



LEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
T. PAGE THARP GOVERNMENTAL BUILDING
102 STARKSVILLE AVENUE NORTH, LEESBURG, GEORGIA 31763

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 AT 6:00 PM
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 work session on Tuesday, October 8, 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 were 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 6:00 PM.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **INVOCATION**

A) Apostle Mauldin Batten, Church of Leesburg, to lead the invocation.

Apostle Mauldin Batten led the invocation.

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A) Consideration to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Roland made the **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2024. Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Mathis and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

A) Consideration to adopt a Proclamation naming October 2024 as Careers in Construction Month.

Commissioner Roland made the **MOTION** to adopt a Proclamation naming October 2024 as Careers in Construction Month. Commissioner Mathis seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

A photo was taken with the instructor Mr. Wanner, the construction students of Lee County High

School, and the Board.

B) Mike Talley, Flint River Consulting, to discuss stormwater.

Mike Talley, Flint River Consulting, addressed the Board. Mr. Talley discussed the flooding issues with Hurricane Helene, stating before the storm, he went and checked possible flooding areas. The County did receive a good amount of rain, but not as much as was expected. Mr. Talley stated that the Callaway Lakes area is where there have been repeated flood issues and there is currently a house at 112 Ivy Lane that has water in it. There is usually "nuisance flooding" in the area, which is when yards are flooded, ponds are full, and roads have water on them; however, houses are not usually impacted. In discussing 112 Ivy Lane, he stated that the family moved here last year and live here part-time. They currently have a shared inlet with their neighbor that ties into the Callaway Lakes drainage system. Based on pictures and discussions, they had approximately 30 inches of water in their shed.

Commissioner Mathis asked if this was the lot previously discussed that was determined to be too low to build on. Mr. Talley answered that this is not the same property. However, this property did have problems early on with the roadside ditch and problems in the inlet. Mr. Talley is not aware of this property having any repeated problems pertaining to the structures. The water was in the house for around three hours then left, which is typical for a flash flood. A neighbor informed them of the water standing outside their house. This will happen again, and we will need a plan for what to do. Mr. Talley said that the inlet on the west side of Ivy Lane is currently holding water. Based on various data, Lee County received a twenty-five-year rain event with three to four hours of rain. Drainage systems in Lee County, as in most communities, are for a ten-year rain event. With this kind of storm and the existing drainage system, there will be flooding. With the water going away after several hours, it shows there is no bigger problem. Mr. Talley suggests doing a study to see what the system can handle and if there is a capacity issue, since it is a thirty-year-old system. He suggested Public Works could install another inlet next to the current one on Ivy Lane, which would be the most cost-effective solution.

Mr. Talley discussed the Ambleside and Wiregrass ponds. Mr. Talley presented maps to show these locations. He stated a citizen, Mr. Maddox, has had problems with damage from flooding. This pond has had problems in the past and once it gets full it begins to go into the cul-de-sac. In the past, Public Works has used an AG pump to dump water into an inlet that goes into the low area. However, that is a low area fills up also, a citizen has allowed us to pump water onto his property but has stated there is too much water and there will be damage to his trees. Currently, with new residential developments, there is no way to pump without going into citizens' driveways. Mr. Talley stated the County can no longer pump outside the County property anymore. He suggested installing a pipe in our right of way and Public Works could pump using that. The County can also install a fence around our property; that can help Public Works know when to stop pumping, by pumping until the water hits the fence.

Mr. Talley showed a map of western Lee County, which showed eight (8) miles of area with no outlets and no outlets owned by Lee County. He stated that there is nowhere for the water in this section of Lee County to go. He stated that fixing this problem would take around \$150,000.00 for surveying and \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00 for engineering. This would just find a solution for where the water could go. With everything else needed to do this project, it could easily come to be \$1 million to \$2 million. Mr. Talley stated that we want to make sure residential property is protected when moving forward in new developments. With the newer Live Oak section, they made sure to take extra precautions and look into various things, Mr. Talley is confident that subdivision will not have problems. Mr. Talley stated that there is a limit on what they can do, since the ordinance does not state they can't build in a no outlet hole. In the long term, as these areas develop, this will be an

ongoing problem. Commissioner Mathis asked Mr. Talley to come up with a plan for the Ambleside pond and Winifred pond. Mr. Talley stated that he will work on a plan.

7. **PUBLIC HEARING**

- A) A Public Hearing will be held to set the millage rate.

Chairman Singletary opened the Public Hearing at 6:21pm.

With no comments, or questions from the public, staff, or Board members, Chairman Singletary closed the Public Hearing at 6:22pm.

Consideration to adopt a resolution to set the 2024 millage rate.

Commissioner Guarnieri made the **MOTION** to adopt a resolution to set the 2024 millage rate. Commissioner Roland seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Mathis and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

- B) **Amber Barragan (Z24-013)** has submitted an application requesting a variance from the R-1 Single-Family Residential District Section 70-164, setback requirements, and is also requesting permission to encroach on Lee County Board of Commissioners property (storm water management area). The applicant hired a pool company who deviated from the County approved site plan and placed the concrete pool deck and pool structure over the rear lot line and onto the property owned by the Lee County Board of Commissioners. Applicant is also requesting permission to place the required pool fencing on Lee County Board of Commissioners property in order to abide by the State of Georgia's Environmental Health Regulations Chapter 511-3-5 Rule.18 (11) Barriers and the 2018 International Pool and Spa Code as adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The property owner is Amber Barragan. The subject property is zoned R-1 and is located at 132 Morning Mist Drive, parcel number 040 D 366, in Land Lot 271 of the Second Land District of Lee County, Georgia. **Planning Commission recommends approval.**

Chairman Singletary opened the Public Hearing.

Assistant Planning Director Amanda Nava summarized this application. Ms. Nava stated that this pool was constructed within four feet of the rear property line, but the ordinance states it must be at least ten feet. She stated that the concrete pad extends over onto county-owned property and exceeds the 40% impervious surface requirement for R-1 lots. The planning staff feels that variance hardship is met in this case, as the applicant had no control over the pool being placed differently than the approved site plan. Ms. Nava stated that in granting this variance, it is not expected to cause substantial detriment to the public interest or the adjacent property. Commissioner Roland asked where this is located and what kind of County property it is. Ms. Nava stated it was on Morning Mist Drive, and it is a stormwater retention pond area. The slab is around two feet on the property which hinders the applicant from placing a fence. She stated that this is far away from the actual stormwater pond and would not cause any issues for the pond. Commissioner Guarnieri asked about permits and inspections. Ms. Nava stated she is not sure how inspections are completed in terms of pool placement. Within the site plan that was approved, the pool was ten feet away from the rear of the property. Commissioner Mathis asked how this happened. Ms. Nava said she is not sure as they had a site plan that was drawn to scale. The concrete slab was nowhere near the rear lot line and the site plan showed it being fifteen feet and once it was placed it was only four feet.

Commissioner Guarnieri stated that he did not have a problem with the variance.

Mr. Phil Cannon, the applicant's attorney, addressed the Board. Mr. Cannon stated that he wanted to make sure the Board knows that Ms. Barragan is an innocent party. If this variance is not passed, she

is looking at around \$100k to \$150k to tear out the pool. Mr. Cannon stated that based on his investigation, it seems like the pool company went and got a permit, then changed the plan. When they changed the pool it then pushed how far the concrete went back. Ms. Barragan reached out to a fence company that informed her that the pool was past her property line. This has been an ongoing issue for 4 to 5 months.

With no comments, or questions from the public, staff, or Board members, Chairman Singletary closed the Public Hearing.

8. **DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS**

- A) Review of the September 5, 2024 Planning Commission meeting minutes.

The meeting minutes were reviewed as presented.

- B) **Planning, Zoning & Engineering - Consideration to approve a Task Order in accordance with the already established Master Services Agreement with WSP for Multi-Family Residential Policy and R-2 Zoning Amendment Support.**

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve a Task Order in accordance with the already established Master Services Agreement with WSP for Multi-Family Residential Policy and R-2 Zoning Amendment Support. Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

- C) **Public Works - Consideration to authorize staff to publish an RFP for an office building for Code Enforcement and Animal Control personnel.**

Chairman Singletary stated that the Code Enforcement and Animal Control personnel would be moving from the E-911 building onto Public Works property. County Manager Christi Dockery summarized the renovation, stating the Board had previously approved over \$700,000.00 for renovations, which would come from ARPA funds. Ms. Dockery stated that Public Works Director Mike Sistrunk is proposing to do a turnkey building that could be purchased, then can install septic and other amenities. Chairman Singletary asked if there were any objections. Commissioner Mathis asked about just recently approving an RFP be published for renovations to the Public Works office. Public Works Director Mike Sistrunk stated that they did, but they ran into problems with the structure. It would be easier and cheaper to erect a new building than to renovate the current building. Commissioner Mathis asked what the original renovation was and how much was approved for it. Mr. Sistrunk stated that the original plan was to add on to the current building, but they are unable to do that due to how the current buildings are laid out. There is a lot between Facilities the Animal Shelter for this turnkey building and the estimated cost is between \$120,000.00 to \$125,000.00.

Ms. Dockery stated that this turnkey building would be done instead of the renovations. Commissioner Mathis asked for staff to bring more information and pricing to the next meeting. Ms. Dockery stated that this would be coming from ARPA funds, where it was previously approved. Chairman Singletary asked what the original total was approved for. Ms. Dockery stated it was \$700,000.00, which included the Tharp Building improvements as well.

9. **CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS & GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS/AUTHORITIES**

10. **COUNTY MANAGER'S MATTERS**

A) Updates on County projects.

County Manager Christi Dockery discussed the following updates to County projects: (1) The Fire Department sent crews to Hazelhurst and Public Works sent crews to Alapaha to help with the storm relief efforts; and (2) the 100 acres was opened for evacuees, with ACCG and GEMA on board.

B) Consideration to approve the Budget Calendar for FY 2025-26.

County Manager Christi Dockery stated this was brought to the Board early to make everyone aware they are preparing for the upcoming budget. This is the standard calendar presented every year.

The Board took no action.

C) Consideration to adopt a resolution authorizing the lease of certain real property acquired by the County pursuant to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to adopt a resolution authorizing the lease of a certain real property acquired by the County pursuant to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Roland voting yea.

D) Consideration to adopt an amendment to the Build Agreement with Kinetic by Windstream.

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that the DCA changed the terms in the original build agreement.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to adopt an amendment to the Build Agreement with Kinetic by Windstream subject to review by County Attorney Jimmy Skipper. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Roland voting yea.

E) Consideration to ratify the purchase of a compressor for the Oakland Library Chiller.

County Manager Christi Dockery stated that the chiller has been ordered, and it will be installed once delivered. The price for this compressor is \$18,736.39.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to ratify the purchase of a compressor for the Oakland Library Chiller at a cost of \$18,736.39 to come from General Fund - Facilities funds. Commissioner Walls seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Guarnieri and Commissioner Roland voting yea.

11. **COMMISSIONER'S MATTERS**

A) Discussion of the 2025 LMIG application and potential projects.

Chairman Singletary discussed the handout of roads. Each district will receive around \$1 million for roads. Commissioner Mathis asked if that's how much was needed to submit the application. County Manager Christi Dockery stated that the LMIG amount is around \$900,000.00. Chairman Singletary stated that it would be around \$200,000 per district, and then they could submit the LMIG application. Commissioner Mathis suggested doing one big road project all together. Chairman Singletary mentioned Ledo Road being done next year. Commissioner Mathis asked if this money is for next year and when it will need to be spent by. Ms. Dockery stated the application must be submitted by February, however, the money can be held for two years. Chairman Singletary stated that it could be put towards Ledo Road. Ms. Dockery stated an estimate given for the County's

portion of Ledo Road was \$1.6 million. Commissioner Walls also mentioned paving Graves Spring Road. Commissioner Mathis clarified that more roads will be paved, Ledo Road is just for the application of LMIG funds. Commissioner Walls stated that paving for Coston Road was approved for approximately \$900,000.00 last year. Chairman Singletary clarified that only the engineering for Coston Road was approved, not the paving. Ms. Dockery stated that she discussed with Matt Inman, they are working to send letters to landowners to inform them of what the road would look like if paved.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve Ledo Road for the 2025 LMIG application. Commissioner Guarneri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

B) Discussion of the purchase of a mobile generator.

Chairman Singletary discussed the buildings that currently have a generator, adding that he feels purchasing a mobile generator and installing switches at the remaining buildings would give an opportunity to be able to move the generator to where it was needed. Chairman Singletary suggested getting a used generator that can help power the buildings, such as the library, in case of shelter needed during storms. He stated that he would like to see if Assistant Fire Chief Cole Williams could find a used generator. Commissioner Mathis stated that he would like to decide on this since it is something that has been discussed for a while. He mentioned not putting generators at buildings that are leased from the County and the Courthouse due to renovations (a generator for the Courthouse could be included in the renovation plans). Commissioner Mathis stated that that leaves the Courthouse Annex, Libraries, Parks & Recreation Office, Tax Commissioner's Office, and the Elections & Registration Office. He stated that the Redbone Library and Parks & Recreation can likely use a Generac generator. Chairman Singletary stated that he thinks if there were generator transfer switches, then it could reduce the number of generators, especially since there is a small chance all the power in the County would be out for a prolonged period of time. He stated that they could look at more generators later, if necessary.

Commissioner Mathis asked what buildings are too big for a Generac generator. Public Works Director Mike Sistrunk stated that the Tax Commissioners Office, Elections & Registrations Office, and Oakland Library were the ones that would require a bigger generator. Chairman Singletary stated that they aren't looking for a generator that can power everything, this would just be to get through a natural disaster. Mr. Williams clarified with the Board that they are wanting a switch for the Tax Commissioners Office, Elections & Registrations Office, and Oakland Library but a Generac generator for the other buildings. Commissioner Mathis asked Mr. Williams and Mr. Sistrunk to bring them a plan for these buildings.

C) Discussion of C-2 (General Business District) setback requirements.

Chairman Singletary stated that this is something that the Planning Department is currently working on and will bring it to the Board at a later date.

12. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

13. **COUNTY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS**

A) Consideration to approve fees to accompany the newly adopted Chapter 22 Article V of the Code of Ordinances, "Short-Term Rental Host License".

County Attorney Jimmy Skipper stated that these are annual fees to accompany the Short-Term Rental ordinance approved at the previous meeting.

Commissioner Mathis made the **MOTION** to approve fees to accompany the newly adopted Chapter 22 Article V of the Code of Ordinances, "Short-Term Rental Host License". Commissioner Guarnieri seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** was unanimous with Commissioner Roland and Commissioner Walls voting yea.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

15. **PUBLIC FORUM**

Paul Clayton - Thanked Public Works for their work done on Old Leslie Road in preparation for the upcoming storm.

Sylvia Grinage - Discussed drainage ponds on Wiregrass Way.

Commissioner Mathis stated that they discussed combining the ponds but landowners did not want that. Mr. Talley is currently working on a plan for these ponds.

Chairman Luke Singletary asked if anyone else would like to speak.

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

16. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A) The next regularly scheduled County Commission Meeting is **Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 6:00pm.**

During announcements, Chairman Singletary thanked all of those who helped set up the 100 acre evacuation site. Chairman Singletary commended the Elections & Registration Office for their outstanding performance award received from the State.

17. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned 7:03 PM.

Facebook Link: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyga/videos/504742239069362>

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK