

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR SESSION, MARCH 11, 2024

The Lee County Commission convened in regular adjourned session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, March 11, 2024. 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, Tony Langley and Richard LaGrand. Elected Officials in attendance: Sheriff Jay Jones and Revenue Commissioner Oline Price. News media in attendance: The Observer reporter Hannah Goldfinger and Opelika-Auburn News reporter Alex Husting.

EMA Director Rita Smith said she is currently working with Senator Tommy Tuberville on a grant for a community shelter in the Beauregard community. Mrs. Smith said she met with Commissioners Cannon and Langley and County Engineer Justin Hardee to discuss the grant since the paperwork had to be submitted by the end of February. Mrs. Smith said she indicated on the grant application the county could participate in a 10% match, and in-kind services may be an option for our match. Mrs. Smith said no action is needed tonight, but if granted, she will bring it back before the Commission for a vote. Commissioner Langley said it is much needed and thanked Commissioner Cannon, Mr. Hardee, and Mrs. Smith for working on it.

Copies of the items on the Consent Agenda sent to the Commissioners in their packets included: listings of claims, a procurement card transactions listing, and a copy of the minutes of the meeting on February 26, 2024. Commissioner LaGrand noted one correction in the minutes on his vote after the Executive Session at the last meeting. Additionally, announcement of a vacancy on the Alternative Sentencing Board and a vacancy on the Smiths Station Fire and Rescue Board was made. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Robert Burns appeared before the Commission to discuss a drainage issue on Lee Road 849. Mr. Burns said he believes the pipe which runs along Lee Road 849 onto his property is too small for the amount of water running through it, especially with heavy rains. Mr. Burns said all types of debris are pushed onto his property like limbs, aluminum cans and neighbors' toys. Mr. Burns said he has called the Highway Department numerous times about it but is told there is nothing the county can do about it. Mr. Burns said he believes the county can backfill and grade the area, cut bushes and ditches to alleviate some of the issues. Mr. Burns said the county brought a load of rocks, but that too has washed away. Mr. Burns said it is destroying his property. Mr. Burns suggested digging up the road to install a larger pipe on Lee Road 849. Mr. Hardee said after the last meeting he talked with Commissioner Langley about the issue and looked into it further. Mr. Hardee said he researched county records, saying the road was paved in 2008 when the 24" cross-drain pipe was installed with an 80 ft. right-of-way. Mr. Hardee said since then, Mr. Burns erected a fence on the county right-of-way. Mr. Hardee said after sizing the pipe it would need another 24" pipe to address the rainwater issue. Mr. Hardee said the Highway

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR SESSION, MARCH 11, 2024

Department can install another drainpipe, but it will not alleviate the water pressure on the fence. Mr. Hardee said the fence would need to be moved off the right-of-way to address the water issue, since there needs to be room for the water to move.

Commissioner Langley said he looked at it and said the fence needs to be moved out of the county right-of-way and for the county to install another 24" pipe to help move the water. Mr. Burns said he hired Precision Surveying, saying he is not a land surveyor, but he hired one and said he does not feel the fence is an issue. Mr. Hardee said if another 24" barrel pipe is installed it would be the same amount of water, just less pressure. Mr. Hardee reiterated that his concern is the location of the fence and whether or not the Commission agrees to install another pipe to address the issue. Mr. Burns said the fence cost \$25,000 and would not wish to move it. Commissioner Langley said he would like to resolve the right-of-way issue before installing a second pipe. Mr. Hardee asked Mr. Burns for his contact information to look into the issue further. Mr. Burns provided his information to Mr. Hardee.

Sheriff Jones presented three Special Event License applications for B & B Beverage Management. Sheriff Jones said one event will be held at Legacy at Serenity Farms and the other two events will be held at Twenty-One Acres. First, Sheriff Jones presented the Special Event License application for B & B Beverage Management for a one-day event to be held on April 4, 2024 at Legacy at Serenity Farms. The venue is a barn type structure with adjoining patio and an enclosed bar/service area. The design capacity is maximum 300 occupants. Commissioner LaGrand made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, to approve the following Resolution granting the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for the upcoming event on April 4, 2024.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Lee County Commission hereby approves the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for an event on April 4, 2024 at Legacy at Serenity Farms located at 1995 West Farmville Road, Auburn, Alabama.

Next, Sheriff Jones presented the application for a two-day event to be held on April 5 & 6 at Twenty-One Acres. Sheriff Jones said the venue is a barn type structure with adjoining patio and an enclosed bar/service area. Sheriff Jones said the design capacity is a maximum of 600 occupants. Commissioner LaGrand made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, to approve the following Resolution granting the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for the upcoming event.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Lee County Commission hereby approves the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for a two-day event on April 5 & 6, 2024 at Twenty-One Acres located at 5505 Lee Road 137, Auburn, Alabama.

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR SESSION, MARCH 11, 2024

Last, Sheriff Jones presented an application for a special event license for B & B Beverage Management for an event to be held on April 12, 2024 at Twenty-One Acres. Commissioner LaGrand made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, to approve the following Resolution granting the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for the upcoming event.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Lee County Commission hereby approves the Special Event License to B & B Beverage Management for an event on April 12, 2024 at Twenty-One Acres located at 5505 Lee Road 137, Auburn, Alabama.

Sheriff Jones presented a request for Commission consideration for a walk-through security scanner for use at the Lee County Courthouse. Sheriff Jones said the safety and security of the public, employees, and elected officials who frequent the Courthouse is a primary concern. Incidents where citizens and officials alike have suffered harm have become less isolated in the United States and a sharper focus has been placed on enhanced security measures at public buildings. Sheriff Jones said after talking with Commission members he would request the Commission approve the Sheriff's Office to acquire a walk-through scanner for use at the Courthouse. The scanner would be utilized initially on Commission meeting nights and phased in to eventually acquire additional scanners and personnel for daily operations at the Courthouse. Judge English expressed his opinion that both the front and back doors should ultimately have scanners. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Long, authorizing the Sheriff to acquire a walk-through scanner for use at the Courthouse. The motion carried unanimously.

Next, Revenue Commissioner Oline Price said upon the recent retirement of her Chief Deputy Revenue Commissioner Lisa Teel, and after acquiring the Appraisal Department in 2021 she would like to make her assistant position more suitable for authority over both departments. Mrs. Price said currently she has 42 full-time employees and 6 part-time retirees in service, for a total of 48 employees. Mrs. Price said she would like to change the job description of the Chief Deputy Revenue Commissioner to Deputy Revenue Commissioner/Chief of Staff and add a Property Assessment Supervisor position. Mrs. Price said the new job description for the Deputy Revenue Commissioner/Chief of Staff includes a considerable amount of involvement with the Appraisal Department. Mrs. Price said after talking with Brandon Causey of the Alabama Department of Revenue about the changes, the department has agreed to fund 50% of the salary through the Reappraisal Fund which will result in savings to the county's general fund budget. Chief Administrative Officer Holly Leverette said to clarify, the original position was classified as a Pay Grade 201, and the new position will be a Pay Grade 203. The supervisor position will be classified at a Pay Grade 114, which equates to an approximate \$45,000 savings to the General Fund with the state match. Commissioner LaGrand questioned the Pay Grades and Mrs. Price confirmed them. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR SESSION, MARCH 11, 2024

approve the position of Deputy Revenue Commissioner/Chief of Staff at Pay Grade 203 and a Property Assessment Supervisor at Pay Grade 114 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hardee presented the bid results of the bridge replacement on Lee Road 245 over Peters Creek. Mr. Hardee said bids were opened on February 21, 2024 with four bids being returned from the following: 1) G. W. Norrell Contracting-\$333,000; 2) Murphree Bridge Corporation-\$349,932.50; 3) Newell & Bush, Inc.-\$381,363; and 4) The Bridge Builders of AL LLC-\$390,265. Mr. Hardee said the lowest responsive bid was received from G. W. Norrell Contracting for \$333,000. Judge English asked if the current bridge is still in use. Mr. Hardee said the bridge failed and has been closed since 2022. Commissioner Morris questioned if Mr. Hardee had done business with the company before and whether he was satisfied with their performance. Mr. Hardee confirmed, saying he has worked with them and noted that his employees will be overseeing the project. Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Long, to award the bridge replacement project to G. W. Norrell Contracting of Georgiana, Alabama for \$333,000. The motion carried unanimously.

Judge English said Commissioner Cannon would like to add an item to the agenda which needs unanimous consent. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to add an agenda item authorizing the county attorney to assist Coroner Daniel Sexton with a Public Records request. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morris and carried unanimously. Then, Commissioner Cannon made a motion to authorize County Attorney Stan Martin to assist Coroner Sexton with an open records request. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Long and carried unanimously.

At approximately 5:37 p.m. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Langley and carried unanimously.