to be upgraded. Mr. Stalvey stated to meet the expected capacity, the existing 10hp pumps will be changed to 25hp pumps. Commissioner Orenstein asked if the 10hp pumps were still operable, Mr. Stalvey responded yes, those pumps will be utilized in the future. Commissioner Griner asked if the 25hp pumps would be sufficient for the current growth, Mr. Stalvey responded yes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the purchase as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of DA's Federal VOCA/CESF Grant Application Renewal

Vice Chairman Evans asked County Manager, Paige Dukes, to present the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the application is a continuation of a VOCA grant that has been in operation since 1997 and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) has been given COVID emergency supplemental funding with the application deadline of January 31, 2022. Mrs. Dukes stated the funds from the grant, along with "five percent" funds, pay for victim services. Commissioner Orenstein asked if the application renewal was being requested to be approved, Mrs. Dukes responded yes. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Special Assessment Rate for 2022

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 set to be at two percent above prime, adding the 2022 rate is calculated at 5.25%. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to set the 2022 Special Assessment Rate at 5.25%, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

AT&T Switched Ethernet Circuit Continuation of Service

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented the item. Mr. Weeks stated this is an existing contract and the board is being asked to approve in order to keep the current rate for the next 36 months. The current price is \$1,374.74 per month, with an annual cost of \$16,496.88. Commissioner Orenstein asked if the price increased, Mr. Weeks answered no, but if not approved there will be a 25% increase. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

GDOT Safety Action Program Loch Laurel Road Project

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has identified Loch Laurel Road for a possible 2024 Off System Safety Project. The project will be 100% federally funded. Mr. McLeod stated the project includes audible centerline striping and audible edgeline striping. Since Lowndes County already has audible edgeline striping, new edgeline striping will be substituted for that item. The County will be responsible for clipping the shoulders. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the request, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FY 2023 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Application

Fire Chief, Lloyd Green, presented the item. Mr. Green stated the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program which provides funding for the hiring of additional firefighters. Mr. Green stated this grant was applied for last year as well. Lowndes County Fire Rescue is requesting to apply for a SAFER Grant which would fund the hiring of nine (9) full-time firefighters and fully fund their salary for three (3) years. Mr. Green stated this grant requires no matching funds. However, it provides funding for salaries and benefits. Commissioner Orenstein asked for clarification that there would be no match by Lowndes County, Mr. Green responded correct, there would be no match from Lowndes County. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the fiscal year, Mr. Green responded the fiscal year should be 2021, not 2023. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority Sales Tax Exemption

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated currently, Lowndes County is working with Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority (VLPRA) on some of their large SPLOST purchases especially to handle those through the county to save on sales tax. Mrs. Dukes stated when the authority was created it was not taken care of legislatively with regards to their tax exempt status. Additionally, Mrs. Dukes stated Representative John Corbett will carry legislation to hopefully get the General Assembly to approve for VLPRA. This is not statewide, this is only for our parks and recreation authority in Lowndes County. Mrs. Dukes stated in order to move forward a resolution that demonstrates the commission is in favor is needed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Property Purchase – Building Valdosta, LLC

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated at the direction of the commission, staff has worked with the county attorney to prepare a purchase agreement that will provide for Lowndes County to purchase 41.543 acres of property on Highway 122 inclusive of development costs incurred by the current owners and as reflected in the agreement, for the purpose of protecting Moody Air Force Base from encroachment. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the property purchase with Building Valdosta, LLC for the amount of \$568,971.00 and the attached agreement, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Reapportionment Resolution

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated approval of the attached resolution will provide Senator Russ Goodman with local verification indicating the commission's

approval to move forward with updating Lowndes County's Enabling Legislation with commission district maps developed with the assistance of the State of Georgia Reapportionment Office. Commissioner Marshall asked if approved when will the public be able to view the maps, Mrs. Dukes responded tomorrow. Commissioner Marshall asked if approved by the General Assembly, when would this become effective, County Attorney, Walter Elliott, responded immediately. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the reapportionment resolution, Commissioners Orenstein and Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated Harrison Tillman was able to submit the audit on time with the help of staff and will be presented at one of the February meetings. Also, Mrs. Dukes stated there were no issues related to environmental regarding the property purchased on Stewart Circle. Mrs. Dukes mentioned the Lowndes County Bird Supper will be held Wednesday, February 2nd in Atlanta at the Georgia Railroad Depot. Mrs. Dukes recognized EMS Director, David Bauch who retired today with Lowndes County 911 staff and EMA staff attending his retirement reception.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD

Andrew Phillips, 2534 Winnwood Circle, addressed the commission regarding the noise from Arglass which has been going on for fifteen months. Mr. Phillips stated he, as well as other neighbors, in his neighborhood would like a solution and are asking for help from the commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Evans thanked Commissioner Griner for all of his help with the reapportionment maps. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Orenstein second. Vice Chairman Evans adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.