

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
Tuesday, February 26, 2013

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chairman Bill Slaughter  
Vice Chairperson Joyce Evans  
Commissioner Richard Raines  
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall  
Commissioner John P. Page

Commissioner Powell was not present due to out of town travel.

Chairman Slaughter called the regular session to order at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner Raines gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Slaughter stated he liked to begin every meeting on a good note, adding he was thankful for the rain and for the benefits it would provide local farmers as they prepared for planting. Chairman Slaughter also thanked Public Works Director, Robin English, and her staff for their extra efforts during the rain and thanked Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, for his hard work and commitment to the community.

**MINUTES**

The minutes were presented for the work session of February 11, 2013, and the regular session of February 12, 2013. Commissioner Page made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**South Regional Joint Development Authority**, County Manager, Joe Pritchard, presented the appointment. Commissioner Page nominated current appointee, Glenn Gregory, for reappointment. There were no other nominations. Vice Chairperson Evans made a motion to reappoint Glenn Gregory, Commissioner Page second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council**, County Manager, Joe Pritchard, presented the appointment, stating it had been previously held by former Commissioner G. Robert Carter. Commissioner Raines nominated Vice Chairperson Evans to serve. There were no other nominations. Commissioner Raines made a motion to appoint Vice Chairperson Evans, Commissioner Marshall second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Abandonment of a portion of Old State Road (CR 16)**, County Engineer, Mike Fletcher, presented the item, stating the request was ready for consideration. April Huntley, 1 Oak Bend Drive, spoke against the request and presented the Commission with a petition of approximately 300 signatures supporting her position. Mrs. Huntley stated she believed the road still served a public purpose and did not want it closed. Bret Huntley, 1 Oak Bend Drive, spoke against the request, stating access to the river means a lot to the citizens in the area for historical and recreational purposes. Thomas Reedy, 26 Howard Circle, Stockton, spoke against the request, stating he was baptized at the river location and would hate to see it closed to future generations. No one spoke for the request. Chairman Slaughter closed the public hearing and asked County Attorney, Walter Elliott, to make a statement regarding questions that arose during the last meeting. Mr. Elliott stated questions regarding river corridor buffers had been addressed and that after reviewing requirements he had determined they had no bearing on abandoning the road. Chairman Slaughter stated the Commission had spoken with the property owner and had been assured that baptisms would still be allowed at the site, adding the county was also pursuing alternate locations on the river for recreational purposes through the Parks and Recreation Authority. Commissioner Page asked if the County Attorney could explain the fact that the county does not own the road, only maintains it through an easement. Mr. Elliott stated the county's interest in the road was established through a prescriptive or implied easement many years ago that allowed the county to maintain the road. Commissioner Marshall stated he understood the county did not close a road for an individual, whether it serves a public purpose or not. Mr. Elliott explained the terms under which the county can close a road, adding the initial determination was made two meetings ago and was the action that led to the public hearing being advertised and held. Commissioner Marshall asked those in attendance that wished the road to remain open to raise their hands. At the raising of hands, Chairman Slaughter called the meeting back to order. Commissioner Raines made a motion to abandon the road, Vice Chairperson Evans second. Vice Chairperson Evans, Commissioner Raines and Commissioner Page voted in favor, Commissioner Marshall opposed. Motion carried.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Grant Re-Application for Rural Transportation Program and Associated Resolution**, County Engineer, Mike Fletcher, presented the item. County Attorney, Walter Elliott, stated all required documents were in the Commission Chambers and available for review. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the re-application and associated resolution, Vice Chairperson Evans second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**FY 2013 CDBG Grant Submittal Resolution and Declaration Establishing No Conflict of Interest – Second Harvest of South Georgia Renovation Project**, County Planner, Jason Davenport, presented the request, stating it was ready for consideration. Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the resolution and declaration, Commissioner Raines second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

## **REPORTS**

Public Works Director, Robin English, reported that due to recent rainfall, fifty-nine roads needed repair, of which thirty were complete. Ms. English stated crews would work through the weekend. Chairman Slaughter thanked Ms. English and asked that she pass the Commission's thanks along to her staff.

Emergency Management Director, Ashley Tye, presented those in attendance with an update regarding management of the recent rainfall and possible flood conditions.

## **CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD**

Geraldine Houston a.k.a. The Peanut Lady, 2116 Caswell Street, stated she was in attendance on behalf of George Page, and wanted to let everyone know she was back in the park and would be providing concessions for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority. Ms. Houston thanked the Commission and County Manager, Joe Pritchard, for their support.

April Huntley, 1 Oak Bend Drive, addressed the Commission regarding her disappointment related to the abandoning of a portion of Old State Road.

Brett Huntley, 1 Oak Bend Drive, addressed the Commission regarding the closing of a portion of Old State Road, stating he feels the road is still being used.

Commissioner Raines made a motion to adjourn the regular session, Vice Chairperson Evans second. Chairman Slaughter adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

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Bill Slaughter, Chairman

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K. Paige Dukes, County Clerk