

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
Special Called Meeting
Monday, June 12, 2023 - 5:30 PM

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 meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Slaughter explained each side will get ten minutes and following after both sides are heard, each side will get two minutes for rebuttal.

PUBLIC HEARING

Rezoning Case REZ-2022-10 The Campus Transitional Facility – Validity of April 11, 2023, Decision,

County Planner, J.D. Dillard presented the item. Mr. Dillard stated on March 28th the Commission began and voted to table the public hearing on a request to rezone property located at 2193 Howell Road from Estate Agricultural (E-A) to Planned Development (P-D) for uses including a Transitional Care Facility until the April 11, 2023 board meeting at which the Board continued the public hearing on the request and voted to rezone the property to Planned Development. The County has received a challenge to the validity of the April 11, 2023 decision based on the notice to the public. Declaring the April 11, 2023 zoning decision invalid and reconsidering rezoning the property will make this challenge moot.

Savannah Baker, 4046 Old Naylor Road, spoke against the request. Ms. Baker stated she has addressed collective concerns from her family and the community regarding the rezoning of 2193 Howell Road for over a year now. Ms. Baker stated she has been able to provide cited facts and statistics in regards to a facility like this, yet they have been unable to provide a success rate for this program, which has been in business for six years, or cite where their statistics come from. Ms. Baker quoted a Valdosta Daily Times article titled "County should always lean to residents in zoning decisions" from May 6, 2023. The voices of the community have been silenced after several news articles and interviews have been altered since released or deleted without access. Ms. Baker mentioned the guys in this program know where drug houses are located on Howell Road, how are the people in your program aware of the locations and if this is true, is this the best place to put your facility? Also, has the Sheriff's Department been notified of the locations? Ms. Baker stated in looking at information provided by this program research was done and it was stated they have been at their current address for two years and law enforcement was called once; upon retrieving records it revealed in the past two years there have been four times law enforcement has been called. Ms.