

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, July 24, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not present.

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

Recognition of Pretrial, Probation, and Parole Supervision Week 2023

County Manager, Paige Dukes, asked the Probation Director, Ferlisha Rountree and her staff to come up to be recognized. Mrs. Dukes commended Mrs. Rountree for her leadership. Mrs. Rountree stated last week the Lowndes County Probation Office celebrated Probation and Parole Appreciation Week, with this year's theme being "stronger together." Mrs. Rountree thanked her officers for their hard work and dedication to the community. Mrs. Rountree stated her officers have one "free work day" a week, with an average of 20 working days a month, with 15-16 of those days being spent in court. The one "free work day" is spent preparing for court, filing petitions, returning phone calls, etc. Mrs. Rountree thanked the Chairman, Commissioners and the County Manager for their daily support. Lastly, Mrs. Rountree mentioned this is the fifth year of operation for the Lowndes County Probation Office. The office is currently staffed with two senior officers, eight probation officers, two case clerks and an administrative assistant.

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of July 10, 2023 and the regular session of July 11, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Motorola SUAll (Evergreen)

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented the item stating this agreement with Motorola SUAll (Evergreen) will allow Lowndes County to maintain the current system by providing system upgrades every two years, as well as 24/7 support. Mr. Weeks stated this is a budgeted item and Lowndes County will pay Motorola a monthly amount of \$40,776.00.

Vertiv Service Contract for the Liebert UPS at the 911 Center & the Four Tower Sites

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented the request in the amount of \$28,892.56. Mr. Weeks stated this agreement will provide maintenance and battery replacement for the 911 Center and four tower sites used by the 911 center.

Acceptance of FY24 Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Funding

EMA Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item stating the Commission approved the application request in April 2022. Mr. Tye stated upon approval of this grant, Evidence Based Associates (EBA) will continue providing Functional Family Therapy Services to Lowndes County youths referred through the Lowndes County Juvenile Court System. Mr. Tye stated for fiscal year 2024, Lowndes County was awarded \$346,372.00, in funding for these program services allowing the court to provide services to sixty (60) Lowndes County youths and their families. Mr. Tye stated there are no matching funds on Lowndes County's behalf, it is funded on a reimbursement basis. Commissioner Evans asked how many years Lowndes County has received this assistance? Mr. Tye responded ten (10) years.

Approval of FY24 Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Grant Application

EMA Director, Ashley Tye, presented the item. Mr. Tye stated the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant which was the previous item is a grant for medium - high risk youth, this will be the third year of funding and two years ago we received funding for the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Grant Program which provides the Strengthening Families Program (SFP). Mr. Tye stated the difference with Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is they go into the homes and it is an individual, one family, one therapist. Mr. Tye stated this is Strengthening Families Program (SFP) and this is a group process for lower category offenses. Mr. Tye stated Peaceway Counseling was used as the provider and has also expressed an interest in continuing to be the service provider. Mr. Tye stated currently there are 12 families enrolled in the program and the goal is to receive the funding and to be able to provide up to an additional 24 families over the next fiscal year.

Fire Rescue Engine 10 Emergency Repair

Fire Chief, Billy Young, presented the item stating this is the service contract for an emergency repair of Engine 10. Chief Young stated this fire truck sustained engine failure and the exhaust system was damaged and this repair cost is for \$64,205.17 with Ward International Trucks performing the repairs. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked how old is this fire truck? Chief Young responded it is a 2018 model.

Permitting and Inspections Ordinances

Permitting, Inspections and Code Enforcement Director, Mindy Bates, presented the item. Mrs. Bates stated this item is updating two ordinances that will affect how inspections is administered. Mrs. Bates stated the first ordinance is regarding the codes that we adopt and the second ordinance is how Permitting and Inspections administers those codes as adopted. Chairman Slaughter asked that Mrs. Bates give a brief overview of the Permitting and Inspections Department. Mrs. Bates stated as of this morning there have been 130 processed applications and the inspectors are out every morning completing the inspections process as needed.

Building Permit Fee Schedule

Permitting, Inspections and Code Enforcement Director, Mindy Bates, presented the item. Mrs. Bates stated in the adoption of the administrative procedures, a portion of that is adopting a fee schedule for permits and this is obtained from the building codes; this is also based on evaluation. Mrs. Bates stated this is the same fee schedule which was used prior to going live in July. Commissioner Orenstein asked how is the value determined? Mrs. Bates answered the applicant identifies and our office verifies internally.

BID

Exit 13 Touchton Road Water Main Extension

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated this project will tie North Lowndes and South Lowndes water systems together, providing redundancy and additional capacity at Exit 11 and 13 areas, which are experiencing residential and commercial growth. Mr. Stalvey stated two bids were received Legacy Water Group, LLC submitted a bid in the amount of \$9,754,718.88 and TB Landmark Construction, Inc. submitted a bid in the amount of \$10,489,762.50. Staff recommends approval of the low bidder Legacy Water Group, LLC in the amount of \$9,754,718.88. Mr. Stalvey mentioned that Legacy Water Group, LLC also did a

project for the County on Coleman Road. Chairman Slaughter asked if this project was being funding through SPLOST? Mr. Stalvey responded, no sir, it is being funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, deferred her report until tomorrow evening.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 8:46 a.m.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Monday, July 25, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not present.

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

INOCATION

Commissioner Orenstein

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Orenstein

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of July 10, 2023 and the regular session of July 11, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Motorola SUAll (Evergreen)

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented an agreement with Motorola SUAll (Evergreen) in the amount of \$489,310.00, for maintenance and upgrades related to the system used by 911. Mr. Weeks stated the agreement provides for all maintenance and upgrades and will be paid monthly in the amount of \$40,776.00. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Vertiv Service Contract for the Liebert UPS at the 911 Center & the Four Tower Sites

911 Director, Danny Weeks, presented the request in the amount of \$28,892.56. Mr. Weeks stated this agreement will provide maintenance and battery replacement for the 911 Center and four tower sites used by 911 operations. Commissioner Orenstein asked is this maintenance for the back-up power supply? Chairman Slaughter answered yes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Acceptance of FY24 Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Funding

EMA Director, Ashley Tye, presented the grant in the amount of \$346,372.00. Mr. Tye stated this is the tenth year of receiving funding under this grant program. Mr. Tye stated a notice of award was received and the Chairman is being asked to sign and execute the documents. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the grant and accept the funds, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of FY24 Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Grant Application

EMA Director, Ashley Tye presented the item. Mr. Tye stated this is the third year of a five year cycle and currently the program is ongoing and this application is a continuation grant allowing Lowndes County to apply for an additional \$50,000.00, in funding to continue the Strengthening Families Program. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the grant as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Fire Rescue Engine 10 Emergency Repair

Fire Chief, Billy Young, presented the item stating this is the service contract for emergency repair of Engine 10. Chief Young stated this fire truck sustained engine failure and the exhaust system was damaged. Chief Young stated this repair cost is for \$64,205.17 with Ward International Trucks performing the repairs. Commissioner Orenstein asked is this the main truck which has been running all calls? Mrs. Dukes responded yes. Chairman Slaughter asked to verify the year, Chief Young responded 2018 model. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if it was an engine failure? Chief Young answered yes and the exhaust system was damaged. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked how could the exhaust system go bad? Chief Young responded when the engine blew, the fluids backed up into the exhaust filters. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the item as presented, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Permitting and Inspections Ordinances

Permitting, Inspections and Code Enforcement Director, Mindy Bates, presented the item. Mrs. Bates stated there are two ordinances before the Commission. The first ordinance is regarding the state minimum standard codes for construction and the second ordinance is the administrative procedures for the enforcement of those construction codes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adopt the ordinances as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Building Permit Fee Schedule

Permitting, Inspections and Code Enforcement Director, Mindy Bates, presented the item. Mrs. Bates stated that pursuant to the Ordinance Adopting Administrative Procedures for the Enforcement of State Minimum Standard Codes for Construction, the Lowndes County Permit Fee Schedule is before the board for adoption. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adopt the Building Permit Fee Schedule as presented, Commissioner Evans Second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

BID

Exit 13 Touchton Road Water Main Extension

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated this project will tie North Lowndes and South Lowndes water systems together, providing redundancy and additional capacity at Exit 11 and 13 areas, which are experiencing residential and commercial growth. Mr. Stalvey stated this is part of the master plan and will be funded through ARPA. Mr. Stalvey stated two bids were

received Legacy Water Group, LLC in the amount of \$9,754,718.88 and TB Landmark Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$10,489,762.50. Staff recommends approval of the low bidder, Legacy Water Group, LLC in the amount of \$9,754,718.88. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to award the bid to Legacy Water Group, LLC in the amount of \$9,754,718.88, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, thanked the County Attorney, Walter Elliott, Mrs. Bates and Mrs. Carter for their help with the ordinances for the Permitting and Inspections Department. The Valdosta Lowndes Parks and Recreation Authority is in need of a new attorney. Mr. Gary Moser has retired, if anyone knows of a local attorney that might be interested. Mrs. Dukes stated some staff attended the Blazer Bingo held last Friday, in support of the Blazer athletics and their football team. Mrs. Dukes stated while attending this event, they found out a food pantry has been established for their players, if anyone would like to donate. On July 31st South Georgia Medical Center (SGMC) will be holding a public hearing regarding their reorganization and this will be held at 10:00 am in the lobby of SGMC. The relaunch of our website, www.lowndescounty.com, will begin August 3rd, Mrs. Sabrina Denson has worked with Mrs. Meghan Barwick and Mrs. Rachel Thrasher to update the website. On August 4th, employee volunteers will be supporting the Home Builders Association through their casino night fundraiser. Mrs. Barwick will be attending the ACCG and GMA Georgia Government Communicators Conference August 7-9 and she was also recently asked to speak at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) for their Communications major program. Lastly, Mrs. Dukes stated Briggston Road has been advertised. Commissioner Orenstein asked regarding the refresh on our website, August 3rd, what should we expect, major changes or improvements? Mrs. Dukes responded improvements; by taking a look at the analytics, also the site will be cleaner than what we currently have now. All of the ADA that has to be in place for website functionality has been updated, as well as refreshing the photography.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD -

Charles Robinson, 4053 Foxborough Blvd., addressed the Commission regarding the increase in property taxes and asked that the percentage be lowered by 10-15%.

Karen Carlisle, 6012 New Bethel Road, addressed the Commission regarding the concerns with the Lowndes County Board of Elections Office using the Dominion voting machines. Ms. Carlisle asked that paper ballots be used instead of the Dominion voting machines.

Blake Robinson, 3819 Schroer Road, addressed the Commission regarding consideration of establishing a Valdosta Lowndes Youth Commission.

Cheri Whitney, 4513 Water Oak Trail, addressed the Commission regarding not trusting the voting done on the computer systems used at the Board of Elections Office. Ms. Whitney stated QR codes are the biggest malware currently and she stated as a sovereign citizen, she does not want to cast her ballot on a computer.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Griner second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular session meeting at 6:01 p.m.