

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR TERM, MAY 12, 2025

The Lee County Commission convened in regular session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, May 12, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by an invocation by Commissioner Langley.

The Chairman declared a quorum and officially opened the meeting with the following members recorded as being present: Judge Jere Colley, Chairman, and Commissioners Doug Cannon, Ross Morris, Jeff Drury, Tony Langley. Commissioner Richard LaGrand participated electronically.

Judy Lockhart thanked the Commission for its praise of area students. As one of the Loachapoka representatives from the Recreation Board, she said she would like to present an update from Loachapoka High School Principal. She stated the LHS Track Team was the 2025 2A State Champion and the LHS Athletic Booster Club would be holding a t-shirt fundraiser to raise funds for the team to purchase rings. The art department at LHS would be designing t-shirts which will be \$25; donations would be welcome. She thanked Commissioners Cannon and Morris for serving on the board of MidSouth RC&D which provided the grant to fund the department. She also stated that LHS Class of 2025 set the record for the most scholarship money earned at \$3,594,760. The school will graduate 42 students, and she thanked the parents, students, community and Commission for their support of LHS.

John Sophocleus spoke and said he was keeping Mr. Martin and Commissioner LaGrand in his prayers. He discussed the Moore's Mill and Lee Road 112 intersection and reiterated his concerns regarding its safety. He reminded the Commission that the stricter of the regulations apply and he is still waiting to see the county's guidelines. He applauded the Commission for its upcoming agenda items regarding disposal sites and fencing and asked for a good program for disciplining wrongful dumping. He encouraged the Commission to discontinue curbside and to charge people to use the dumpsters as done in the past and the county would save money on its quarterly notice mailings. He said he was pleased to see bids for Parks and Recreation improvements being done correctly and offered his support and input to the representation issue because Lee County and the Probate Judge need relief.

Judge Colley recognized the elected officials in attendance: Revenue Commissioner Oline Price and Sheriff Jay Jones. News media in attendance: Alex Husting with the Opelika-Auburn News.

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Commissioner Langley recognized Gracyn Lashley, Tanya Martinez and Taylor Morgan from the Beauregard High School FFA. Ms. Lashley was No. 12 in the nation with all states competing in the Future Farmers of America Finals; Ms. Martinez and Ms. Morgan had an exceptional presentation to share on stage at the FFA National Convention in October in front of thousands of FFA members. Beauregard FFA was represented at the highest level with the chapter named the No. 1 chapter in the nation in the Premier Chapter Strengthening Agriculture Program. Commissioner Langley congratulated them and their teammates on their hard work. He also thanked Jerad and Whitney Dyess for their hard work and leadership, and they do for the students.

Commissioner Langley also recognized members from the Beauregard High School Track and Field team: Kameron James, 5A State Champion in the High Jump; ZJ Grady, 5A State Runner-up in the Shotput; and Kamryn Torbert, 5A 3rd-place finisher in Discus and Sports Vision Female Athlete of Year Award. Also recognized were Kaleb Jones and Kylee Lynn as State Qualifiers in 5A Golf.

Commissioners Cannon and LaGrand recognized the Loachapoka High School Track and Field Team which won the 2025 Section 2 Class 2A Boys AHSAA State competition. Noah Norman won the Class 2A State Shot Put Champion; and Derrion Calloway was named the Regionals Section 2, Class 2A MVP for boys. Team members: Derrion Calloway; Semaj Card; Mitchell Chenier; Peter Chenier; Rodney Doolittle; Jaden Lockhart; Jamichael Morris; Noah Norman; ZaQuavis Shaw; Christian Ware; and Tristan Willis. Coaching staff includes Head Coach Mitchell Chenier; and Assistant Coaches Sabrina Milligan, Coy Moore and Casey Core. Commissioner LaGrand extended his congratulations on a job well done and stated that Loachapoka, AL, was the home of the 2025 Boys 2A State Champions.

EMA Director Rita Smith recognized Grants Administrator Michael Holden for a recent grant awarded the Agency by Alabama Power. She stated that Mr. Holden identified a weather notification gap within the deaf and blind community and applied for and received a \$10,500 grant from Alabama Power with proceeds going to assist that vulnerable population. Working with the Opelika office of the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, 60 strobe lights and pillow shakers will be utilized for 53 residents identified as needing those resources for a total of \$1800. The remaining funds will be used to purchase 280 weather radios which will be divided equally among the five Commission districts with each district receiving 56 radios. She stated the EMA would work with each Commissioner to identify the areas where the radios were needed most.

Governmental Relations Coordinator Wendy Swann provided an update on the Lee County local legislation. She stated that three of our four local bills have been enacted: the Land Tax

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Transfer to Revenue (Act 2025-292); Solid Waste Income Exemption (Act 2025-228); and the Electronic Filing of Business Property Tax (Act 2025-263). The final bill, amending County Commission Authority Regarding County Roads, had been sent to the Governor for her signature and was anticipated to be enacted in the next few days. She also provided a report on the ACCA priority legislation with almost all of the Associations' priority bills receiving passage.

Copies of the items on the Consent Agenda sent to the Commissioners in their packets included: listings of claims to be approved and ratified, procurement card transactions listing, two approvals for excess tax funds and a copy of the minutes from April 28, 2025. Also included was a listing of travel requests. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Under Old Business, Commissioner Morris requested the Travel Policy Amendments be tabled to the next meeting as there are additional revisions that need to be considered. Commissioner Morris made the motion to table which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Jones presented a request to amend a contract previously awarded to Axon for in-car dash cams and body worn cameras (BWC). Due to increased equipment costs, Axon will go ahead and equip 19 in-car dash cams and 45 BWC with the costs deferred to FY25-26. He stated through negotiations with the vendor to supply the remainder of the BWC (42) which will allow all sworn personnel to have a BWC. Axon will accept what has already been budgeted and would add a co-term to the existing contract to extend payment for the other items over a 5-year period in binary payments due each year in January and July. The total cost over the five-year period will be \$789,204 with final payment due in July 2030. He stated the discount went from \$177,044 to \$200,409 annual cost with binary payments of \$52,687 each January and \$94,533 each July. He stated the co-term also provides for an automatic renewal in year three of the latest tech and new equipment at no additional cost. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to accept the co-term addition to the existing Axon contract which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

County Engineer Justin Hardee presented a request to accept roads in Saugahatchee Crossing Subdivision. He stated that while the roads were initially included with a list of 25 other roads the county accepted in January 2024, the five roads were not accepted at that time because of additional questions and concerns. The subdivision is located Commission District 1 off of Highway 14. Included in the packets was a location map and a listing of the roads. He stated Commissioner Cannon and the department have been working with members of the Property Owners Association to do what is necessary for the roads to be accepted, which included

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additional surveys and quitclaim deed transferring the roads back to the county. The POA has nearly met all the requirements, and the Commission is requested to accept the 2.5 miles of roads into the county's maintenance system contingent upon receiving the needed documentation as well as stipulating these roads will not be eligible for or considered for resurfacing for a minimum of five years after acceptance. Commissioner Cannon made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Environmental Services Director John McDonald presented quotes for fencing at the 29 North Disposal Site. He stated the cost for fencing had not been factored into the budget for this fiscal year. The Department received three quotes: Turner Fence for \$30,290 if the \$2,500 brush removal fee is deleted as that is already done by the Highway Department with work beginning in 3-4 weeks; Blackmon Fencing at \$31,550 with work beginning around May 15th; and Nolan Fencing at \$40,211.85 with work beginning within one week of being informed. He stated the quote from Nolan was a five-day quote so that price may have changed. The fencing would be 6ft commercial galvanized fencing with 3-strand barb wire at the top and 2 24-ft double swing gates to create an entrance and an exit similar to what is already at the Bottle at Motts. Commissioner Drury made a motion to accept the quote from Blackmon under the stipulation they can begin work as stated. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Langley. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McDonald continued and presented proposed rules for the disposal sites/convenience centers. He stated had looked at signage used previously as well as other counties for rules on what is and is not acceptable at the transfer station. He also said the signs will include a disclaimer that Lee County is not responsible for damages. He reached out to several vendors and received one quote back from Doris Signs for \$1,050 for five signs which will be white with a red border and black lettering. As this item is not budget, he said he is requesting Commission approval for purchase. Commissioner Cannon made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Morris to authorize the purchase of the signs. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Next, Mr. McDonald presented a proposed Environmental Services Work Schedule. He stated the proposed schedule has seven employees per shift and will have all sites staffed outside of lunch break or in the case of assistance at another site. The shifts would have 7 per shift for 12 hours at each of the five sites. The 12-hour rotation schedule would account for solid waste duties on the weekend, clean-up and recycle operations during the week and set-up on Friday for the next disposal day shift. Commissioners Langley and Cannon thanked Mr. McDonald and his staff for their hard work on developing the schedule. Commissioner Drury then made a motion seconded by Commissioner Langley to accept the proposed schedule. Following a roll call vote

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with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Under New Business, Sheriff Jones presented a resolution to honor Peace Officers Memorial Day. He stated that May 15 is the national day of recognition to honor peace officers that have lost their lives in the performance of duties in their communities, town state and country. He stated he doesn't like to repeat the names of those that harmed others, but he does repeat the names of those deserving of giving our respect to and honoring for their service to us.

He then read the names of local law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty "Six law enforcement officers in Lee County, Alabama, have been killed in the line of duty including Opelika Police Chief Henry Dilmus Hart on February 1, 1884; Lee County Sheriff William S. "Buck" Jones on June 29, 1932;; Opelika Lt. Moitt Brenton Truitt, Jr., on June 3, 1970; Opelika Sgt. Roger Lamar Motley, Jr., on October 4, 1993; Lee County Deputy James W. Anderson."

He said the resolution is in support of keeping their memory alive and their sacrifice and their families sacrifice should not go unrecognized. He said Lee County has always been at the top of the list for showing respect to local law enforcement and first responders and it is deeply appreciated; the support of the public is critical to successful law enforcement operations. Commissioner Cannon made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION HONORING PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

WHEREAS, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15 a National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which it falls as Nation Police Week in 1962, which was established by the 987th Congress of the United States Joint Resolution 76 Stat. 676 approved October 1, 1962; and

WHEREAS President Bill Clinton amended Public Law 103-322 in 1994 to direct that the flag of the United States be flown at half-staff on May 15; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 800,000 law enforcement officers serving throughout the United States, including dedicated members of the Lee County Sheriff's Office, Opelika Police Department and Auburn Police Department; and

WHEREAS, since the first recorded death in 1786, more than 24,000 United States law enforcement officers have made the ultimate sacrifice and been killed in the line of duty, which are honored with their names added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC, each year; and

WHEREAS, six law enforcement officers in Lee County, Alabama, have been killed in the line of duty including Opelika Police Chief Henry Dilmus Hart on February 1, 1884; Lee County Sheriff William S. "Buck" Jones on June 29, 1932; Opelika Lt. Moitt Brenton Truitt, Jr., on June 3, 1970; Opelika Sgt. Roger Lamar Motley, Jr., on October 4, 1993; Lee County Deputy James W. Anderson on September 24, 2009; Auburn Officer William Ray Buechner, Jr., on May 19, 2019.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY The LEE COUNTY COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

We fully support the Lee County Sheriff's Office, Opelika Police Department and Auburn

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Police Department and their efforts to promote and ensure the safety of the citizens of Lee County.

We hereby observe May 15, 2025, as Peace Officer Memorial Day in memory of the six men who have lost their lives in the line of duty within Lee County since 1884.

Done this the 12th day of May 2025

Sheriff Jones continued and presented a proposal for a vehicle technician position. He stated they would combine two open, existing positions – a civil process server and an administration clerk – into one single vehicle technician position. The creation of the position would allow staff to perform maintenance and decrease the time and cost incurred by not sending certain jobs to an outside vendor. Commissioner Cannon made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Drury to create the position. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

The last item presented by Sheriff Jones was Bid 2025-06 for oil changes. He stated seven bids were sent out with three received. The business previously approved for this bid did not meet the standards and specs placed in the bid which necessitated having to rebid the service. He stated Midas was the lowest vendor for synthetic oil changes but was not responsive to conventional oil changes. Express Oil change met the bid for being completely responsive and requested the Commission approve the bid from Express Oil Change. Commissioner LaGrand made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Revenue Commissioner Oline Price presented a Nonette Palmer Reese for appointment to the Lee County Board of Equalization. She stated there was an unexpected vacancy on the board following the passing of long-time member G.D. Dorman who had served for 16 years. Ms. Reese has vast experience with land development as well as commercial and residential property management and sales and would provide the Board with a perspective it has not had in the past. Commissioner Drury made a motion to accept the appointment which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

County Administrator Holly Leverette presented a request for an adjustment to the 2025 Gas Tax Budget. She stated every year the Highway Department sells surplus equipment at auction and this year's auction netted \$140,833.75. She requested to recognize these funds as revenue allow the Highway Department to make additional capital purchases. Included in the

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packets was a listing of equipment sold and equipment needs from the Department. After subtracting the difference between budget and actual from the surplus proceeds, the funds remaining at \$98,052.48 which would be used for the listed equipment needs. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to approve the gas tax adjustment which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hardee presented the final plat approval for the property division for the Kenneth Espy Vann Estate located off Lee Roads 644 and 2046 in District 3. Included in the packets was a location map and a copy of the plat which consists of 6 lots, the smallest of which will be just under .5 acres. Adjacent property owners were notified of the development by letters sent on May 1, 2025, so that they may attend and voice their support, opposition, or obtain more information. Judge Colley questioned if there was anyone in attendance on Kenneth Espy Vann Estate .

Ms. Tabitha Holmes addressed the Commission and expressed concerns that the development will lead to more flooding and erosion issues from the increased amount of impervious surfaces. She stated the neighborhood has a history of flooding and poor drainage and allowing in more development without addressing existing issues is irresponsible. Multiple homes have reported flooding with heavy rains and the development already have is making it worse.

Ms. Mandy Muncie also addressed the Commission and reiterated the concerns from Ms. Holmes. She stated she didn't want to tell anyone what to do with their land but became concerned when found out the number of lots that would be created. She said the roadway falls outside the city limits, and the neighborhood is responsible for any repairs. Current constructions companies take liberties, and the road is eroding on either side. Homeowners have been forced to spend thousands installing French drains to try to address the flooding issues. She also stated that with additional building causing more erosion, flooding and loss of light, there were protected wild species in the area that might be affected. She asked the Commission to prioritize responsible land use and environmental stewardship by rejecting proposal or submit to an environmental review before any additional action taken.

Commissioner Drury asked what species with Ms. Muncie stating the red belly woodpecker, and jumping mice but there could be more. Commissioner Drury asked if all regulations were met; Mr. Hardee stated it meets all regulations the department has authority over. Commissioner Drury stated if meeting all regulations, there is not a lot that can be done but he would like to table the item to allow time to meet and discuss what issues there are. Commissioner Drury made the motion to table which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

ISD Director Amanda Sides presented a request to transition phone and data service to Granite Government Solutions. She stated transitioning to Granite from the current provider

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would save approximately \$4,370 per month in service costs. The proposal would provide redundant internet at every location and would be a secondary internet to what is already in place including WOW! at the Auburn Annex; CTV Beam at Smiths Station; and Point Broadband at Engineering, EMA and Sheriff's Office. The contract would be a three-year contract and could begin moving over services in 60-90 days following approval. Commissioner Drury stated he would abstain from voting on this issue because of business conflicts. Commissioner Cannon made the motion to approve the proposal with Granite which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted yes with the exception of Commissioner Drury who abstained. The motion carried on a 4-0-1 vote.

Ms. Sides also presented a proposal for a citizen engagement platform. The platform uses text messages to send out notifications to citizens and is an automatic enrollment which citizens would need to opt out of if do not wish notifications. Those notifications could include garbage route delays, weather delays, holidays, etc. She stated messages sent would be specific to where citizens live so they would not be receiving messages for things not pertaining to their area. The system is currently being used by Madison, Houston, Montgomery and Etowah counties. The internal portal would be managed by IT with Commissioners and those needing access having a log-in to review information received. She stated specific groups could also be created such as elections, billing customers, etc. The cost of the program is \$20,000 a year with the company waiving the \$10,000 set-up fee; payment deferred until October.

Commissioner Cannon stated this was a good communication tool that could be used by all Commissioners and departments. Commissioner Langley asked if this would need to be added to the budget with Ms. Sides saying it would go into effect upon signed but billing would not occur until the next fiscal year beginning in October so the item would need to be added to the upcoming budget. Commissioner Drury made a motion to approve the proposal contingent upon review of the contract by the County Attorney or his appointee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morris. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Parks Director Ryan Norris presented the results of Bid LCP 41-COMRP-25 for Lee County Athletic Field Improvements. He states five bids were received and those bids were: Colorful Resources of Auburn/Opelika for \$97,000; Turfwell Athletic Fields for \$128,375; Sur-Line Turf, Inc., for \$129,375; Specialty Turf Supply, Inc., for \$143,389; and Evergreen Siteworks, LLC., for \$151,565. He requested the Commission to award the contract to Colorful Resources of Auburn/Opelika for \$97,000, as the lowest responsible bidder. Commissioner Morris asked if there was a concern with the amount being so low. Mr. Norris stated they have worked with Colorful Resources in the past, although not on this large of a scale. Commissioner Morris made a motion to approve the bid which was seconded by Commissioner

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LaGrand. Following a roll call vote with all voting yes, the motion carried unanimously.

Jeff Jennings presented the results of Bid #2025-05 for a 375-ton Chiller for the Lee County Detention Center. He stated three bids were received and those were: Trane, \$986,744; Daikin, \$935,000; and Johnson Controls, \$938,704. He recommended the bid be awarded to Daikin as the lowest responsible bidder. Commissioner Cannon asked if this had been budgeted; Mr. Jennings stated it had been budgeted at \$1.2 million so this is under budget. Commissioner Morris stated he would abstain from voting on this issue because of business conflicts. Commissioner Langley made the motion to award the bid to Daikin which was seconded by Commissioner Drury. Following a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted yes with the exception of Commissioner Morris who abstained. The motion carried on a 4-0-1 vote.

Judge Colley stated the Executive Session would be postponed to a later date. There being no other business, Commissioner Cannon made a motion seconded by Commissioner Morris to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.