



**Lowndes County
Government 101**

August 11, 2011
 Lowndes County Administration Building
 Lunch & Learn Series – Program 1

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History & Facts

- Established December 23, 1825
- Created from a portion of Irwin County
- 5 Cities-Valdosta, Hahira, Lake Park, Remerton & Dasher
- By law, one local government cannot bind another
- Lowndes County's ULDC created one of the first military protection area (MAZ) zoning designations in the Nation.

Additional information: www.dca.state.ga.us/CountySnapshotsNet/

Mission Statement

“To provide an efficient, effective and responsive local government to all citizens of Lowndes County while maintaining the financial strength to meet any contingency.”

Lowndes County Board of Commissioners



Ashley Paulk
Chairman



Joyce E. Evans
Vice Chairperson
Commissioner
District 1



Richard Raines
Commissioner
District 2



Crawford Powell
Commissioner
District 3

Additional information is available – www.lowndescounty.com

Terms

Chairman – Elected at Large
Commissioners – 5 District Specific

- 4 year term
- Staggered to maintain continuity
- Chairman & District 1 – Vote 2012
- District 2 & District 3 – Vote 2014
- District 4 – Vote 2012 (2 year term) Vote 2014
- District 5 – Vote 2012

Currently, the Office of Reapportionment is reviewing Lowndes County's district boundaries to ensure all new population, demographic requirements have been met in accordance with the most recent census.

Topics

- Introduction
- Form of Government
- “Original & Exclusive Jurisdiction”
- Organization & Structure
- Constitutional Officers
- Other Elected Officials
- Budget
- Services Provided – County Wide
- Services Provided – Unincorporated
- Services Funded & Otherwise Provided
- Emergency Management

Introduction

- The highest level of state law governing counties is the Georgia Constitution of 1983 to include subsequent amendments.
- Second, general statutes and local legislation enacted by the General Assembly.
- County legislation may be enacted by the adoption of local ordinances. Local ordinances are enforced by code enforcement. In most cases, violations are under the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court.

7

Forms of County Government

Form of Government Primary Policy Making Role

- Traditional Commission ⇨ Board of Commissioners
- Sole Commissioner ⇨ Single Commissioner
- Elected Executive ⇨ Shared by BOC & EE
- Commissioner-Administrator ⇨ Board of Commissioners
- Commission-Manager ⇨ Board of Commissioners

Lowndes County has a Commission-Manager form of government.

A county's form of government can only be changed by Act of the Generally Assembly.

8

Organization & Structure



9

“Original & Exclusive Jurisdiction”

- Direct & control all county property
- Levy a general tax for general county purposes
- Levy a special tax for particular county purposes
- Establish, alter, or abolish roads, bridges & ferries
- Fill vacancies in county offices by appointments
- Order Elections
- Examine, settle, or pay claims against the county
- Examine, audit and settle the accounts of all officers who care for, manage, keep, collect, or disburse money belonging to the county or appropriated for its upkeep

10

“Original & Exclusive Jurisdiction”

- Make such rules and regulations for the support of the poor of the county
- Make rules & regulations for the county police and patrol
- Make rules and regulations for the promotion of health and quarantine
- Regulate and fix the cost of peddling licenses

11

Constitutional Officers

- Sheriff – Chris Prine
- Clerk of Superior Court – Sara Crow
- Probate Judge – Terri Adams
- Tax Commissioner – Mary Nell Robertson

Each officer is independently elected and individually responsible. The BOC has only the authority to establish budgets.

12

Other Elected & Appointed Officials

- Superior Court Judges
- District Attorney
- State Court Judge
- Solicitor General of the State Court
- Chief Magistrate
- Circuit Public Defender
- Coroner
- Surveyor
- Board of Assessors*

13

Budget

- Georgia counties are required to adopt a balanced budget, no later than June 30 each year.
- Local government budgets are not simply a \$ in \$ out concept. Revenue sources and expenditure allowances are legislatively outlined.
- Lowndes County officials & staff begin working on the budget in November of each year in order to present a recommendation to the BOC in early May.
- Public hearings are held during the budget process, citizens are encouraged to attend.
- Lowndes County's FY 2010-2011 budget totals just under \$80,000,000.00.

14

Services Provided – County Wide

- Superior Court
- Clerk of Court
- District Attorney
- State Court
- Magistrate Court
- Probate Court
- Juvenile Court
- Probation
- Public Defender
- Sheriff
- Jail
- Animal Control
- Emergency Medical Services
- Coroner
- Road Maintenance & Construction
- Parks and Recreation
- Libraries
- Emergency Management
- Extension Services
- Board of Elections
- Tax Commissioner
- Board of Assessors
- Board of Equalization

15

Services Provided - Unincorporated

- Lowndes County Fire Rescue
- Solid Waste Management
- Mosquito Control

16

Services Funded & Otherwise Provided

- Lowndes County Health Department
- Mental Health
- Department of Family & Children's Services
- Lowndes Nutrition

17

Emergency Management

- Lowndes County Emergency Management is a local extension of Georgia Emergency Management.
- In the event of a disaster or emergency, local resources must be exhausted before aid can be requested.
- Mutual aid agreements are in place with other local governments.
- Local emergency ordinances are in place to protect local life and property.

18

You Are Invited

- To schedule an appointment.
- Attend Commission Meetings:
Regular Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, with a work session the preceding Monday.
Meeting agendas are posted online at www.lowndescounty.com

The next Lunch & Learn is scheduled for Thursday, September 8, 2011. The topic for discussion will be the FY 2010-2011 budget and budget process.

19



Thank you for your
interest in
Lowndes County
Government.

www.lowndescounty.com

20