

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
Tuesday, April 12, 2022

**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 regular session meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and recognized the presence of Leadership Lowndes and Lowndes Youth Leadership League members.

**INVOCATION**

Commissioner Marshall

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Marshall

**National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week Proclamation Presentation (Regular Session)**

Chairman Slaughter and the Commission recognized 911 Director, Danny Weeks, and his staff in observance of National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session of March 21, 2022 and the regular session of March 22, 2022. 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-2022-06 Kinderlou Forest, P-D to R-10, P-D, and C-H, County Utilities**

Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request represents a change in zoning for approximately 780 acres from P-D (Planned Development) zoning to R-10 (Suburban Density Residential) and C-H (Highway Commercial). Mr. Dillard stated approximately 690 acres are designated as residential development and approximately 90 acres are proposed for commercial development. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommends approval and the TRC had no objectionable comments. No one spoke against this request. Jeff Lovell, 3998 Inner Perimeter Road, spoke in favor of this request as the engineer for this project. Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve this request as presented, Vice Chairman Evans second.

**REZ-2022-07 Hayden Park, Camelot Crossing & Val Del Rd, ~149 acres, from R-1 to C-G, P-D, and R-10** Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is a change in zoning from R-1 (Low Density Residential) zoning to C-G (Commercial General) on approximately 63 acres. P-D (Planned Development) zoning on approximately 28 acres and R-10 (Suburban Density Residential) on approximately 55 acres. Mr. Dillard stated the applicant would like to create a mixture of residential and commercial sites for development in various stages. Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommended denial due to the traffic concerns on Val Del Road and North Valdosta Road and the TRC recommends approval, noting that before a final Certificate of Occupancy can be issued for the apartments in the P-D portion, a secondary point of ingress/egress must be established. Chris Buescher, 3532 River Chase Drive, spoke against this request. Mr. Buescher stated he was speaking on behalf of the residents of River Chase Subdivision. Mr. Buescher stated the residents are not anti-development, but would ask the Commission to table the request until the next meeting for additional questions to be answered. Commissioner Orenstein asked Mr. Buescher if he could give the board any insight to the questions he'd like to have addressed, Mr. Buescher answered the additional area of R-10 ingress/egress, funneling of traffic occurring on Val Del Road, and high density development with regards to property values. Commissioner Griner commented regarding the P-D zoning, the applicant would have to come before the Commission to get that changed. Charlie Hand, 1908 Lake Arthur Drive, Cairo, Georgia spoke in favor of the request as the developer. Mr. Hand stated he was unaware of the traffic issue and the traffic will be rerouted and there is not a road going out to Val Del Road. Mr. Hand stated it would take between 12-15 months to put in the infrastructure. Mr. Hand stated this project will take years before anyone is living in the apartments. Mr. Hand stated this will be a high end project with a resort style pool, walking track, dog parks, and playgrounds. Commissioner Orenstein asked regarding the commercial component being proposed with the apartments, are you planning to do that simultaneously, Mr. Hand, stated he'd like to put the infrastructure in with water/sewer. Mr. Hand stated any other concerns would try to be addressed. Chairman Slaughter asked Mr. Hand since the opposition asked to have this item tabled for two weeks, how would you feel regarding this suggestion, Mr. Hand stated their concerns have been addressed and he doesn't see anything changing in the next two weeks. Chairman Slaughter asked regarding the concept of this project as far as changes in the R-10 area or in the small commercial side that fronts Val Del Road, there are no changes, Mr. Hand stated the wetlands are being flagged and located on the survey, before the road is designed. Commissioner Marshall stated it seems to be Camelot and North Valdosta Road instead of Camelot and Val Del Road, Mr. Hand stated initially it was designed to come up through and to exit Val Del Road, but was changed due to the traffic. Commissioner Orenstein mentioned Commissioner Wisenbaker had asked regarding concerns with YMCA's plans during the work session meeting and Commissioner Orenstein stated he spoke with Larry Tobey and there were no intentions to sell to a developer. Commissioner Griner asked Mr. Dillard is the one entrance on Camelot Crossing sufficient for Fire Rescue and the Sheriff's Department, Mr. Dillard responded Chief Green with Fire Rescue would be willing to work with the developer regarding ingress and egress and final plans would be reviewed by Fire Rescue with comments. Commissioner Griner asked if the only other way out is Val Del Road, Mr. Dillard responded yes. Commissioner Griner made a motion to table this item until the next commission meeting of April 26, 2022, in order to have the secondary exits established, Commissioner Marshall second. Vice Chairman Evans and Commissioners Orenstein, Marshall and Griner voted in favor, Commissioner Wisenbaker opposed. Motion carried.

**REZ-2022-08 Hallabrook, 3263 Old Clyattville Rd, ~15.6 acres, R-A to P-D, Well & Septic**

Planning and Zoning Director, J.D. Dillard, presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated this request is a change in zoning from R-A (Residential Agriculture) zoning to P-D (Planned Development) zoning. Mr. Dillard stated the applicant would like to utilize the property as an event facility/venue, primarily for weddings, family reunions, birthday parties, corporate events and community gatherings. Mr. Dillard stated the TRC recommended approval with the below conditions:

1. The property may be used only for:
  - a. Uses permitted in the Residential Agricultural (R-A) zoning district, and
  - b. An event facility where the operation of an event facility is limited to meetings, retreats, celebrations, and weddings for groups no larger than the fire code allows for the proposed buildings/area. Outdoor performances by bands or ensembles that are accessory to a meeting, retreat, celebration, or wedding shall be allowed. The event facility shall adhere to the Lowndes County Noise Ordinance.
2. Unless otherwise noted on the LCBOC approved site plan, the use of the property shall be subject to all standards applicable to properties in the R-A zoning district.
3. Exterior lighting shall be shielded to avoid direct illumination of adjacent properties.

Further, Mr. Dillard stated the Planning Commission recommended approval with the conditions as defined above. No one spoke against this request. Bill Langdale, 2519 Jerry Jones Drive, spoke in favor of the request as the attorney of this project.

Commissioner Wisenbaker made a motion to approve the request, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Electric Vehicle Charging Station**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, presented the item. Mrs. Dukes stated this is a partnership with Georgia Power to provide for two charging stations capable of providing three charging opportunities to be located in the southern portion of the parking lot of the Lowndes County Judicial-Administrative Complex. Mrs. Dukes stated these electric vehicle charging stations will provide a tremendous amount of development impact in bringing people to the downtown area. Vice Chairman Evans made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Acceptance of the FY2022 VAWA Continuation Grant Award**

Chairman Slaughter presented the item stating the Commission heard from Ms. Hayes with the Solicitor's Office during the work session. No further discussion took place. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the grant as presented to include the \$36,266.00, cash match as required, Vice Chairman Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Lowndes County Jail Medical Addition Owner and Architect Agreement**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated this is the owner and architect agreement with Studio 8 Design, LLC to design a 60 bed expansion for medical and isolation. Commissioner Marshall asked regarding the project estimate of four million dollars, how is that being funded, County Manager, Paige Dukes, responded through the ARPA funding. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the item as presented, Commissioner Griner second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Acceptance of the Quit Claim Deed from the Georgia Department of Transportation for 9.014 acres**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated Lowndes County requested the former rest area property just north of Hahira on the west side of I-75 from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Mr. McLeod stated the total acreage is 9.014 acres and joins the North Lowndes Recreation Complex. The Georgia Department of Transportation sent a Quit Claim Deed for the property to be recorded. Mr. McLeod stated the deed does contain a reversionary clause that the property must be used for specified use, for the potential use of Parks and Recreation or other related purposes. Commissioner Orenstein stated this is a huge expansion for Parks and Recreation and expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Dukes and Mr. McLeod. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Wisenbaker second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Lowndes County Judicial Complex Courtroom Audio and Visual Replacement for 10 Courtrooms**

Director of Engineering Services, Chad McLeod, presented the item. Mr. McLeod stated staff has been working with all of the judges on a plan to replace the audio and visual equipment in the ten courtrooms in the Judicial Complex. Mr. McLeod stated the equipment is no longer working and obsolete. Mr. McLeod stated staff has been working with S&L Integrated for professional services to replace this equipment in the amount of \$944,072.72. Commissioner Orenstein asked if this is the first time this equipment is being replaced, Mr. McLeod answered yes. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the request as presented, Commissioner Orenstein second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**REPORTS - County Manager**

County Manager, Paige Dukes, stated the acceptance of property donations does not happen very often and thanked the County Attorney, Walter Elliott and his staff for their assistance. Mrs. Dukes thanked those for attending the ribbon cuttings for the drafting pit last week and the shooting range cover held this morning. Additionally, Mrs. Dukes mentioned the swearing in of the second recruit class with Lowndes County Fire Rescue, who will be moving into the Bemiss station. Mrs. Dukes stated budget meetings will be held in the upcoming weeks. Mrs. Dukes mentioned Public Works Director, Robin Cumbus and her staff have been working on the drainage issues in our area. Lastly, Mrs. Dukes reminded the Commission the County Offices will be closed for Good Friday on April 15, 2022.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Marshall wished everyone in attendance a Happy Easter. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if the North Lowndes Fire Station was under construction yet, Mrs. Dukes answered no. Commissioner Wisenbaker asked if the hiring process had started, Mrs. Dukes responded yes. Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Griner second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the regular session at 6:18 p.m.