



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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

TUESDAY, MAY 9, 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, May 9, 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 Dennis Roland, 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

Matthew Lampley, Executive Pastor of First Baptist Church Albany, 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 April 25, 2023.**
Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for April 25, 2023. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.
- (B) **Consideration to approve the minutes for the Special Called Meeting of the Finance Committee of the Board of Commissioners for April 17, 2023.**
Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to approve the minutes for the Special Called Meeting of the Finance Committee of the Board of Commissioners for April 17, 2023. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.

CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

- (A) **Brent Davis, Reliable Engineering, to discuss current road projects.**
Brent Davis, Reliable Engineering, provided the update that all LMIG road projects have been completely resurfaced. The project was delayed on two roads due to waiting on necessary railroad permits; however, once

completed, the railroad crossings were greatly improved. Shoulder work and hydro seeding has also begun and while a few roads are still in need of striping and rumble strips, he stated that the project should be fully completed within two weeks. A punch list will also be created for any repairs needed. Mr. Davis let the Board know that they were anticipating being approximately \$23,000.00 under budget. Mr. Davis also discussed the current project on Park Street, stating that the striping, handicap spots, and signage are in progress and should be done this week.

Vice-Chairman Singletary stated that he appreciated Mr. Davis and applauded the work he has been doing for the County.

(B) **Chad Slaughter, Marsh McLennan Agency, to present on the healthcare renewal.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to table the discussion on the healthcare renewal, based on discussions had at the Special Called meeting held immediately prior to this meeting. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

Lee County Emergency Management Agency

(A) **Consideration to apply for a Hazard Mitigation Grant.**

County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the grant stating that there would be a required match of 25% (approximately \$15,000.00) from the County and staff would like to use the grant for generators (an eligible projects) at various County buildings. The Board voiced support for the grant application and staff was advised to continue with the application.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES

(A) **Sheriff's Office and Jail – Consideration to award the bid for Inmate Medical Services.**

Three bids were received. Southern Health Partners is the staff recommendation, with base pricing of \$418,800.00 annually and with added Dental and Mental Health, will bring the first year's price to \$440,264.00. Southern Health Partners will increase by 4% the second and third year of the contract.

Commissioner Walls made the **MOTION** to award the bid for Inmate Medical Services to Southern Health Partners. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.

(B) **Superior Court – Judge Sizemore to address the Board regarding the Courthouse expansion project.**

This item immediately followed the healthcare renewal item.

Judge Sizemore discussed current issues at the courthouse, especially handicap accessibility. There is not an elevator inside the courthouse (Lee County is one of two courthouses within the circuit that does not have an elevator), which poses an issue if a handicapped individual needs to be on the jury or otherwise attend court, as the main courtroom is on the second floor.

Judge Sizemore proposed creating an addition to connect to the rear of the original courthouse that would contain a secondary courtroom; thereby, maintaining the architectural beauty and integrity of the original courthouse. Having a secondary courtroom would not only be a solution for the accessibility concerns, but also allow the three (3) Superior Court Judges to hold two jury trials at one time. An addition would also allow potentially for an office area where one of the Judges may have their permanent chambers located and also provide additional bathrooms. Photographs provided by Judge Sizemore were shown as examples.

Within the circuit, Lee County has the highest population and the second biggest caseload. Superior Court Judges see felony cases, divorces, civil cases over \$15,000.00, and those misdemeanor cases in which a jury is

requested. Several years ago, the area formerly used as the jail was renovated to include a smaller satellite courtroom in an attempt to accommodate individuals who could not attend court in the upstairs courtroom; a room Judge Sizemore stated is frequently used.

Judge Sizemore asked the Board to consider the creation of a committee to further discuss the project and conduct a needs analysis of sorts. Chairman Mathis asked County Manager Christi Dockery to begin putting a committee together, at Judge Sizemore's request. Judge Sizemore added that he would like to serve on that committee.

Commissioner Roland asked if it would be beneficial to institute a State Court in Lee County, to which Judge Sizemore replied that it could potentially make things easier in terms of misdemeanor cases. Judge Sizemore also suggested that the Superior Court set aside a certain number of weeks to focus on misdemeanor cases.

COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS

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

County Manager Christi Dockery discussed ongoing projects in the County: (1) DNR has nearly completed the engineering for the boat ramp to be located on the 100 acres at Jackson's Ford Landing; and (2) the 2023 CDBG project will focus on an infrastructure project for a mobile home park within the County, that application is due by June, and the project will take approximately 18 months.

(B) **Consideration to approve a renewal contract for the Public Defender for July 2023 – December 2023.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve a renewal contract for the Public Defender for July 2023 – December 2023. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(C) **Discussion of speed humps.**

Commissioner Singletary stated that there have been many requests for speed humps and suggests the County go back to a petition process or have a standard procedure that requires a certain percentage of the property owners on the street to voice support of the installation of a speed hump. The individual requesting the speed hump would be responsible for seeking out the required percentage of signatures. The Board voiced support, but added that the placement needed to make sense.

(D) **Consideration to declare vehicles surplus.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to declare the following vehicles surplus to be sold on GovDeals: a 2008 Ford Crown Victoria VIN: 1007, a 2010 Ford Crown Victoria VIN: 6329, and a 2002 Ford F-150 Pick Up Truck VIN: 4734. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS

(A) **Discussion of the Lee County Medical Center.**

Commissioner Roland began the discussion by voicing concern over the Hospital Authority and the issuance of the \$30 million in bonds. Chairman Mathis stated that the Hospital Authority members have no immediate intentions regarding the \$30 million bonds at this point and added that the Development Authority will be reimbursing the County for funds spent up to this point.

Chairman Mathis asked staff to set up a joint meeting with the Development Authority and Board of Commissioners for the discussion of the development of the Grand Island property and other projects.

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.

No citizens took part in the Public Forum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (A) The next regularly scheduled County Commission Meeting is **Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 6:00pm.**
- (B) The offices of the Lee County Board of Commissioners will be **closed Monday, May 29, 2023** in observance of Memorial Day. County offices will reopen Tuesday, May 30, 2023 for regular business hours. **Residential garbage services will be delayed one day for the rest of the week.**
- (C) The garbage transition is still ongoing. Several cans from the old garbage service have not been picked up yet, citizens are asked to please be patient during this time as they make rounds to pick the remaining cans up. Staff currently has a list and is working with the company to get these picked up.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:45PM.

Facebook video link: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyga/videos/255511416953315>

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.