

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR MEETING, DECEMBER 12, 2022

The Lee County Commission convened in regular session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, December 12, 2022. The Chairman declared a quorum and officially opened the meeting with the following members recorded as being present: Judge Bill English, Chairman, and Commissioners Doug Cannon, Ross Morris, Gary Long and Tony Langley. Absent: Commissioner John Andrew Harris. Elected Officials in attendance: Sheriff Jay Jones and Coroner Daniel Sexton. News media in attendance: The Observer reporter Hannah Lester and Opelika-Auburn News reporter John West.

Chief Administrative Officer Holly Leverette introduced new Chief Financial Officer Anna Kate Padgett who will begin in the position on January 9, 2023. Ms. Padgett, who previously worked with the Department of Public Examiners, spoke briefly, and said she is excited to begin working with the County.

Copies of the items on the Consent Agenda sent to the Commissioners in their packets included: listings of claims, a procurement card transactions listing, minutes of the Executive Session and regular meetings both held on November 28, 2022, and first readings of Lee County Recreation Board/District 2, Beulah Utilities Board and two members of the Lee County Youth Development Center Board. Commissioner Langley asked Mrs. Leverette about the "no-name vendor" listed on the P-card listings and Mrs. Leverette stated that typically those are related to travel but staff works with the departments to prevent no-name vendors and it has gotten better but it takes time. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Judge English stated he had included in the packets the evaluation form for the Chief Administrative Officer and a memo regarding the form. The probationary period is over at the end of the year but remains in place until removed by the Commission. Commissioner Cannon stated he would like to extend the probation period for up to six months and the evaluation until February or March to allow the two new commissioners time to work with Mrs. Leverette to be able to perform a fair evaluation. Commissioner Langley agreed, stating it would be unfair of him to try to give her an evaluation in only his third meeting. Commissioner Cannon made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

EMA Director Rita Smith presented information regarding the Smiths Station Community Shelter Grant. The grant does require a 90/10 split with the federal share estimated to be \$89,145 and the non-federal share of \$9,905 which the county would be responsible for. Mrs. Smith said the amount is an estimate by Lee-Russell Council of Governments and EMA but stated it could be higher depending on the bids. Mrs. Smith said once the RFP goes out, they will have a much better idea of what the amount will be, however EMA cannot move forward without a commitment from the County Commission. Commissioner Cannon asked if they could

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commit up to that amount; Ms. Smith stated the Commission could do that and if bids come in higher than expected, she could come back before the Commission to amend it. Mrs. Smith said as part of the commitment the county needs to agree to maintain the shelter as well. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the commitment up to \$9,905 and authorize the Chairman to sign the maintenance agreement once presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheriff Jones presented results of Bid #2023-02 for uniform dry cleaning. Sheriff Jones stated two bids were received and recommended to award the bid to the lowest responsive bidder, Downtown Cleaners, which currently performs the service. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to award Bid #2023-02 for uniform dry cleaning to Downtown Cleaners. The motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Jones presented results of Bid #2023-03 for a Lenco Bearcat Armored Vehicle. Sheriff Jones said this vehicle would be utilized by the tactical team which is comprised of members of the Lee County Sheriff's Office, the Auburn Police Department, and the Opelika Police Department. He said there is a need for such a vehicle because the MRAP (mine resistant vehicle) is cumbersome to operate in certain circumstances. The Bearcat vehicle is a smaller and lighter vehicle with protection for the response team for events they are required to handle. Sheriff Jones said with the assistance of EMA they were able to secure a \$150,000 grant to go toward the cost of the vehicle. Sheriff Jones said two bids were received, one from Lenco Bearcat of Massachusetts and one from Terradyne Armored Vehicles of Canada. The bid from Terradyne was received late, so it was left unopened. The bid from Lenco was \$238,801; there is a difference of \$88,801 between the bid and the amount of the grant. Sheriff Jones said he has been in ongoing discussions with both City of Auburn and City of Opelika police departments working on a plan to share the balance in thirds. Sheriff Jones said the vehicle has a 12-month build time so earliest to receive would be December 2023, which will allow more time to work on a funding agreement with the other entities. Commissioner Cannon asked if the balance would be roughly \$30K for each of the entities. Sheriff Jones said yes since the vehicle would be shared by all three entities. Commissioner Langley asked how often the other vehicle had been used with Capt. Wallace stating it had been used recently with a hostage situation in Auburn. Commissioner Langley stated he wanted to make sure that the county could justify the cost although the \$150,000 grant would help with that. Commissioner Long made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the purchase for \$238,801 from Lenco Bearcat Armored Vehicle. The motion passed unanimously.

Next, Sheriff Jones presented an educational reimbursement request for Deputy Vintel Thomas. Sheriff Jones stated the classes pertain to his current duties and recommends approval. Commissioner Morris made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon to approve the

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educational reimbursement request as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

County Engineer Justin Hardee presented a preliminary plat for Cherry Hill Subdivision located in District 3 off Lee Road 246. This is a preliminary plat approval which gives the developer a permit to develop the almost 40-acre property. The property is being subdivided into 37 lots with each lot to be approximate .75 acre with approximately ½ mile of streets that will be built to county standards before final acceptance. Mr. Hardee said notification letters of the proposed subdivision were sent out on November 22 to adjoining property owners. Mr. Hardee said the subdivision will come back before the Commission for final approval before any lots are sold. Commissioner Long made a motion to approve the preliminary plat as presented for Cherry Hill Subdivision. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morris and carried unanimously.

Next, Mr. Hardee presented the results of Bid #2023-01 for a new water truck with chassis which will replace an older one in the department. Mr. Hardee said this replaces an older truck and will give the department a second water truck, which is in good shape and road worthy. Mr. Hardee said the water trucks are used to clean out driveway pipes, cross-drains and respond to situations where there are issues with items in the roadway such as mud. Mr. Hardee said bids were mailed to five vendors and posted on the county website; three bids were returned. The low bidder was Thompson Tractor Co., Inc., with a bid of \$138,911.53; however, they did not meet two of the engine specifications required in the bid; they were short on horsepower by 40% and torque by 20%. Mr. Hardee said the next lowest bid meeting all specifications was Cowin Equipment Company for \$142,947.59. Mr. Hardee recommended the Commission award the bid to Cowin Equipment Company. Mr. Hardee said the bid is well-under what was allocated in the capital budget for this item. Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Long to award the bid to Cowin Equipment Company. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Leverette presented the creation of a billing clerk position in Environmental Services. Mrs. Leverette said there is a need for billing services representatives in the department with Environmental Services taking over the garbage fee billing. Approval is needed for the billing clerk job description to move forward with the hiring of the positions. Mrs. Leverette said the two positions will come in at a pay grade 109 and are budgeted. The responsibilities will include billing duties as well as customer service and clerical support and is the same pay grade as taxpayer billing service representatives in the revenue office. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the billing clerk positions as recommended. The motion passed unanimously.

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Last, Judge English discussed the last December meeting. Judge English said the meeting would fall on Tuesday, December 27 since the Commission already set Monday, December 26 as a county holiday. Judge English said he reached out to various department heads, and none had any pressing business that could not wait until the first scheduled meeting in January. Commissioner Long made a motion to cancel the last December meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cannon and carried unanimously.

At approximately 5:25 p.m., Commissioner Morris made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Langley to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.