



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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

TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2023 6:00 P.M.
T. PAGE THARP BUILDING
OPAL CANNON AUDITORIUM
WWW.LEE.GA.US

MEETING MINUTES
VOTING 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 voting session on Tuesday, May 23, 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

Pastor Jonathan LaBarge, New Hope Baptist 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 May 9, 2023.**
Commissioner Roland made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes for May 9, 2023. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.
- (B) **Consideration to approve the minutes for the Special Called Meeting of the Personnel Committee of the Board of Commissioners for May 9, 2023.**
Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve the minutes for the Special Called Meeting of the Personnel Committee of the Board of Commissioners for May 9, 2023. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.
- (C) **Consideration to approve the minutes for the Special Called Joint of the Board of Commissioners and Lee County Development Authority for May 15, 2023.**
Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to approve the minutes for the Special Called Joint Meeting of the Board of Commissioners and Lee County Development Authority for May 15, 2023. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Singletary voting yea.

CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

(A) **Recognition of employees' years of service.**

Chairman Mathis recognized the following employees for their years of service to Lee County:

5 years – Corrie Futch – Property Appraiser

5 years – Jack Smith – Deputy, Sheriff's Office

5 years – Melinda Newberry – Utility Billing Specialist

(B) **Lisa Oosterveen, Deputy Director, ASPIRE Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Services, to present on Mental Health Awareness Month and discuss services provided by ASPIRE.**

Hollis Smith and Brittany Craft, ASPIRE Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Services, presented on Mental Health Awareness Month and discussed the adolescent and adult services offered in our area, such as school based services present (in all Lee County schools), a mental health resiliency clubhouse, a crisis center, outpatient services, and a residential substance abuse program.

Consideration to adopt a proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month in Lee County.

Commissioner Roland made the **MOTION** to adopt a proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month in Lee County. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

NONE

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES

(A) **Consideration to appoint one (1) member to the Tax Assessors Board for a term of three (3) years. Current term expires 05/31/2023. New term expires 05/31/2026. Letter of interest in reappointment received from Charles "Chuck" Gee.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to reappoint Charles "Chuck" Gee to the Tax Assessors Board for a term of three (3) years, expiring 05/31/2026. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS

Joey Davenport, Chief Building Official/Co-Assistant County Manager took a moment to introduce and welcome Diana Sandoval and Sid Walker, new personnel with the Planning, Zoning, and Engineering Department.

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

County Manager Christi Dockery discussed ongoing projects in the County: (1) The striping project on Park Street has been completed; (2) the gymnasium renovation project is in its final phase; (3) the LMIG road resurfacing projects have been completed; and (4) the current CDBG project should be completed within the next two weeks.

(B) **Consideration to award the bid for Administrative and Related Gant Services for the 2023 CDBG project.**

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that if the County does not move forward with a 2023 project, these same bid results can be utilized for the 2024 CDBG application cycle.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to award the bid for Administrative and Related Grant Services for the 2023 CDBG Project to Bob Roberson & Associates, recipient of the highest scoring rating amongst reviewers. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(C) **Consideration to award the bid for Engineering and/or Architectural Grant Services for the 2023 CDBG project.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to award the bid for Engineering and/or Architectural Grant Services for the 2023 CDBG project to Still Waters Engineering, recipient of the highest scoring rating amongst reviewers. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(D) **Consideration to approve an annual renewal NPDES Permit Contract with Flint River Consulting.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve an annual renewal NPDES Permit Contract with Flint River Consulting for \$16,500.00. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(E) **Consideration to approve an annual renewal On Call Contract with Flint River Consulting.**

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to approve an annual renewal On Call Contract with Flint River Consulting for \$10,500.00. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(F) **Consideration to approve a lease agreement, to expire December 31, 2028, for property located at 297 Foxworth Drive, Leesburg, GA 31763 to Richard and Sherry Benz.**

Commissioner Roland made the **MOTION** to approve a lease agreement, to expire December 31, 2028, for property located at 297 Foxworth Drive, Leesburg, GA 31763 (FEMA lot) to Richard and Sherry Benz. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Singletary and Commissioner Guarnieri voting yea.

COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS

(A) **Consideration to ratify the healthcare plan renewal.**

This renewal includes Anthem BlueCross BlueShield, Know the Costs, and Teladoc. There is a 5% employee contribution increase for the Platinum Plan and a \$250.00 increase for the employer contribution to the Silver Plan.

Commissioner Singletary made the **MOTION** to ratify the healthcare plan renewal. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

(B) **Discussion of greenspace.**

(C) **Discussion of stormwater.**

Mike Talley, Stormwater Engineer, Flint River Consulting, and Joey Davenport, Chief Building Official/Co-Assistant County Manager were present.

Chairman Mathis began the discussion by stating that there is a long standing issue regarding both stormwater and greenspace. A change in state law was adopted regarding stormwater runoff and an ordinance was put in place some time ago referencing the amount of greenspace required in every residential development (some requirements are also state law).

Mr. Davenport stated that in 2002, the state released a greenspace requirement and the County responded by adopting an ordinance in conjunction. A few years later, the state did away with that requirement, however, the County never went back and revised the ordinance to reflect this change. To Mr. Davenport's knowledge, there is not a current state requirement specifically regarding greenspace.

Chairman Mathis added there were two conflicting greenspace ordinances, with one ordinance stating you can only build three (3) houses per acre but also one that asks you to do calculations on the number of acres in the development, subtract the number of lots that are not buildable, and then get the lots out of the remaining property, which seem contradictory and can be confusing. Mr. Davenport clarified that the three (3) houses per acre requirement is for if there is water and sewer, which would logically provide 1/3 acre lot sizes; however, when stormwater areas are taken out of the area, resulting lot sizes can be as small as 2/10 acre.

Commissioner Singletary stated that the way he interpreted the ordinance was that the lots were divided after the greenspace and stormwater ponds/drainage had been accounted for (the buildable lots). Chairman Mathis said he didn't read it that way and it's because of this confusion that there needs to be a correction made to clarify the wording and intent of the ordinance.

Commissioner Roland suggested allowing the developers to divide the greenspace among the houses, thereby providing larger lot sizes and the ability to collect property taxes off of it. Mr. Davenport wished to clarify that the County is not taking greenspace anymore. County Attorney Skipper added that greenspace must be owned by a homeowners association or a trust and that just because its greenspace doesn't necessarily mean that it is untaxable. Commissioner Singletary added that greenspace is an essential part of the neighborhoods and subdivisions.

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper will draft an amendment to the existing greenspace ordinance so as to limit the amount of houses permitted (with a well and septic, the requirement is one (1) for every 2 acres; with water and septic, the requirement is one (1) for every acre; with water and sewer, the requirement is three (3) per acre) on a developable acre, specifically defined so as not to include stormwater areas, greenspace, or roadways. For example, if there are 100 acres and 25 acres of that area is greenspace, the total number of houses permitted to be built is based upon the remaining 75 buildable acres.

The Board also agreed to retain the following requirements, as seen in the Lee County Code of Ordinances Sec. 70-94. - Land conservation: "Where the property is to be developed as a major subdivision with at least a county provided water system or a county provided sewer system, unless otherwise specified, a minimum of 25 percent of the remaining developable land shall be preserved. Where the property is to be developed with wells and septic tanks, a minimum of ten percent of the developable land shall be preserved."

Chairman Mathis then asked Stormwater Engineer Mike Talley to discuss the latest stormwater update and let the Board know of any further suggestions, adding that the County doesn't allow developers to do the bare minimum as has been seen in the past. Mr. Talley stated that the latest update was to adopt the infiltration requirement as set by the State, which requires a developer of a commercial development to capture and infiltrate one inch of runoff from the site. The water stays at the site and then gets infiltrated back into the ground, usually in this area by way of a pond. Additionally, there is already a water quality requirement at less the volume than the runoff reduction volume, so if the infiltration/runoff reduction requirement is met, the water quality requirement is satisfied as well.

In moving forward, Mr. Talley emphasized that he goes by the Code, which he acknowledged can be amended as the Board sees fit and as situations arise resulting in cause to re-evaluate a portion of the current Code. With any changes come tradeoffs like losing developable land because more land is required to abide by some set standards or spending money if the development of any kind of underground detention is necessary; however, Mr. Talley added that the underground options typically do not work well in this area due to the water table.

Chairman Mathis emphasized the concern of runoff to neighbors and asked if we were doing everything we could do to prevent it, to which Mr. Talley replied that he believes we are, but added that the aerial topographical maps that the State has provided to the County are very beneficial. This allows staff to view the property/project area and assess any potential runoff issues. Mr. Talley added that there were some other things the County could do and improve on, such as percolation tests and infiltration. Chairman Mathis asked Mr. Talley to work on and provide the Board a simple summary of what the County is doing vs what the County could be doing better for any stormwater issues.

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, June 13, 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.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM.

Facebook video link: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyga/videos/628340435568747>

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.