

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR SESSION, JULY 8, 2024

The Lee County Commission convened in regular session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, July 8, 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. No other elected officials were in attendance. News media in attendance: The Observer reporter Hannah Goldfinger.

Copies of the items on the Consent Agenda sent to the Commissioners in their packets included: listings of claims and a procurement card transactions listing. Copies of the June 24, 2024 minutes were emailed earlier today, and a copy was placed on each Commissioner's desk. Also, first reading of Vertrina Grubbs to the East Alabama Health Care Authority was made. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to approve the consent agenda items as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Ashley Lucas of Cedar Estates Subdivision addressed the Commission concerning the condition of the roads and drainage in the subdivision. Mr. Lucas said two others from the subdivision were in attendance on the matter, Mark Hoffman and Richard Gross. The three roads are Lee Roads 2182, 2183 and 2184. Mr. Lucas said the residents in the subdivision are in desperate need of help from the county to repair the roads. Mr. Lucas said he and others in the subdivision are willing to give a 60 ft. easement to the county for this purpose. Mr. Lucas said the developer went bankrupt and never established a Homeowners Association to address these items. Mr. Hardee said whether or not an HOA is established it is not something the Commission deals with. Mr. Hardee said Mr. Lucas said there are 40 residents in the subdivision who all pay county taxes. Mr. Lucas said he believes there are two options: 1) for the county to begin routine grading of the roads; or 2) for the county to asphalt the roads, which he prefers. Commissioner Langley deferred discussion to Mr. Hardee. Mr. Hardee said the roads in the subdivision are unpaved and platted as a private subdivision. Mr. Hardee said the plat shows a public easement across private property, not deeded right-of-way. Additionally, the plat notes that the roads are the responsibility of the residents, not the county. Mr. Hardee said the subdivision was platted in 2007, with 40 lots, which did not have to meet county standards at that time. Mr. Hardee also said the note on the plat states it is private property and has not been accepted for maintenance by the county. Mr. Hardee said after 2008 the county changed the regulations and a developer can no longer build a private subdivision like that. Mr. Lucas questioned whether, if the residents agree, if they could sign a petition to request to have the roads in the subdivision paved. Commissioner Cannon said the Commission could look at it. Commissioner Langley said more discussion would need to take place after a petition is submitted and he would ask for guidance from his fellow Commissioners since he is fairly new and is unfamiliar with an issue like this. Judge English questioned Mr. Hardee on county dirt road specifications. Mr. Hardee said there are no county dirt road specifications. Commissioner Morris asked the total mileage of the roads. Mr. Lucas said it is 2.2 miles. Mr. Lucas said the residents would like the roads to be paved but

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would agree for the county to grade the roads, saying they are open to discussion. Judge English asked Mr. Hardee how much it would cost to pave 2.2 miles. Mr. Hardee said \$75,000-\$80,000 just for paving, but from start to finish it would be about \$250,000 to \$300,000 to pave approximately 2.2 miles. No action was taken by the Commission.

In the absence of Sheriff Jones, Captain Jimmy Taylor presented an educational reimbursement request from Sergeant Jeff Snyder. The three courses are: BCJ3305-Constitutional Law; BCJ3306-Private Security; and BCJ3324-Crisis Management. Captain Taylor said the courses pertain to Sgt. Snyder's current job duties and budgeted. Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to approve the educational reimbursement request for Sergeant Snyder as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

County Engineer Justin Hardee presented final plat approval for Forest Ridge Subdivision. Mr. Hardee said the final plat has been reviewed and meets the minimum requirements of the *Lee County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations*. The proposed subdivision is adjacent to Lee Road 158 in District 4. Mr. Hardee said the development consists of 14 lots with 7 shared driveways with the smallest lot size approximately three acres. Mr. Hardee said adjacent property owners were mailed notices on June 24, 2024, to attend and voice their support, opposition, or to obtain more information. Judge English asked if anyone wished to address the Commission on this development, with no response. Ardie Stanton of Lee Road 817 said he received a letter about the development and wanted to know how it would affect his property. Mr. Hardee said Lee Road 817 is in Loachapoka and is not near this development. After no further comments, Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Long, to approve the final plat for Forest Ridge Subdivision as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Next, Mr. Hardee presented a petition for vacation of a portion of Lee Road 57A. Mr. Hardee said an attorney for the adjacent property owners on Lee Road 57A approached the Highway Department regarding abandonment of the right-of-way on Lee Road 57A, which is approximately 450 feet in length. Mr. Hardee said the Highway Department currently maintains Lee Road 57A and the adjacent property owners are listed as Henry L. Yancy, Jr., James E. Washington, Patricia Wilson and Franklin Lockhart. Mr. Hardee said all parties have signed the petition to vacate. As required by *Code of Alabama* §23-4-20, the adjacent property owners have submitted a written petition requesting the Commission vacate the county right-of-way along Lee Road 57A. Mr. Hardee said the next step in the process is for the Commission to set a Public Hearing which would need to be placed on the August 26, 2024 agenda. Commissioner LaGrand made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Langley to set a public hearing on August 26, 2024, to vacate the right-of-way along Lee Road 57A. The motion carried unanimously.

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Last, Chief Administrative Officer Holly Leverette asked the Commission to set a work session at the conclusion of the next Commission meeting to continue discussion on the funding for a dirt road paving program and on the solid waste contracts with Arrow Disposal and GFL Environmental. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris, to set a work session following the regularly scheduled meeting on July 29, 2024 to discuss funding of dirt road paving and solid waste contracts with Arrow Disposal and GFL Environmental. The motion carried unanimously.

At approximately 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Cannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Morris to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.