



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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

TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.
T. PAGE THARP BUILDING
OPAL CANNON AUDITORIUM
WWW.LEE.GA.US

MEETING MINUTES
WORK SESSION

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Luke Singletary, Chairman	District 2
Chris Guarnieri, Vice-Chairman	District 4
Dennis Roland, Commissioner	District 1
Billy Mathis, Commissioner	District 3
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 voting session on Tuesday, April 9, 2024. 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 Luke Singletary, Vice-Chairman Chris Guarnieri, Commissioner Dennis Roland, Commissioner Billy Mathis, and Commissioner George Walls. Staff in attendance was County Manager Christi Dockery, County Clerk Kaitlyn Good, and County Attorney Jimmy Skipper. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live. Chairman Singletary called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

Apostle Malden Batten, The Church of Leesburg, led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- (A) **Consideration to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for March 26, 2024.**
Commissioner Walls made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for March 26, 2024. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Mathis and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

- (A) **Recognition of Assistant Fire Chief/ EMA Director Cole Williams on receiving his Georgia Emergency Medical Service Director Certification.**
Chairman Singletary acknowledged that unfortunately Mr. Williams was unable to attend the meeting; however, the Board still would like to recognize his accomplishment as not many individuals have achieved it.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

E-911

- (A) **Consideration to approve allowing staff to consult with a Structural Engineer to assist with a design to renovate the E-911 Center.**

County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the need for expansion of the dispatch room, stating that the space is too crowded, especially when four (4) dispatchers are on a shift. Ms. Dockery stated that she and Co-Assistant County Manager/ Chief Building Official Joey Davenport would like to have a structural engineer evaluate the building and provide quotes and plans. Once completed, staff will bring the project back to Board for the RFP process.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve allowing staff to consult with a Structural Engineer to assist with a design to renovate the E-911 Center. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

- (B) **Consideration to approve a quote from INdigital for the purchase of a new phone system.**

Commissioner Mathis started the discussion by stating that he sees the importance and need for a new phone system; however believes it would make more sense to wait and purchase and install said system following the building's renovation, as just previously discussed, so as to not have to worry about moving anything. Commissioner Mathis stated that at the very least, we should wait to hear what the structural engineers have in their plans after their evaluation of the building.

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that there are some issues with the current system and Motorola is typically unresponsive to any support tickets. Jen Poole from INdigital addressed the Board by stating that the current system, Callworks, is at end of life with no local techs or parts that can be ordered. She informed the Board that INdigital offers a better cost, have service techs within the state, cover multiple counties, and have data centers in different states.

Commissioner Mathis asked why the equipment could not wait until after the renovation. Ms. Poole replied that the current system is out of date and not working as it should. Ms. Dockery asked what the timeline would be if approved. Ms. Poole stated that it would take approximately four (4) months for installation.

Commissioner Mathis stated that staff should get a plan together then order the equipment as it made more sense to wait. Chairman Singletary asked what the current problem with the system is, to which Ms. Celinski stated that it is the system as a whole. The audio, which is just now beginning to become an issue, has been acting up. She stated they are catching it early and she wished to be proactive and bring it to the Board before it does become a major problem. Commissioner Guarnieri asked how long the service contract is, to which Ms. Poole stated that the contract would be five (5) years long but can be extended.

Commissioner Mathis asked how long it would take to get a survey completed. Chief Building Inspector Joey Davenport stated that the County uses several different engineers but that a simple plan could be made up in a month or so. When asked how long the renovation of the Elections Office took, Mr. Davenport answered that it took around up to four (4) months to fully complete.

Ms. Poole stated that once the contract is signed, INdigital would immediately begin helping with the current system that E-911 has until the new system can arrive. Ms. Celinski stated that currently they have put in support tickets with no answers, local technicians are not trained to work on the current system, and it is very difficult to work with. INdigital does have technicians locally that can work on the new proposed system and will be able to help whenever is needed. Ms. Poole added that if the system were to be installed prior to the building renovation, should anything need to be relocated, it would be relocated for only the cost of any additional cabling.

Chairman Singletary stated that this item would be brought up and discussed again at the next meeting.

Environmental Health

(C) **Consideration to adopt an increase in Environmental Health fees.**

County Environmental Health Manager Ken Collins summarized the proposed fee increases, stating that no changes to the fee schedule had been made since 2015 and revisions were needed. There is a district Environmental Health fee committee that has looked at the fees for not only this district, but for all of Georgia. After research, it was determined that many of the existing fees are undervalued when considering the time, equipment, and effort involved in providing the services. Fees in other districts were found to be higher than ours.

Any presented proposed increase in fees must be approved districtwide as they will be applied districtwide to be effective July 1, 2024. Based on Georgia law, the fees must be approved by the County Board of Health (done last month) and then by the Board of Commissioners. Once the fees are adopted, they can be implemented. Chairman Singletary pointed out that the increase proposed are not substantial increases. Mr. Collins replied that the increases are not as high as they should be, so as to avoid citizen “sticker shock”; hopefully they will be revisited in a few years.

Chairman Singletary stated that this item would be brought up and discussed again at the next meeting.

Planning, Zoning & Engineering

(D) **Review of the minutes for the March 7, 2024 Planning Commission meeting.**

The meeting minutes were reviewed as presented.

Public Works

(E) **Consideration to approve a quote for emergency cross drain pipe repairs on Stocks Dairy Road.**

Public Works Director Mike Sistrunk presented on issue and quote, stating that the pipe joints were starting to separate on the 400 block and needed to be corrected as soon as possible as it is a serious issue for the roadway. Mr. Sistrunk added that any proposed work would not impact area traffic or the road itself.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve a quote for emergency cross drain pipe repairs on Stocks Dairy Road for \$49,573.00 from POPCO, Inc. to come from SPLOST funds. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES

NONE

COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS

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

County Manager Christi Dockery discussed ongoing projects in the County: (1) The road resurfacing project is ongoing and should be completed in approximately 6 weeks; (2) we are currently in the collection period for TSPLOST II; (3) the Bermuda Lane pipe repair project is ongoing; (4) proposed budgets have been drafted and provided to the Board; and (5) the 911 telecommunication tower to be located at Fire Station 4 will go to Planning Commission next month for a variance and conditional use application and then come back to the Board.

(B) **Consideration to approve a design and engineering proposal from Lose Design for the 100 acre Lee County Community Park project.**

Chairman Singletary stated that this item would be brought up and discussed again at the next meeting.

(C) **Consideration to approve a quote for the repair of the Chokee Creek bridge on New York Road.**

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve a quote for the repair of the Chokee Creek bridge on New York Road for \$30,000.00 from Southern Concrete Construction Company, Inc. to come from TSPLOST funds. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner

Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(D) **Discussion of 2024 Local Road Assistance Administration funds (LRA) and potential projects.**

The eligible activities/projects and application process are the same for these LRA funds as they are for traditional LMIG. The application process is currently open, but will close June 15, 2024. Lee County's formula amount for this grant is \$855,690.09 and no match is required.

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that it is staff's recommendation that the Commissioners select one or two roads from the attached proposed road list. This road list has been compiled based on factors such as grade of the road as well as the cost of maintenance. Staff also recommends applying to GDOT for these LRA funds and once accepted, holding the funds until the County also receives the funds for the LMIG FY2025 cycle; the application process for traditional LMIG usually begins in July.

Chairman Singletary stated that this item would be brought up and discussed again at the next meeting so as to allow the Commissioners time to think on it.

(E) **Consideration to approve the emergency repair of the Oakland Library roof.**

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve the emergency repair of the Oakland Library roof for \$22,509.00 from Whitt's Quality Roofing, LLC to come from General funds. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(F) **Consideration to adopt a resolution declaring the election results for the SPLOST referendum, held March 12, 2024.**

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to adopt a resolution declaring the election results for the SPLOST referendum, held March 12, 2024. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(G) **Consideration to award the bid for the design and engineering of the Coston Road paving project.**

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to award the bid for the design and engineering of the Coston Road paving project for \$49,800.00 from Advanced Engineering Services, the lowest bidder, to come from TSPLOST funds. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

(H) **Discussion of Lumpkin Road East.**

Handouts were provided to the Board at the commencement of the meeting and a map of the area was displayed. Stormwater Engineer Mike Talley of Flint River Consulting summarized the flooding issues on Lumpkin Road East. Mr. Talley suggests grading a new ditch on the North side of the roadway with a culvert under the road. If the easement is acquired, Public Works crews can complete the work. The main issue lies with the dam downstream. Law states that if you move water from one basin to another, you are liable for any damages or perceived damages; which is why when there is a flooding issue, the County must get explicit permission from property owners before pumping from one basin to another.

The dam, which was built on private property sometime in the 1960's, is in poor condition. Mr. Talley stated the best thing to do is remove the dam, while also being sure there is no effect on Hwy 195. With no dam, the ditch and culvert would work. A drainage study could be done so as to ensure it was not impacting the DOT culverts. We need to evaluate the integrity of the dam. Back in 2020, there was evidence of water coming over the dam. As a result, there may be some stability issues regarding the embankment, including a crushed pipe at the bottom of the dam.

On the south side of the property, there is evidence of what used to be an outfall for the pond. The existing pond is also in bad shape. A solution is to build a diversion structure around the pond; the issue, however, is available land and not wishing to put any additional water in that pond. The pond is a hazard to do anything with. The proposed solution, as discussed, is to create a diversion structure around the pond so as to not

interfere with the embankment. Mr. Talley mentioned easements could be needed from approximately three (3) property owners if done on the South side. We would be allowed to size this structure so as to handle the amount of water we know is coming from properties. The embankment is about 15 feet above the natural ground and about 20 feet higher than the culvert at Hwy 195. Elevation goes from 240 to 220 feet, so a concrete structure will be needed and a structural engineer would need to be contracted.

Mr. Talley stated the first problem that needs to be addressed is the dam. Commissioner Mathis asked if this could be easily done if we had the landowners' permission, to which Mr. Talley replied that he believes anyone would be willing to play ball to get the dam up to a better functioning condition. Granting some sort of temporary easement or ownership partial may be considered in this scenario. Again, Mr. Talley emphasized that the integrity of the dam needs to be evaluated before anything. The South side would be more amenable to the structure. County Attorney Jimmy Skipper stated that he would like some time to look at the option of temporary easements.

COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS

NONE

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 – State of Old Leslie Road

Chairman Singletary asked if anyone else would like to speak.

With no further comments or questions from the audience, the Public Forum was closed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(A) The next regularly scheduled County Commission Meeting is **Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 6:00pm.**

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Walls made the **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mathis seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea. The meeting adjourned at 7:18PM.

Facebook video link: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyga/videos/7289924994395864>

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.

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