



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023 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 |
| Luke Singletary, Vice-Chairman | District 2 |
| Dennis Roland, Commissioner | District 1 |
| Chris Guarnieri, Commissioner | District 4 |
| George Walls, Commissioner | District 5 |

COUNTY STAFF

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

The Lee County Board of Commissioners met in a work session on Tuesday, February 14, 2023. 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 Luke Singletary, Commissioner Chris Guarnieri, and Commissioner George Walls. Staff in attendance was County Manager Christi Dockery, County Attorney Jimmy Skipper, and County Clerk Kaitlyn Good. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live. Chairman Mathis called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

INVOCATION

Pastor Matthew Schluckebier, Life 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 January 24, 2023.
Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for January 24, 2023. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Roland voting yea.

CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

Parks & Recreation

- (A) Discussion of the 100 Acre Park property.
Commissioner Singletary opened up the discussion by stating that he would like to see development on the

property and mentioned the construction of a perimeter road, parking, and grassing to start, with future development of community use fields (e.g. football, tennis, pickleball, baseball, etc.) and a large multipurpose building. Commissioner Roland added that he believed there was approximately \$3 million in SPLOST funds that could be used and supported getting the project started, citing the construction of a building, including perhaps offices, as well as the necessary fields for the Recreation programs, a pickleball court, and of course parking and roads.

Commissioner Singletary would like to work on an RFP for the engineering and architectural elements of the property. Some previous concept plans discussed at previous 100-Acre Committee meetings have included roads, access points, a camping area, trails, fields, and room for expansion. DNR is also to be working on the boat ramp this fall.

Commissioner Singletary and Parks & Recreation Director Jeremy Morey further described the potential multipurpose building stating it would have interchangeable flooring in which flooring could be laid for basketball season and then removed to allow for other activities such as agriculture shows, car shows, etc. The building (approximately 40 – 45,000 sq. ft.) could also have removable walls similar to that of garage doors, enabling the building to also become semi-open. A similar building in Americus was cited as an example. Mr. Morey also spoke on the growth of the Lee County recreation programs, adding that they need dedicated football fields, more baseball fields, and gym spaces for basketball.

Chairman Mathis asked Commissioner Singletary, Mr. Morey, and Ms. Dockery come together to meet and discuss the parameters of what should be included in the RFP and bring the item back to the Board for discussion.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES

- (A) **Probate Court – Consideration to approve a five (5) year Correctional Services Agreement between the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Misdemeanor Probation Department and the Probate Court of Lee County, Georgia.**

This item was tabled to give Probate Court staff additional time to review the document.

- (B) **Magistrate Court – Consideration to approve a five (5) year Correctional Services Agreement between the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Misdemeanor Probation Department and the Magistrate Court of Lee County, Georgia.**

- (C) **Superior Court – Consideration to approve a five (5) year Correctional Services Agreement between the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Misdemeanor Probation Department and the Superior Court of Lee County, Georgia.**

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper stated that he has reviewed all three (3) agreements presented. Chairman Mathis stated that while Probate Court staff would like more time to review the document, the agreements for Magistrate and Superior Courts were okay.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve both a five (5) year Correctional Services Agreement between the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Misdemeanor Probation Department and the Magistrate Court of Lee County, Georgia and a five (5) year Correctional Services Agreement between the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Misdemeanor Probation Department and the Superior Court of Lee County, Georgia. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Roland voting yea.

- (D) **Tax Assessor – Consideration to approve the purchase of a MobileAssessor system.**

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that the Tax Assessor's Board had discussed and passed this at their latest meeting and were now asking the Board to fund this software that will enable staff to take photos of properties on site with an iPad, with that data transmitting back to the software at the office.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve the purchase of a MobileAssessor system for \$13,148.50 with an annual \$3,700.00 maintenance fee to come from the Tax Assessor's Office departmental

budget salary line item. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(E) **Tax Assessor – Consideration to approve a quote from K&G Consulting, LLC for their assistance with property revaluation appeals. HANDOUT**

County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the quote stating that the Tax Assessor's office has approximately 141 appeals remaining (out of 541) and K&G Consulting, LLC has offered to provide assistance. Appeals are analyzed on a day rate, with a fee of \$750.00 per day (prepping or on site). Under normal circumstances, 10 to 15 appeals per day can be evaluated. This fee covers all expenses. Ms. Dockery stated that the cost should be no more than \$11,000.00.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve a quote from K&G Consulting, LLC for their assistance with property revaluation appeals with the cost to again come from the Tax Assessor's Office departmental budget salary line item. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(F) **Tax Commissioner – Consideration to approve a quote from K&G Consulting, LLC for Georgia Tax Collection System (GA-TCS) software. HANDOUT**

County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the requested software adding that the current software is no longer supported. Chairman Mathis stated that Tax Commissioner had stated that this is the only software that would work. Per County finance policy, staff has also reached out for another quote; however, has not yet received it. County Manager Christi Dockery voiced support for the purchase, if that was the will of the Board.

Operating license and first year maintenance for GA-TCS will be provided for the sum of \$30,000.00. The operating license fee also covers the cost of converting the previous 7 years of system's data to the GA-TCS format. Additional years can be converted at a cost of \$750.00 per year. An annual support fee of \$15,000.00 will be assessed after the first full year of usage. The support fee covers all maintenance, upgrades and assistance by the K&G Consulting Services team.

Commissioner Singletary asked if every county utilizes this software, to which County Manager Christi Dockery replied that she was unsure but could find out a definite answer. Chairman Mathis asked that Ms. Dockery get with Tax Commissioner Susan Smith to gather more information about the current software and the details of the proposed software and come back to the Board.

Commissioner Guarnieri voiced concern over the following statement in the quote: "GA-TCS will be installed on the Tax Commissioners current hardware if the hardware and network are compatible with Microsoft SQL Server operations. If the hardware/network is not compatible, specifications will be provided for a system upgrade. System upgrades will be the responsibility of the County." Commissioner Guarnieri asked if staff could find out if the software is compatible the County's current hardware.

This item was tabled.

(G) **Utilities Authority – Consideration to approve the purchase of a meter and wastewater monitoring services from J.K. Duren Company, Inc.**

Utilities Authority General Manager Chris Boswell was present and discussed the purchase as it is meant for the Lee County Jail. In order to measure the wastewater, there has to be a special meter. Mr. Boswell cited how when the inmates wash cars, that water goes onto and into the ground and the County has to pay for that water. Chairman Mathis asked Mr. Boswell why the County is asked to pay for it instead of the Utilities Authority to which Mr. Boswell replied that it is the County Jail and the Utilities Authority doesn't own that water system, they just manage the system to help the County.

Mr. Boswell stated that this can be bid out, but the presented quote is approximately \$11,900.00. Commissioner Singletary asked the urgency of the project citing that anything typically of that projected cost would be bid out. Chairman Mathis confirmed that the cost was over the threshold. Mr. Boswell stated that

the Utilities Authority uses J.K. Duren Company to monitor their wells, but recommends the County put out a bid.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to authorize staff to put out a bid for the purchase of a meter and wastewater monitoring services. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

- (H) **Utilities Authority – Consideration to utilize \$1.2 million ARPA funds for water system improvements.**
Utilities Authority General Manager Chris Boswell stated that as the original grant for water/sewer was not approved, he and the Utilities Authority would like to utilize the \$1.2 million ARPA funds for an additional well, to be put out for bid.

Last May, the 11th well for the Authority went live; however, there is always a concern for the tendency for drought, citing a time in June during which all 11 wells were running. This leads to concerns that during severe drought times, there is not going to be enough water, especially with all the commercial and residential growth around the County (two-thirds of the Utilities Authority customers are in the southern region of the County). The cost for the last well was right at approximately \$1 million. This new well could potentially provide enough water for four to five years in the future.

Chairman Mathis wished to remind everyone that there will be more utilities needed and run to the Grand Island property within the next few years and suggested this money be saved until we know what that project may cost. The Board also discussed projects with Mr. Boswell that are covered by the bonds including a sewer extension, wastewater treatment plant, and the Grand Island property infrastructure. Chairman Mathis asked Mr. Boswell if he had brought this concept to the Utilities Authority and gotten prices, to which Mr. Boswell stated it had been discussed previously as part of the aforementioned grant application and how if the grant did not go through, the well would then become the number one priority.

This item was tabled.

- (I) **Consideration to appoint one (1) member to the Utilities Authority for a term of one (1) year. Appointment may be a commissioner to represent By Virtue of Office. Current term expired 01/31/2023. New term expires 01/31/2024.**

Chairman Mathis stated that Commissioner Walls had voiced that he would like to be appointed to this board.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to appoint George Walls to the Utilities Authority for a term of one (1) year, expiring 01/31/2024. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Chairman Mathis voting yea.

COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS

- (A) **Updates on County projects.**
County Manager Christi Dockery discussed ongoing projects in the County: (1) The CDBG project at Palmyra Mobile Home Park is progressing; (2) the Landfill ramp project is completed and is expected to open soon; (3) the storage building for Parks & Recreation has been completed; and (4) the renovation at the gym is ongoing and nearing completion.
- (B) **Consideration to adopt an updated Resolution for the Purpose of Naming an Open Records Officer, an Alternate Open Records Officer, and for Other Purposes.**
Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve an updated Resolution for the Purpose of Naming an Open Records Officer, an Alternate Open Records Officer, and for Other Purposes for the purpose of naming Deputy County Clerk Payton Harris as the Alternate Open Records Officer to Open Records Officer/ County Clerk Kaitlyn Good. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.
- (C) **Consideration to approve a Build Agreement with Windstream Kinetic Fiber, LLC.**

County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the agreement, stating that this agreement is one more step in the process of approximately 4,600 residents receiving broadband internet access, an accomplishment hoped to be attained within the next two (2) years. This will be a \$21 million investment in the County. Windstream has already received some permits and had some engineering completed for the western side of the County. County Attorney Jimmy Skipper added that he has reviewed this document and is aware that Sumter EMC has also begun some prep work for the project as they have been within Sumter EMC easements.

Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to approve a Build Agreement with Windstream Kinetic Fiber, LLC. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS

(A) **Discussion of stormwater fees.**

Commissioner Roland started the discussion by stating that for years, developers have been causing water to run onto other adjacent properties and the County has been charged with resolving the issues. Commissioner Roland suggests having the developers help pay to solve any issues that may come up, to not have the County take over the whole expense, citing outfalls to the creeks and culverts.

Stormwater Engineer Mike Talley, Flint River Consulting, stated that some government entities have implemented stormwater fees of a few dollars to citizens as a public utility. Mr. Talley added that EPD has changed stormwater requirements for developers, as the state has passed "runoff reduction". Runoff reduction requires developers to retain a certain amount of water onsite that will never leave the site and must be infiltrated the groundwater table (1 inch volume). This will reduce the amount of water that leaves the site; with a holding pond, the developers could limit the peak. As we move forward, the County has access to better data now with Lidar to allow for better monitoring of development projects.

Mr. Talley will come back to the Board at a future meeting to bring the Text Amendment corresponding with the referenced change to code.

(B) **Discussion of the Lee County Medical Center project.**

Chairman Mathis stated that all questions or concerns should be directed to the Lee County Development Authority.

(C) **Discussion of security in County offices.**

Chairman Mathis opened this discussion by stating that the Tax Commissioner's Office has requested additional cameras. Commissioners also brought up the need for cameras or other security concerns at a number of other County buildings. Chairman Mathis suggested that now would be a good time to address any security concerns and solutions at any County office or building. The Board advised County Manager Christi Dockery to speak with management staff and bring back any and all security concerns, solutions, and requests.

This item will be brought back for discussion at the next meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS

(A) **Consideration to adopt a text amendment to Chapter 58, Article I adding Section 58-18. Permitting and Construction of Duplexes and Single-Family Dwellings in Certain Previously Approved Subdivisions. FIRST READING**

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper summarized the amendment, stating the purpose of this amendment is to address an issue that has arisen pertaining to subdivisions having been approved years ago, stopping construction, and then starting back years later when the code had changed. This amendment will allow future construction of an existing subdivision that includes both single-family dwellings and duplexes to do so under

the code of the time in which the subdivision was initially approved. All state and local building codes will apply.

The first reading was conducted.

Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to waive the second reading of the proposed text amendment. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to adopt a text amendment to Chapter 58, Article I adding Section 58-18. Permitting and Construction of Duplexes and Single-Family Dwellings in Certain Previously Approved Subdivisions. Commissioner Singletary seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(B) **Consideration to adopt a Resolution approving the plan of finance for the benefit of LCMC OPCO, LLC d/b/a Lee County Medical Center.**

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper summarized the resolution, stating that this resolution arose from the TEFRA Hearing the Hospital Authority recently had. The hearing is required before any local entity can issue tax-free bonds in favor of a particular tax-free entity, such as the Lee County Medical Center. The proposal is that the Hospital Authority will issue up to \$30 million in bonds to support the construction of the project. If approved, the Development Authority will issue the balance of the bonds, which is anticipated to be around \$160 million.

The TEFRA Hearing was held and the Hospital Authority adopted a resolution for the submission of a request to the Board to approve the plan of finance, which states that the Hospital Authority will issue up to the \$30 million in bonds. Mr. Skipper stated that this is not a bond resolution (we are not ready for this yet), just the next step in the process. The Board received everything from the Hospital Authority in reference to this resolution. Mr. Skipper clarified that this resolution is the Board's approval of the plan of finance, essentially agreeing that the Hospital Authority can issue the bonds. The Development Authority has gone through a similar process already.

Additionally, state law states that the county is not liable for the repayment of bonds issued by a county authority. An IGA will be completed between the Board and the Hospital Authority stating the county will pay those bonds on an annual rate over a 25 year period in connection with the \$30 million. There should not be an IGA with the Development Authority for those bonds.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to adopt a Resolution approving the plan of finance for the benefit of LCMC OPCO, LLC d/b/a Lee County Medical Center. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** passed 4-1 with Commissioner Walls voting yea and Commissioner Roland voting nay.

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.

No citizens took part in the public forum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (A) The next regularly scheduled County Commission Meeting is **Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:00pm.**

Special Announcement

Chairman Mathis and the Board took a moment to recognize Veronica Johnson and the Elections and Registrations Office for being honored recently at the state level.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:02PM.

Facebook video link: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyga/videos/1109287970026861>

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.

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