

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, June 12, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Vice Chairman Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Scott Orenstein
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
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 May 8, 2023, the regular session of May 9, 2023 and the budget work session of May 31, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

APPOINTMENT

Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Anthony Payton's term expired May 21, 2023 and Mr. Payton would like to continue to serve.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2023-07 Project Viking, ~69 acres, Hunt Road, M-2 & CON to M-2 & CON, City Utilities

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is to rezone approximately 4.73 acres of the 69 acres from its current CON (Conservation) zoning district to M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) zoning based upon current field data that delineates the actual wetland boundaries. Mr. Dillard stated the subject property is within the Urban Service Area and Industrial Activity Center Character Area. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this is for infrastructure and/or industrial development building on that portion of the property; Chairman Slaughter responded, it is for potential development for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Development Authority for this industrial area to have more useable acreage by adding the portion previously in conservation zoning to heavy manufacturing zoning.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Oak Hill Drive Water Main Extension

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated two residents on Oak Hill Drive have a well failure limiting their water supply and quality. These residents will be cost sharing in the project. Mr. Stalvey stated this water main extension will make water available to ten lots on Oak Hill

Drive. Mr. Stalvey stated two quotes were received from JWA in the amount of \$38,300.00 and RPI in the amount of \$30,750.00 to install the watermain. Mr. Stalvey stated staff recommends the low bidder RPI. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the cost sharing with the residents, Mr. Stalvey stated two residents will pay a portion of the cost in the amount of \$6,000.00 each.

Stone Creek Onsite Well Pump

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the pumping capacity of the onsite well at Stone Creek decreased significantly and after consulting with Woodrow Sapp Well Drilling, the pump was pulled and inspected. Mr. Stalvey stated due to wear, age and the need to increase capacity, a new pump is recommended. Staff recommends approval of the new Stone Creek onsite well pump, including materials, equipment and labor from Woodrow Sapp Well Drilling in the amount of \$64,095.00.

Kubota M6-141 Tractor

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated due to increased spraying on the hay fields and the Land Application System (LAS) expansion, an additional tractor is needed at the LAS. Staff determined a Kubota M6-141 was the best option. This tractor is quoted through state contract in the amount of \$100,694.35, but a lower quote was received through our local dealer, Southern Tractor and Outdoors, in the amount of \$96,095.22.

Lowndes County DUI Court FY 24 Grant Award

State Court Judge, Ellen Golden, presented a request to renew the State Court's DUI Accountability Court Grant. Judge Golden stated her office has received a grant in the amount of \$143,063.00, for the upcoming fiscal year that requires a twelve percent match in the amount of \$19,509.00. Judge Golden further stated that in addition to the twelve percent match, additional funding of \$42,404.00 is needed for the surveillance officer's salary as well as a portion of the treatment costs, transportation and drug testing supplies incurred annually. Judge Golden stated there has been a total of 76 graduates since 2017 with 26 currently in the program. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the \$143,063.00 amount, as far as how many personnel salaries that is covering, Judge Golden responded it covers the coordinator's salary, a part time case manager as well as drug testing. DUI Court Coordinator with State Court, Heather Harris, responded it covers a portion of the surveillance officer's salary as well. Commissioner Marshall asked if this is a part time position for the surveillance officer, Ms. Harris answered yes, with ten hours a week.

Lowndes County Juvenile Accountability Court (LCJAC) FY24 Budget & Grant Award

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes mentioned Judge Tunison was here briefly this morning and had to leave. Mrs. Dukes stated this is a program that Judge Tunison spear headed with Juvenile Court after his experience with the Accountability Court at the Superior Court level. Mrs. Dukes stated this is partially a diversion program that gives juveniles additional services and the cash match for this year's grant award is \$8,857.00. Commissioner Evans stated she believes since Judge Tunison has been involved with this grant, it's been working.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, asked Projects Assistant, Jason Davenport and County Planner, J.D. Dillard to address the commission regarding the text amendment revisions. Mr. Davenport gave an overview of the text amendments for consideration on July 11th:

1. Variances
2. Code List (Inspections Related)

3. Chickens
4. Time
5. Solar Enforcement
6. OCGA ZBOA (Zoning Board of Appeals)
7. Day Cares
8. Tree Bank
9. Public Hearings
10. Minor Amendments (Typo's, Formatting, etc.)

Mr. Davenport stated as soon as the Planning Commission meets next week, this will be shared on our website and social media. Commissioner Orenstein asked regarding the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA), if this will double the amount of time, Mr. Davenport responded yes. Chairman Slaughter asked if this would be applicable to all cases across the state, Mr. Davenport responded not rezoning cases, just cases on the Zoning Board of Appeals agenda. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding chickens and House Bill 1150, Mr. Davenport answered he is not familiar with that House Bill, but he will research. Commissioner Orenstein asked to revisit the ZBOA item again, asking if anything can be done rather than having the ZBOA in a formal meeting, could more authority be given to TRC, Mr. Davenport stated Zoning Administrator, Trinni Amiot, has spent time reviewing the last ten years of variances and there is an option to expand the authority that staff has, but Mr. Davenport stated that due to the advertising in the Valdosta Daily Times, there seems no way to speed this process up. Mrs. Dukes stated we can review the data Mrs. Amiot has compiled and look at expanding the regulatory on the front end for your consideration and based on what citizens have asked for the most to update. Chairman Slaughter asked Mrs. Amiot for a percentage in looking at the different variance cases, Mrs. Amiot responded she did not have an estimate yet, but road frontage, connection to county utilities and setbacks are the three major requests. Commissioner Orenstein asked regarding the development regulations, where would that fall in these updates, specifically the number of lots required (ingress/egress), Mr. Davenport answered that is not on this list. Mrs. Dukes stated in addition to the Planning Commission, the amendments have been shared with the Home Builders Association. Chairman Slaughter stated he has received comments from other stakeholders regarding the process of starting July 1st, is there a form of notification to broadcast regarding inspections, Mrs. Dukes responded yes.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marshall reminded those in attendance regarding the Special Called Meeting tonight, Monday, June 12th at 5:30 p.m. regarding a rezoning case, Redeemed Living.

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adjourn the work session, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, June 13, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chairman Bill Slaughter
Vice Chairman Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Scott Orenstein
Commissioner Clay Griner

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not in attendance.

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and recognized the Leadership Lowndes class members as well as City of Valdosta Councilman, Andy Gibbs. After the Invocation, Chairman Slaughter asked Dan Green to come forward and lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Wisenbaker

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Dan Green, County Manager, Paige Dukes' Grandson

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of May 8, 2023, the regular session of May 9, 2023 and the budget work session of May 31, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT

Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Anthony Payton's term expired May 21, 2023 and Mr. Payton has expressed a desire to continue to serve. Commissioner Griner nominated Mr. Anthony Payton for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Anthony Payton was appointed by acclamation.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2023-07 Project Viking, ~69 acres, Hunt Road, M-2 & CON to M-2 & CON, City Utilities

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is to rezone approximately 4.73 acres of the 69 acres from its current CON (Conservation) zoning district to M-2

(Heavy Manufacturing) zoning based upon current field data that delineates the actual wetland boundaries. Mr. Dillard stated the subject property is within the Urban Service Area and Industrial Activity Center Character Area. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke against this request. Mr. Clayton Milligan, 3998 Inner Perimeter Road, spoke in favor of the request on behalf of the Development Authority, stating for further development of the property the wetlands have been delineated now and moving the zoning line to line up with the delineated wetland line. This will also allow more room for the rail spur on the property. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Oak Hill Drive Water Main Extension

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated two residents on Oak Hill Drive have a well failure limiting their water supply and quality. These residents will be cost sharing in the project. Mr. Stalvey stated this water main extension will make water available to ten lots on Oak Hill Drive. Mr. Stalvey stated RPI submitted the low bid in the amount of \$30,750.00. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the purchase from the low bidder, RPI, in the amount of \$30,750.00, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Stone Creek Onsite Well Pump

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the pumping capacity of the onsite well at Stone Creek decreased significantly and after consulting with Woodrow Sapp Well Drilling, the pump was pulled and inspected. Mr. Stalvey stated due to wear, age and the need to increase capacity, a new pump is recommended. Staff recommends approval of the new Stone Creek onsite well pump, including materials, equipment and labor from Woodrow Sapp Well Drilling in the amount of \$64,095.00. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this will increase pressure, Mr. Stalvey answered no, just more water. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Kubota M6-141 Tractor

Utilities Director, Steve Salvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated due to increased spraying on the hay fields and the Land Application System (LAS) expansion, an additional tractor is needed at the LAS. Staff determined a Kubota M6-141 was the best option. This tractor is quoted through state contract for the amount of \$100,694.35, but a lower quote was received through our local dealer, Southern Tractor and Outdoors in the amount of \$96,095.22. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the purchase with Southern Tractor and Outdoors in the amount of \$96,095.22, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Lowndes County DUI Court FY 24 Grant Award

Chairman Slaughter presented the item stating the Commission heard from Judge Golden with State Court during the work session meeting. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve acceptance of the grant in the amount of \$143,063.00, to include a twelve percent match in the amount of \$19,509.00, and additional funding to subsidize the surveillance officer's salary as well as a portion of the treatment costs, transportation and drug testing supplies incurred annually, making the total request \$42,404.00, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Lowndes County Juvenile Accountability Court (LCJAC) FY24 Budget & Grant Award

County Manager, Paige Dukes presented this item stating Judge Jim Tunision has solicited grant funds for Accountability Court for the Juvenile Court from the state with this being the third year that this program is in operation. Mrs. Dukes stated there is a cash match from Lowndes County in the amount of \$8,857.00. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve acceptance of the grant and the required cash match in the amount of \$8,857.00, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, gave the Commission a copy of the Georgia Department of Labor Profile Report for this year which was updated in June 2023. Mrs. Dukes gave the Commission an overview of the report:

Page 1: Employment and Unemployment Trends tracking with State averages

Page 2: U.S. Census Bureau reporting Building Permits are down slightly in April over last year
Page 3: 2022 Industry Mix

Page 4: 2022 Top Industries by firm, employment and weekly wages

Page 5: Technical College Certificates, Diploma and Degree Graduates; this is important when looking at the value of our Technical College by adding to the workforce here in Lowndes County

Page 6: Top 10 Largest Employers 2022 and Labor Force Education

Mrs. Dukes stated staff will continue to share this information as it is updated.

Mrs. Dukes mentioned that the ACCG awards are featured in this month's Georgia Trend magazine as well as Commissioner Marshall and his family being featured in June's Valdosta Scene magazine. Mrs. Dukes stated there will be bids going out next week for the animal shelter, resurfacing and jail medical. Briggston Road will bid the first of August and we hope to have the new fire station on the north end ready to bid out in August/September. Bids are going out for utilities North/South Connector (water above ground storage tank and the clearing of the Land Application System (LAS) with the ARPA obligation being complete. The Chamber's Young Professionals group was hosted at the Quiet Pines Golf Course last Friday and the Georgia Grown Regional Directors held their meeting there today. Mrs. Dukes reminded those in attendance the offices will be closed on Monday for the Juneteenth holiday. On behalf of the staff, Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to Commissioner Orenstein.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD -

Janice Monaco, 3744 Bermuda Run Drive, addressed the Commission regarding concerns related to the 2023 property tax assessment. Ms. Monaco also questioned why Lowndes County does not give seniors exemptions regarding property taxes. Chairman Slaughter stated he would discuss the matter with her after the meeting was adjourned.

Blake Robinson, 3819 Schroer Road, addressed the Commission regarding the Georgia County Internship Program with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG). Mr. Robinson asked the board to consider applying for the program for the 2024 grant cycle.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the regular session meeting, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:53 p.m.