

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, September 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 in attendance.

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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of September 11, 2023 and the regular session of September 12, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Quiet Pines Golf Course Ezgo Golf Cart Lease Agreement

Community Development Director, Rachel Thrasher, presented the item. Mrs. Thrasher stated Quiet Pines Golf Course has twenty-two semi-operational carts for use, aging between two - nine years old. Rather than replace the carts through purchase, the request is to proceed with a lease agreement with EZGO carts which will cover maintenance, warranty and ensure a full working fleet. The lease agreement is for forty-eight (48) months and will be financed through Wells Fargo Bank with a monthly payment of \$4,100.00 and an annual fee of \$50,160.00. Commissioner Griner asked how many carts? Mrs. Thrasher answered a quantity of thirty-eight (38) carts, which is what the cart barn is built to hold. Commissioner Orenstein asked if there was any value to the old carts and if the carts were owned by the County? Mrs. Thrasher responded the County does own the carts and possibly the carts could be sold on GovDeals. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if there was a trade-in option available through the company? Mrs. Thrasher answered they will not take these carts since the new carts will have lithium batteries and the current carts are older with Yamaha batteries.

Mental Health Model Resolution for ACCG

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) has forwarded the resolution to all counties in Georgia with mental health being a conversation with the upcoming session of the General Assembly. As part of that, the ACCG is asking every county in the state to adopt this resolution, to show a collected and consolidated support to hopefully move the General Assembly in a good direction the next session. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked what are the improvements? Mrs. Dukes responded we don't have any details as of yet, more information will be forth coming. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker stated he is hoping for relief

for the jail. Mrs. Dukes stated if someone is on mental health medication and they are in jail, even though the medication is provided, you can't make them take it. If they commit additional crimes to end up in prison, the prison system can make them take it. Chairman Slaughter stated with the changes made ten years ago, mental health issues have come up short in being addressed in local communities and hopefully the state will look for improvements.

Purchase of Wetland Credits for Shiloh Road Bridge Project

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County is required to purchase 7.12 wetland credits as a result of the Shiloh Road Bridge Project. Mr. McLeod stated staff recommends the purchase of 7.12 wetland credits from Williams Investments, LLC in the total amount of \$85,440.00. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked is a credit an acre? County Engineer, Mike Fletcher, answered it depends on the type of wetland, some could be four (4) credits, per acre and some could be eight (8) credits, per acre. Chairman Slaughter asked what prompted this action? Mr. McLeod answered the bridge itself is being elevated and there will be a run around bridge with the original structure being temporarily closed. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked how many acres are needed? Mr. McLeod answered we will get that number for you.

FY25 5311 Regional Transit Resolution

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is a continuing resolution with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) 5311 Regional Transit. Mr. Dillard stated the FY2025 grant submission due date is October 31, 2023.

BIDS

Grove Pointe Lift Station Access Road

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the Grove Pointe lift station is located at the end of Courtland Circle cul-de-sac. For the past few years, the County has had issues getting to this site to perform the required maintenance, due to the area bordering wetlands. Lowndes County Utilities and Engineering staff have determined the only solution is to build a concrete drive and turn around area to the lift station. Two bids were received, Rountree Construction for \$320,031.25 and Southland Contractors, Inc. for \$222,377.49. Mr. Stalvey stated both bids had clerical errors that did not affect the price. Staff recommends the low bidder, Southland Contractors, Inc. for \$222,377.49. Commissioner Orenstein asked why is this being requested? Mr. Stalvey answered due to the area being so wet, the amount of base, as well as several utilities that go through and use this area, including power, water and communications. Commissioner Orenstein asked if additional property was being purchased? Mr. Stalvey answered no sir, it is all on our easement. Chairman Slaughter stated in the past when clerical errors were made on bids, the bids were not considered. In this situation, staff reviewed the bids and both parties had clerical errors which were made, but did not affect the price.

TIA 2023-05 Briggston Road Grading, Drainage, Base, and Paving Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Briggston Road is a TIA approved project, 4.06 miles long, located just north of Clyattville and runs between Madison Highway and Old Clyattville Road. Mr. McLeod stated two bids were received with the low bidder being Reames and Son in the amount of \$3,892,229.54.

NC-TIA 2023-01 Rocky Hill Church Road Grading, Drainage, Base, and Paving Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Rocky Hill Church Road is approximately 0.14 miles long and is located off of Clyattstone Road. Mr. McLeod stated three bids were received with the Scruggs Company being the low bidder in the amount of \$194,166.66.

Fire Rescue Station 10 Pavement Resurfacing Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Fire Rescue Station #10 pavement resurfacing includes removing 6,578 square feet of asphalt and replacing it with approximately seven - nine inches of concrete. The sole bidder is Rountree Construction Company in the amount of \$240,119.00.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, requested an executive session for the purpose of privileged attorney-client communication regarding the acquisition of real estate. At 8:44 a.m. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of privileged attorney-client communication regarding the purchase of real estate, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:52 a.m. Chairman Slaughter reconvened the work session with no additional information being discussed. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, Commissioner Orenstein second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, September 26, 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 regular session meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Orenstein

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Orenstein

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of September 11, 2023 and the regular session of September 12, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Quiet Pines Golf Course Ezgo Golf Cart Lease Agreement

Community Development Director, Rachel Thrasher, presented the item. Mrs. Thrasher stated Quiet Pines Golf Course has twenty-two semi-operational carts for use, aging from two - nine years old. Rather than replace the carts through purchase, the request is to proceed with a lease agreement with EZGO carts which will cover maintenance, warranty and ensure a full working fleet. The lease agreement is for forty-eight (48) months and will be financed through Wells Fargo Bank with a monthly payment of \$4,100.00 and an annual fee of \$50,160.00. Commissioner Orenstein asked if the costs were budgeted? Mrs. Dukes answered yes. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the lease agreement as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Mental Health Model Resolution for ACCG

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) has forwarded the resolution to all counties in Georgia in support of mental health reform in the state. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this resolution is basically supporting the legislators to pursue solutions to our mental health challenges? Mrs. Dukes responded

correct. Discussion occurred among the Commissioners. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the resolution as presented, Commission Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Purchase of Wetland Credits for Shiloh Road Bridge Project

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County is required to purchase 7.12 wetland credits as a result of the Shiloh Road Bridge Project. Mr. McLeod stated staff recommends the purchase of 7.12 wetland credits from Williams Investments, LLC in the amount of \$12,000.00 per credit, for a total amount of \$85,440.00. Mr. McLeod stated the answer from the question asked at the work session meeting regarding the number of acres being impacted, is 0.67 acres, which is ten credits, per acre. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the purchase of wetland credits as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FY25 5311 Regional Transit Resolution

County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is a continuing resolution with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) 5311 Regional Transit. Mr. Dillard stated the FY2025 grant submission due date is October 31, 2023. Commissioner Marshall asked for the estimated amount needed? Mr. Dillard answered there is not an amount from the County at this time. Commissioner Griner asked what was the grant for in 2023? Mr. Dillard answered he could get the total amount. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to adopt the resolution as presented, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

BID

Grove Pointe Lift Station Access Road

Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item. Mr. Stalvey stated the Grove Pointe lift station is located at the end of Courtland Circle cul-de-sac. For the past few years, the County has had issues getting to this site to perform the required maintenance due to the area bordering wetlands. Lowndes County Utilities and Engineering staff have determined the only solution is to build a concrete drive and turn around area to the lift station. Two bids were received, Rountree Construction for \$320,031.25 and Southland Contractors, Inc. for \$222,377.49. Mr. Stalvey stated both bids had minor clerical errors that did not affect the price. Staff recommends the low bidder, Southland Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$222,377.49. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve Southland Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$222,377.49, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

TIA 2023-05 Briggston Road Grading, Drainage, Base, and Paving Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Briggston Road is a TIA approved project, 4.06 miles long, located just north of Clyattville and runs between Madison Highway and Old Clyattville Road. Mr. McLeod stated two bids were received with the low bidder being Reames and Son in the amount of \$3,892,229.54. Commissioner Marshall asked when this project is scheduled to begin? Mr. McLeod answered a month to get the contract signed, possibly 30-45 days. Commissioner Orenstein asked if the cost was within the estimated cost by the county? Mr. McLeod answered yes, we were \$500,000.00 over on the road construction part, but TIA was able to use our inflation factors to cover the cost. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve Reames and Son Construction as the low bidder in the amount of \$3,892,229.54, Vice Chairman Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

NC-TIA 2023-01 Rocky Hill Church Road Grading, Drainage, Base, and Paving Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Rocky Hill Church Road is approximately 0.14 miles long and is located off of Clyattstone Road. Mr. McLeod stated three bids were received with the Scruggs Company being the low bidder in the amount of \$194,166.66. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the Scruggs Company in the amount of \$194,166.66, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Fire Rescue Station 10 Pavement Resurfacing Bids

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Fire Rescue Station #10 pavement resurfacing includes removing 6,578 square feet of asphalt and replacing it with approximately 7- 9 inches of concrete. The sole bidder is Rountree Construction Company in the amount of \$240,119.00. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this cost includes removal of the debris, Mr. McLeod answered yes, sir. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve Rountree Construction Company in the amount of \$240,119.00, Commissioners Evans and Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, mentioned the budget book was available to view on our website, thanks to Finance Director, Stephanie Black and her staff. Mrs. Dukes mentioned the following meetings being held throughout the week: Staff level Idalia after action meeting will be held at the EOC on Thursday, the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Children's Imagination Station is Thursday, September 28th, the COAD stakeholders meeting will be held October 3rd, the Lowndes County Employee Health Fair will be held at VSU in the Magnolia Room on October 5th, the Special Olympics will be hosted at Quiet Pines Golf Course on October 7th, staff will be working at Quiet Pines on Monday for the final clean up, the annual joint scrap tire event will be held October 9-20 at the Valdosta Public Works Department. Pending approval, October 25th will be the date of the ribbon cutting for the historic courthouse at 10:00 a.m. Mrs. Dukes stated staff will be having discussions regarding a debris removal deadline. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked how long before a date will be decided? Mrs. Cumbus answered by the end of the week. Mrs. Dukes asked EMA Director, Ashley Tye, to introduce Anthony Toussaint, with the Small Business Administration (SBA) Business Recovery Center currently located at the Civic Center in Lowndes County, available 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. daily. Mr. Toussaint gave the Commission an update regarding the process of how citizens may apply/submit an SBA application. Commissioner Marshall asked what type of mistakes have been made to possibly disqualify someone? Mr. Toussaint answered common clerical errors, which if done in person, those mistakes decrease. Mr. Tye stated individual assistance for citizens, since opening a week ago Sunday at the civic center, since the declaration was approved, approximately 8,000 people registered for assistance. In Lowndes County close to two (2) million dollars has been approved in assistance. The maximum amount to receive is \$41,000.00, with only one being given out so far. Mr. Tye stated FEMA is still in the process of registering people, with FEMA staff being available at the Winnersville Classic as well. Chairman Slaughter gave the scenario that with a large population of citizens that are economically disadvantaged and if FEMA funding doesn't satisfy their need or make them whole, they go to SBA, get a low interest loan and if they are unable to satisfy the loan, are there other organizations at the recovery center that they could talk with regarding home repairs? Mr. Tye stated Georgia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), is the state/national level volunteer organization and the role of VOAD is primarily to focus on the clean-up, no repairs. Commissioner Marshall appreciated the clarification of the maximum amount being received as \$41,000.00. Mr. Tye stated regarding the public assistance viable to governments, the main public assistance is debris removal. Mrs. Dukes stated we have to make sure the contractor

remains independent. Mr. Tye stated also, regarding public assistance, he is working with all department heads and departments in the county to capture all of the cost. FEMA will assign and take all data and cost, submit for reimbursement and there is a cost share. Commissioner Marshall asked if there is a maximum amount the County can receive? Mr. Tye answered, no sir. Mr. Tye stated we are documenting volunteering hours which we can claim, which counts toward our match requirement. Communities Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD), serves as a long term recovery group. There will be a meeting next week to meet with these groups to make a list of the work/assistance each group can offer. Chairman Slaughter stated the needs people have, such as the elderly, with no insurance and with help being needed to make home repairs, Lowndes County can't work on private property, so it is up to our local community to fill the gap.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD - There were no citizens wishing to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Slaughter recognized Leadership Lowndes and Youth Leadership Lowndes class members. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Orenstein second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular session meeting at 6:20 p.m.