

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, October 12, 2021

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

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

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and recognized the presence of Leadership Lowndes Class Members of 2021 and thanked them for their interest in our community.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Marshall

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Marshall

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of September 27, 2021 and the regular session of September 28, 2021 and the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Meeting of September 28, 2021. No changes to the minutes were requested. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Vice Chairman Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

REZ-2021-15 Beaver Run Subdivision, Bemiss Knights Academy Rd, E-A to R-10, Water/Sewer, ~10 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is a request for approximately 10 acres of approximately 21 acres property from E-A to R-10 for the development of a 25 lot residential subdivision. Mr. Dillard further stated access to the property is off of Bemiss Knights Academy Road. Regarding the Comprehensive Plan R-10 zoning is currently listed as a permitted zoning within this area. The Planning Commission recommended approval. No one spoke against this request. David Deloach, 2422 Bemiss Road, spoke in favor of this request and offered to answer any questions the commissioners might have regarding this rezoning. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-16 G W Farms, 5999 Val Del Road, R-A to R-1, Well & Septic, ~98.95 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is to rezone the property from the current zoning of Residential Agricultural (R-A) to Low-Density Residential (R-1) in order to be subdivided at a greater density with 73 lots. Approximately 20 lots are greater than the one acre minimum and a community pool/common area is proposed within the development. The subject property does possess road frontage on Val Del Road. The Planning Commission found this request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The TRC noted any development would require soil evaluation by the Department of Public Health for well and septic as well as adherence to the supplemental engineering standards for properties containing or adjacent to wetlands. The Planning Commission recommended denial. Commissioner Orenstein asked if 20 lots are larger than one acre, Mr. Dillard responded yes based upon the preliminary site plan. Chuck Dunmon, 5930 Val Del Road, spoke against the request. Mr. Dunmon mentioned his concerns regarding the 73 one acre lots regarding well and septic systems, perk tests, storm water and the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Griner asked how close is this property to the City of Hahira, Mr. Dunmon answered four miles away. Sharon Respass, 6002 Val Del Road, spoke against this request. Mrs. Respass mentioned the reason her family moved to Val Del Road was the character of the neighborhood. Mrs. Respass stated with a rezoning denied over a year ago that the arguments against rezoning haven't changed since that time and to please retain the current zoning on Val Del Road. John Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, spoke against the request. Mr. Quarterman stated he was glad to see the Planning Commission and staff recommending against this rezoning. Mr. Quarterman stated character areas matter and this subdivision should be denied. Richard Coleman, 109 South Ashley Street, spoke in favor of the request on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Coleman stated 72 acres would be developed and 25 acres would be left for a detention pond in the front with 72 lots being developed in the back. Mr. Coleman mentioned the traffic count on Val Del Road, the intersection of Val Del Road and North Valdosta Road and the water runoff issue with the detention pond keeping the water in the subdivision. Steve Daugherty, 6380 Cooper Road, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Daugherty stated he lives north of Moody Air Force Base and he would like to see Lowndes County continue to grow. Commissioner Griner asked Director of Engineering Services Chad McLeod, if Coppage Road is being paved to the westside, Mr. McLeod answered yes. Commissioner Marshall asked if anyone else has been given the opportunity to purchase the property, Chairman Slaughter stated the property owner isn't here in this meeting and is the only one to answer that question. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to deny this request. The motion failed for lack of a second. Commissioner Griner made a motion to approve the rezoning from R-A to R-1 with a condition of the 20 ft buffer between Val Del Road and the first property owners, Commissioner Orenstein second. Commissioners Orenstein, Marshall and Griner voted in favor of the request, Vice Chairman Evans and Commissioner Wisenbaker opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-17 Jeffrey Atkison, 4365 Williams Rd, R-1 to R-A, Well & Septic, ~8.0 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is for Low Density Residential (R-1) to Residential Agricultural (R-A) in order for the applicant to provide dog training services. The Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments and the applicant is working through the State Department of Agriculture for the necessary licensing and permits to operate a kennel/training facility. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the request, Commissioners Griner and Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-18 The Villages, Bemiss Rd., P-D Site Plan Amendment, Water & Sewer, ~3 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is an amendment to an approved P-D Site Plan approved in 2020. The original site plan was approved for 25 single family homes and has since changed hands by developers and is being requested for 11 duplexes. The subject property is within the urban service area and P-D is recommending zoning. The Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-19 LCBOC on Behalf of Frank Wetherington Living Trust, 4224 Val Del Road, P-D to R-A, Well & Septic, ~5.0 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is a P-D property which was rezoned in 2020 as part of the Landings subdivision and has since been amended in July 2021 and the updated site plan excludes this portion. This request is to remove the P-D standards of the Landings subdivision and return this parcel to its previous zoning of R-A. The Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request, Vice Chairman Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-20 LCBOC on Behalf of Harold and Gina Warr, 4154 Val Del Road, P-D to R-A, Well & Septic, ~2.9 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is a P-D property which was rezoned in 2020 as part of the Landings subdivision and has since been amended in July 2021 and the updated site plan excludes this portion. This request is to remove the P-D standards of the Landings subdivision and return this parcel to its previous zoning of R-A. The Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REZ-2021-21 LCBOC on Behalf of Val Del Estates, Val Del Road, P-D Amendment, Water & Sewer, ~56 acres, Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this is an update to a previously approved P-D site plan. Mr. Dillard stated due to COVID-19, the normal operation of services was interrupted and timelines were inconsistent. The Planning Commission recommended approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke for or against this request. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request, Vice Chairman Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Abandonment of a portion of Salem Church Road (CR #68) and a portion of Wells Road (CR #68 & CR #69), Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated staff received a request to abandon a portion of Salem Church Road and a portion of Wells Road. Mr. McLeod stated this request is before the board to determine either "that the section of the county road system has for any reason ceased to be used by the public to the extent that no substantial public purpose is served by it" or "that its removal from the county road system is otherwise in the best public interest," or both. This request came from PLB Limited Partnership, which used to be owned by Lakewood Farms, LLC. If the Commission decides to close Wells Road, a turnaround would have to be constructed on the north end of the proposed closed location. Commissioner Griner made a

motion to deny the request for the abandonment of a portion of Salem Church Road (CR#68) and a portion of Wells Road (CR #68 & CR #69), Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor of denial, no one opposed. Motion carried.

American Rescue Plan Funding Application for Utilities Repairs and Expansion, Utilities Director, Steve Stalvey, presented the item, stating the American Rescue Plan (ARP) provides funding for local municipalities to make repairs and improvements to their water and wastewater infrastructure. Lowndes County, in conjunction with Carter & Sloope Engineering, has identified several projects that meet the criteria for this funding opportunity. The total amount of these projects is \$10,500,000.00. The grant amount requested would be \$5,250,000.00, with Lowndes County matching with \$5,250,000.00. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the American Rescue Plan Funding Application for Utilities Repairs and Expansion for \$5,250,000.00, Vice Chairman Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

BID

Improvements to the Historic Carnegie Library Museum, Engineering Services Director, Chad McLeod, presented the item, with Kellerman Construction Company presenting the sole bid in the amount of \$237,168.00 and 120 days. Mr. McLeod stated improvements to the Historic Carnegie Library Museum is an approved project for SPLOST VIII. Vice Chairman Evans made a motion to award the bid to Kellerman Construction Company in the amount of \$237,168.00 and 120 days, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

REPORTS - County Manager

County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated over the past couple of months and the direction the commission has given staff to explore opportunities for broadband expansion in Lowndes County, several providers have been met with and there is APRA funding available, through the state, with the grant deadline being moved until the end of October. These meetings included Jason Shaw, Georgia Public Service Commissioner for our district, with the most viable grant request being received from Windstream. Staff would like to request permission to move forward as the lead applicant with Windstream, there is no financial obligation on the part of the county. The Windstream plan does include 18,900 locations at a total cost of 36.3 million and a grant request 16.2 million and Windstream plans an investment of 20.1 million. There's also a proposal from Hargray for 10,300 locations at a total cost of 54 million and they plan to split that amount if awarded. Mediacom has a proposal as well which hasn't been reviewed yet. Mrs. Dukes stated if any of these proposals are approved, these are all great providers. The Commission gave their approval for staff to proceed with the Windstream proposal. The Southern Georgia Regional Commission Area Officials Appreciation Evening will be held Tuesday, October 26th in Adel and at the Chairman's direction, the regular session commission meeting will be rescheduled for Monday, October 25th at 5:30 p.m. Flu shots will be available for employees on October 26-28, 2021 through the end of November at Airport Medical. The Lowndes County Sheriff's Department and the Valdosta Police Department announced Trick or Treating will be held Saturday, October 30th and a Halloween event will be held by the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department beginning at 5:00 p.m. at Miller Business Park as a drive thru event. Lastly, Mrs. Dukes wanted to thank those for attending the Valdosta/Lowndes Love Your River Clean Up held on October 9th.

CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD

Sandra Jones, 4940 Coppage Road, addressed the commission regarding taxpayers over the age of 65 being exempt from paying school taxes on their property taxes. Ms. Jones asked the commission to please consider the seniors in our community. Chairman Slaughter stated he would speak with Ms. Jones after the meeting was adjourned.

Gretchen Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, addressed the commission to say "thank you" for the participation in the Valdosta-Lowndes Love Your River Clean Up. Mrs. Quarterman also thanked the commission for not closing Wells Road.

John Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, addressed the commission to say "thank you" for the participation in the Valdosta-Lowndes Love Your River Clean Up. Mr. Quarterman also thanked the Chairman and Mayor for agreeing to participate in the Chairman and Mayor's Paddle being held on Saturday, January 29, 2022 at the Troupeville Boat Ramp.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the regular session, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.