



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

T. PAGE THARP GOVERNMENTAL BUILDING
102 STARKSVILLE AVENUE NORTH, LEESBURG, GEORGIA 31763

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022 6:00 P.M.

T. PAGE THARP BUILDING
OPAL CANNON AUDITORIUM
WWW.LEE.GA.US

MEETING MINUTES
WORK SESSION

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Billy Mathis, Chairman	District 3
John Wheaton, Vice-Chairman	District 1
Luke Singletary, Commissioner	District 2
Rick Muggridge, Commissioner	District 4
George Walls, Commissioner	District 5

COUNTY STAFF

Christi Dockery, County Manager
Kaitlyn Sawyer, County Clerk
Jimmy Skipper, County Attorney

The Lee County Board of Commissioners met in a work session on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. The meeting was held in the Opal Cannon Auditorium of the Lee County T. Page Tharp Governmental Building in Leesburg, Georgia. Those present were Chairman Billy Mathis, Vice-Chairman John Wheaton, Commissioner Luke Singletary, Commissioner Rick Muggridge, and Commissioner George Walls. Staff in attendance was County Manager Christi Dockery, County Attorney Jimmy Skipper, and County Clerk Kaitlyn Sawyer. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live.

INVOCATION

Pastor Shane Mullins, Move Christian Church, led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board and the audience said the Pledge of Allegiance in unison.

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- (A) **Consideration to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for February 22, 2022.**
Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for February 22, 2022. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Muggridge voting yea.

CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

- (A) **Jennifer Stephens, Community Supports Day Coordinator for ASPIRE, to address the Board regarding Developmental Disabilities Month. Consideration to adopt a Proclamation declaring March 2022 as Developmental Disabilities Month, on behalf of ASPIRE Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.**

Jennifer Stephens, Community Supports Day Coordinator for ASPIRE, addressed the Board regarding Developmental Disabilities Month and ASPIRE, stating that they work at ASPIRE to help individuals gain access to their community, build relationships, and seek employment if they so choose. Commissioner Wheaton asked Ms. Stephens about programs and resources available for inmates and those recently arrested. Ms. Stephens stated they had court services, and would be happy to gather more information and link him to the right individuals within ASPIRE. Ms. Stephens thanked the Board for their continued support of ASPIRE and a picture was taken.

Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to adopt a Proclamation declaring March 2022 as Developmental Disabilities Month, on behalf of ASPIRE Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. Commissioner Muggridge seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Walls voting yea. The proclamation was signed.

(B) **Jasmine Jones, GRA Outreach Coordinator for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), to address the Board regarding their rental assistance program.**

Jasmine Jones, GRA Outreach Coordinator for Region 10 for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), addressed the Board regarding their rental assistance program stating that the purpose of her visit was to introduce this programs to the leaders and residents of Lee County. The rental assistance program is for those who have experienced hardship and have had difficulties in making their rent and utility payments. Ms. Jones sated she would be in the community over next few days networking to get the word out on how to apply. Commissioner Muggridge asked if by networking she meant she would be speaking to the citizens in distress; those in need of the service, to which Ms. Jones replied that she would be networking with other local entities and agencies such as Neighbors in Need, the Housing Authority, and area doctor's offices and pharmacies, not directly with individuals. A handout was provided.

(C) **Deanna Hawkins-Perry, Vice President of State Government Affairs - Georgia, Michael Foor, President of Kinetic Operations - Georgia, Daryl Barron, District Director, and Noah Carroll, Manager of Local Operations, to address the Board regarding the broadband initiative.**

Deanna Hawkins-Perry, Vice President of State Government Affairs – Georgia and Michael Foor, President of Kinetic Operations – Georgia addressed the Board regarding the broadband initiative. Daryl Barron, District Director and Noah Carroll, Manager of Local Operations were also present in the audience.

Mr. Foor thanked the Board for the opportunity to pursue the broadband initiative and applauded County Manager Dockery and staff for their work and persistence with the project. Mr. Foor also wished to thank the local EMCs for their help and support, emphasizing the implementation of this initiative was a result of everyone pulling together.

Ms. Perry stated that Kinetic by Windstream is excited for the residents of Lee County and the broadband grants award as announced recently by Governor Kemp. Through a partnership with the county, internet service will be delivered to more than 4,234 homes and businesses in Lee County (as identified by the state of Georgia as designated as underserved or unserved). Windstream's collaborative agreement with Sumter EMC will facilitate the build out of this project. Governor Kemp and the Broadband Infrastructure Committee were commended for their dedication to this cause. The County's supporting investment of \$1.2 million was key to the success of the application for the grant. Ms. Perry echoed Mr. Foor's sentiments of thanks and commended County Manager Dockery and staff for the hard work on the application. The state's grant funds are \$12,541,000.00 and the Windstream fund contribution is \$7,337,000.00, leading to a total of over \$21 million for this project. Ms. Perry stated that they will begin the process this year and end in 2026. Preliminary engineering is underway.

Chairman Mathis asked if there was a resource for citizens to see if their home or business will be affected and when to expect it. Ms. Perry stated that there is a map at a dot location level that shows approximate locations around the county, with the specifics of the information forthcoming. Information will be shared it is available, with specific address to come. Mr. Foor stated he and staff had discussed holding community information events including different representatives who will be able to handle pre-registration processes and advise on if citizens are in the new service area. The dates for the events have yet to be determined, however will be as soon as possible. Commissioner Singletary asked how many Sumter EMC customers this would impact. Mr. Foor stated that with this project there are two projects going on, one with Sumter EMC and one where we work with Sumter in the community for Lee County customers specifically. The goal is to serve as many unserved locations as possible and many of those fall within Sumter EMC's footprint because they are in the less dense areas. A graphical illustration will be provided at a future date to show which area will be included.

Commissioner Muggridge asked if they had any idea as to when the first customer may get service, to which Mr. Foor stated possibly by the end of this year, but definitely by 2023. They will “turn on” service at each home individually as they are completing them. Mr. Foor added that they anticipate laying approximately 300 miles of fiber and the goal is to exceed state guidelines. Partnerships are critical to the success of the project. Mr. Foor commended the staff for the efforts in starting this process both with the application and “knocking on doors” to get the word to leaders to pay attention to Lee County.

Commissioner Muggridge asked Mr. Foor when customers could expect a cost schedule for services. Mr. Foor stated that costs for new customers would be consistent with those of existing customers in surrounding areas, beginning at approximately \$60.00 for the basic service of 50meg and increasing in \$10.00 increments with additional plans/services. This will be equipped with the next generation of fiber so that the fiber put on the house won't be limited to gig, so that it may be increased in the future. There will be no copper used.

The Board thanked the representatives for coming and for what they're doing for the community. A handout was provided.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

Public Works

- (A) **Consideration to approve a 36 month, 2000 hour lease for a 2022 Alamo mower with Flint Equipment.**
- (B) **Consideration to approve a 60 month, 5000 hour lease for two (2) 2022 Motorgraders with Flint Equipment.**

Chairman Mathis clarified with County Manager Dockery that this was the comprehensive list of equipment Public Works needed for the next year. There are three Motorgraders, one of which is coming up for a lease renewal, and then we would like one additional Motorgrader. Chairman Mathis stated that the estimated delivery date for both types of equipment is October 2022 and therefore could be factored into next year's budget. Commissioner Walls asked if this would be paid out of SPLOST, to which Chairman Mathis stated we could.

Commissioner Muggridge made the **MOTION** to approve a 36 month, 2000 hour lease for a 2022 Alamo mower (\$5,226.30 monthly) and a 60 month, 5000 hour lease for two (2) Motorgraders (\$5,524.60 monthly) with Flint Equipment at state contract cost, to come from SPLOST VII funds. Commissioner Wheaton seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES

- (A) **Consideration to appoint four members to the Community Foundation Board of Trustees for a term of two years. Current term expires 03/22/2022. New term expires 03/22/2024. Letters of interest in reappointment received from Christi Dockery, Marian Grant-Whitlock, Heather Jones, and Ann Nix.**
Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to reappoint Christi Dockery, Marian Grant-Whitlock, Heather Jones, and Ann Nix to the Community Foundation Board of Trustees for a term of two years, expiring 03/22/2024. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Muggridge voting yea.
- (B) **Consideration to authorize staff to put out a bid for inmate medical services. Current contract expires June 30, 2022.**
Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to authorize staff to put out a bid for inmate medical services. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Muggridge and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.
- (C) **Consideration to appoint one member to the Housing Authority Board for a term of one year. Current term expires 03/31/2022. New term expires 03/31/2023. Letter of interest in reappointment received by**

Latrisha Bell.

Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to reappoint Latrisha Bell (resident) to the Housing Authority Board for a term of one year, expiring 03/31/2023. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Muggridge voting yea.

COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS

(A) **Updates on County projects.**

County Manager Christi Dockery discussed ongoing projects in the County: (1) the Courthouse Annex windows sealant project has been completed and the gymnasium windows have been ordered, and (2) the Gymnasium project should be completed within the next few months.

Chairman Mathis asked if we had received any Motorola radios. County Manager Dockery stated the radios were being programmed. Chairman Mathis stated he would like to get them before they turn obsolete. County Manager Dockery stated she would check on the progress.

Chairman Mathis also mentioned the issue with some of our equipment being on a tower. We own the land that the tower is on, but are not getting rent payments, but they want us to pay to put our equipment on this tower. Chairman Mathis asked that County Attorney Skipper and staff contact the owners to renegotiate an appropriate rent.

Commissioner Muggridge made the **MOTION** to authorize County Attorney Jimmy Skipper to renegotiate rent rate for the tower. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Wheaton and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.

(B) **Consideration to approve a two year renewal of the IT Services Managed Services Contract for Network Technology Solutions (NTS). Current contract expires March 24, 2022.**

There is no change in price from the current contract. NTS will continue to honor the cost from the original contract dating back to 2018 and there are also no changes made to the services provided.

Commissioner Wheaton made the **MOTION** to approve a two year renewal of the IT Services Managed Services Contract for Network Technology Solutions (NTS) for a monthly payment of \$14,239.97 to come from the IT departmental budget. Commissioner Singletary seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Muggridge and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(C) **Consideration to approve the annual Professional Services Agreement for the NPDES Permit Contract for Flint River Consulting, LLC. Current contract expires May 31, 2022.**

(D) **Consideration to approve the annual Professional Services Agreement for the On Call Contract for Flint River Consulting, LLC. Current contract expires May 31, 2022.**

There was a slight increase in price from the 2021 contracts.

Commissioner Muggridge made the **MOTION** to approve the annual Professional Services Agreements for the NPDES Permit Contract (\$15,430.00) and the On Call Contract (\$9,240.00) for Flint River Consulting, LLC to come from SPLOST VII funds and the Planning departmental budget. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Wheaton and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.

COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS

(A) **Discussion of package sales of distilled spirits in Lee County.**

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper summarized the resolution stating that this would allow the item of package sales to be on the ballot in November. The county can do an ordinance, resolution, or have a citizen petition to request a referendum. The easiest way to get this matter to the voters is to adopt a resolution. The call must be issued 90 days before the election.

Commissioner Muggridge made the **MOTION** to adopt a resolution requesting that a referendum election be

held on November 8, 2022 to authorize the issuance of licenses for the package sale of distilled spirits in Lee County. Commissioner Singletary seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Wheaton and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS

NONE

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

PUBLIC FORUM

Citizens will be allowed to address the Board of Commissioners regarding any issues or complaints. Individuals should sign up prior to the start of the meeting.

Paul Clayton – Old Leslie Road ditching

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (A) The next regularly scheduled County Commission Meeting is **Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 6:00pm.**
- (B) This year's annual **Great American Cleanup, Amnesty Day at the Landfill, and Prescription Drug Take Back** event will be held **Saturday, April 9, 2022** beginning at 9:00am and ending at 4:00pm.

Further Discussion Not Listed on Agenda

Chairman Mathis summarized the recent vandalism of County parks and offered a reward for any information that can lead to a conviction of whoever is destroying County property to come from his own pocket. Chairman Mathis asked County Manager Dockery to reach out to the Sheriff to see if they need anything. Commissioner Walls asked if there were cameras up at the park locations. Chairman Mathis stated that there were a few and to his understanding, the Sheriff's Office is regularly patrolling Pirate's Cove.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:28PM.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: _____
COUNTY CLERK

Lee County is a thriving vibrant community celebrated for its value of tradition encompassing a safe family oriented community, schools of excellence, and life long opportunities for prosperity and happiness without sacrificing the rural agricultural tapestry.

Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language interpretation should contact the ADA Coordinator at (229) 759-6000 or through the Georgia Relay Service (800) 255-0056 (TDD) or (800) 355-0135 (voice). This person can be contacted at the T. Page Tharp Building in Leesburg, Georgia between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and will assist citizens with special needs given proper notice of seven (7) working days.

The meeting rooms and buildings are handicap accessible.