

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
WORK SESSION  
Monday, January 9, 2023 - 8:30 AM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairman Scott Orenstein  
Commissioner Joyce Evans  
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker  
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 December 12, 2022 and the regular session of December 13, 2022. No changes to the minutes were requested.

**APPOINTMENT**

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the seat currently held by Mr. Jonathan Vigue, the Wild Adventures General Manager, expired December 31, 2022. Mr. Vigue has expressed a desire to continue to serve and Mr. David Westberry, who works in the State Court's office, has also expressed a desire to be appointed to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority Board.

**South Georgia Regional Library (SGRL) Board**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Steve Boatner resigned from his position on the South Georgia Regional Library Board, leaving a vacant seat due to no longer living in the area. Mrs. Dukes stated the board submitted Ms. Darlene Ridley for consideration and Mr. David Westberry has also expressed a desire to serve.

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Dan Deaver's term expired June 30, 2022 on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority. Mrs. Dukes stated Dr. Vince Miller, who works with Valdosta State University, is currently a city appointee on the Valdosta-Lowndes Parks and Recreation Authority and he has recently moved to the unincorporated area. Mrs. Dukes stated with the uncertainty that the city will leave Dr. Miller in his seat, Mrs. Dukes asked the commission to consider appointing Dr. Vince Miller to Mr. Dan Deaver's seat and that will leave Dr. Miller's seat open with the city to appoint someone else to fulfill his unexpired term. Chairman Slaughter stated he attends the Valdosta Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority meetings and Dr. Miller is always engaged. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked when that board meets, Mrs. Dukes responded on the third Wednesday of each month, at 4:30 p.m., at the administrative office located at 1901 North Barack Obama Blvd.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Patrol Car Laptop Lease**, IT Director, Aaron Kostyu, presented the lease with Dell, in the amount of \$150,900.00, for three years. Mr. Kostyu stated this lease has the option to keep these computers after the lease, in which the laptops would be used for training purposes.

**Extension of Agreement for ULDC Updates**, County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is an extension of the contract between Lowndes County and the consulting firm of Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) for updates to the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) and to provide technical assistance throughout the course of the extension through December 31, 2023. Chairman Slaughter asked if we expect the process of this contract extension period to be enough time to be completed, Mr. Dillard responded yes.

**Adopt Resolution Accepting Infrastructure for Cattle Crossing Subdivision**, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated the Cattle Crossing Subdivision, located on Knights Academy Road, has twenty-four (24) lots. Mr. David DeLoach, the developer, has requested Lowndes County to accept all infrastructure to include roads, drainage and utilities. Mr. McLeod stated engineering and utilities staff have completed the final inspections of the project.

**Approval of SG's VOCA Continuation Grant Award for 2022-2023**, Solicitor General's Office Representative, Karen Hayes, presented the item. Ms. Hayes stated the Solicitor General's Office has received this VOCA Continuation Grant since 2014. Ms. Hayes stated this grant funds two full-time victim advocates and allows the Solicitor General's Office to continue to provide services to victims earlier in the criminal justice process. Ms. Hayes further stated the requested \$6,000.00 cash match will offset the funding requested to provide health benefits to the employees funded by this grant.

**Stop Loss Insurance Coverage through HM Insurance Group**, 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 \$1,190,046.00. Mr. Beals stated that after EPIC shopped rates for the new year, HM Insurance Group offered the best terms with the lowest available rates, also with a savings of \$156,518.00.

## **REPORTS - County Manager**

There was no additional information reported.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Slaughter reminded those in attendance that the Regular Session Commission Meeting will be held tonight, Monday, January 9th, at 5:30 p.m. instead of tomorrow night, Tuesday, January 10th, at 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the work session meeting, Commissioner Marshall second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 8:38 a.m.

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
Monday, January 9, 2023 - 5:30 PM

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

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

Chairman Slaughter 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 12, 2022 and the regular session of December 13, 2022. Vice Chairman Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**APPOINTMENT**

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated the seat currently held by Mr. Jonathan Vigue expired December 31, 2022. Mr. Vigue has expressed a desire to continue to serve and Mr. David Westberry, who works in the State Court's office, has also expressed a desire to be appointed to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority Board. Commissioner Griner nominated Mr. Jonathan Vigue for reappointment. There being no other nominations, Mr. Vigue was reappointed by acclamation.

**South Georgia Regional Library (SGRL) Board**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Steve Boatner resigned from his position on the South Georgia Regional Library Board, leaving a vacant seat due to no longer living in the area. Mrs. Dukes stated the board submitted Ms. Darlene Ridley for consideration and Mr. David Westberry has also expressed a desire to serve. Commissioner Wisenbaker nominated Ms. Darlene Ridley for appointment. There being no other nominations, Ms. Ridley was appointed by acclamation.

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority**, County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated Mr. Dan Deaver's term expired June 30, 2022 on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority. Mrs. Dukes stated Dr. Vince Miller, who works with Valdosta State University, is currently a city appointee on the Valdosta-Lowndes Parks and Recreation Authority and he has recently moved to the unincorporated area. Mrs. Dukes stated with the uncertainty that the city will leave Dr. Miller in his seat, Mrs. Dukes asked the commission to consider appointing Dr. Vince Miller to Mr. Dan Deaver's seat and that will leave Dr. Miller's seat open with the city to appoint someone else to fulfill his unexpired term, which will expire June 30, 2023. Chairman Slaughter nominated Dr. Vince Miller. There being no other nominations, Dr. Miller was appointed by acclamation.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Patrol Car Laptop Lease**, IT Director, Aaron Kostyu, presented the lease with Dell, in the amount of \$150,900.00, for three years. Mr. Kostyu stated this lease agreement with Dell is to replace the-in-car laptops for the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the lease purchase agreement, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Extension of Agreement for ULDC Updates**, County Planner, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is an extension of the contract between Lowndes County and the consulting firm of Goodywn Mills Cawood (GMC) for updates to the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) and to provide technical assistance throughout the course of the extension through December 31, 2023. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agreement, with a not to exceed amount of \$25,000.00, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Adopt Resolution Accepting Infrastructure for Cattle Crossing Subdivision**, Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated this resolution is for Cattle Crossing Subdivision, located on Knights Academy Road and has twenty-four (24) lots. Commissioner Griner made a motion to adopt the resolution, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Approval of SG's VOCA Continuation Grant Award for 2022-2023**, Chairman Slaughter presented the item stating the Commission heard from Ms. Hayes with the Solicitor's Office during the work session. There being no additional questions, Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the request as presented, Vice Chairman Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Stop Loss Insurance Coverage through HM Insurance Group**, Human Resources Director, Kevin Beals, presented the annual renewal in the amount of \$1,190,046.00. Vice Chairman Orenstein asked the savings amount, Mr. Beals responded \$156,518.00. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the annual renewal as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **REPORTS - County Manager**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated the renovations have begun on the second floor of the administrative building. Mrs. Dukes stated the first round of positions will be posted for the permits

and inspections department no later than the first of the week. Mrs. Dukes stated the software development is under way for permits and inspections as well. Mrs. Dukes mentioned SDS has been submitted and as of last week, Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has requested additional information and points of clarification on a few items and County Attorney, Walter Elliott will work with the City attorneys and respond to Georgia DCA. Mrs. Dukes mentioned today is National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. The Lowndes County Bird Supper will be held February 1st with tickets being sold here, at the County, and at the City of Valdosta. On Friday at noon Lowndes County will host Leadership Moody with lunch being served and Mrs. Thrasher will be presenting information regarding Lowndes County and local government. The Leadership Lowndes Retreat is being held this weekend, with Mrs. Dukes attending and two staff members attending, Gary Williams with Fire Rescue and Rachel Thrasher with Community Development. Commissioner Wisenbaker, asked regarding the man power to run inspections and permitting, Mrs. Dukes responded that currently Assistant Director, Diane Carter, has been hired with a plan reviewer, and five-six inspectors anticipated to be hired. Mrs. Dukes stated we would hire as many as properly certified, based on our needs. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if any in-house employees could move over to the inspections and permitting department, Mrs. Dukes answered not right now. Chairman Slaughter stated many prospects for the inspector positions could have multiple certifications. Chairman Slaughter stated this should be an easier and smoother process, a one-stop shop. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the timeline for starting this department, if it was still on schedule, Chairman Slaughter answered yes. Vice Chairman Orenstein mentioned not over-taxing the current staff and, since this is an enterprise fund, whatever permit fees need to be in subsequent years, it needs to be adjusted. Chairman Slaughter stated that regarding the Lowndes County staff, customer service is first and priority.

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

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Slaughter and the Commission wished County Manager, Paige Dukes a belated Happy Birthday. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Evans second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.