

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
WORK SESSION
Monday, August 21, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

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

Commissioner Demarcus Marshall was not present.

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

MINUTES

The minutes were presented for the work session of July 24, 2023 and the regular session of July 25, 2023. No revisions to the minutes were requested.

PUBLIC HEARING

Beer and Wine License - John Michael Ricks and Cherry L. Trouille of The Fish Net, Inc., DBA The Fish Net Restaurant - 3949 Sportsman Cove, Lake Park, GA

Finance Accounts Receivable Technician, Lorraine Taylor, presented the item. Mrs. Taylor stated the applicant is requesting a beer and wine license for consumption on premises at 3949 Sportsman Cove in Lake Park. Mrs. Taylor stated this is due to a change in ownership and all requirements have been met.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Beer and Wine License - Faisal Ijaz of Sandhu Bros, LLC, DBA Little River Groceries - 8235 Ga Hwy. 122 W., Hahira, GA

Finance Accounts Receivable Technician, Lorraine Taylor, presented a request for a beer and wine license for consumption off premises, due to a change in ownership.

Beer and Wine License - Ashish Patel of Rudra 7415, LLC, DBA JP Foods - 7415 GA Hwy 376, Lake Park, GA

Finance Accounts Receivable Technician, Lorraine Taylor, presented a request for a beer and wine license for consumption off premises, due to a change in ownership.

Adoption of Millage Rate for 2023

Finance Chief Accountant, Rachel Bowen, gave a presentation on the millage to the Commissioners. Mrs. Bowen stated that if adopted, the county-wide millage rate for 2023 is recommended to be set at a rollback rate of 8.896 mills with the Industrial Authority receiving 1.00 mill and the Parks and

Recreation Authority receiving 1.25 mills. Additionally, Mrs. Bowen stated this represents a reduction of 1.315 mills from 2022. Commissioner Griner asked for the millage rate required to rollback to our exact budgeted forecast? Mrs. Bowen stated she believes the millage rate of 8.896 is the prediction for the 95% assessment rate that would cover all of the budget requirements. Commissioner Griner asked what is the approved budget requirements for property tax collection? Mrs. Bowen stated she did not have that information with her, but could obtain it before the meeting tomorrow night. Commissioner Griner also asked for the fire tax information as well. Chairman Slaughter stated related to the rollback and what was budgeted, the millage rate would be 8.778 mills which is based on a 95% collection rate to be at zero. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if Parks and Recreation has always been 1.20 mills? County Attorney, Walter Elliott, stated it is 1.25 mills and you cannot go below that amount. Chairman Slaughter stated you could increase, but not decrease the amount. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked what is the value of a mill? Chairman Slaughter stated that based on the current assessments, it is at 4.20 million. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker stated that the difference is because of the value of the mill increasing. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if the fire tax rate should be adjusted? Chairman Slaughter stated he would not recommend changing. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked when all of the fire stations are in place, will we be adjusting the rate down from 2.50 mills or will the taxpayers continue to pay 2.50 mills? Chairman Slaughter stated this would be considered based on the budgeted needs. County Manager, Paige Dukes, responded through this next year we need to build fund balance; since the plan was presented to the Commission, inflation has hit significantly to cover the growing cost of personnel, we will need to consider. If the voters choose to pass SPLOST IX, there are capital needs in the budget to be put on the SPLOST IX list which would take some pressure off of the millage and look at an adjustment. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked what balance do we have in fire fund? County Manager, Paige Dukes, answered she would have to look that information up.

Adoption of Fire District Millage Rate for 2023

Finance Chief Accountant, Rachel Bowen, presented the item. Mrs. Bowen stated the 2023 fire district millage rate should be set at 2.50 mills, which is no change from the prior year.

BID

Bid for Animal Services Chassis Box

Purchasing Agent, Amy Woods, presented the item. Mrs. Woods stated the only bid that met specifications was Jackson Creek Manufacturing, Inc., located in North Carolina, in the amount of \$41,650.00. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked is this for a dog box? Mrs. Woods responded yes sir. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked what was being done with the old dog box? County Manager, Paige Dukes, responded this box is in pieces and at its end of life and will be disposed of. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked where is it? Mrs. Dukes responded it is still being used on one of the trucks. Chairman Slaughter stated typically with surplus items they are advertised on GovDeals. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if the commissioners could bid on items on GovDeals? County Manager, Paige Dukes, answered yes. Vice Chairman Wisenbaker asked if it is aluminum or stainless steel? Animal Services Director, Linda Patelski, responded it is both.

REPORTS - County Manager

There was no additional information to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Orenstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Griner second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 8:47 a.m.