

MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION, REGULAR TERM, JULY 28, 2025

The Lee County Commission convened in regular session at the Courthouse in Opelika, Alabama, Monday, July 28, 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 and Richard LaGrand.

A motion was made by Commissioner Drury to amend the agenda to allow for recognition of the various All-Star teams in attendance prior to the public comments. Commissioner Langley seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Commissioner Drury recognized the Smiths Station 2025 USSSA 8u All-Stars youth baseball team for its accomplishments. The team was the USSSA Regional Silver Bracket Champions, a USSSA State Tournament Semi-finalist and compiled a 7-2 All-Star Record. Player recognitions include: Outstanding Leadership - Wyatt Upton for leading the team by example in every way; Most Valuable Fielder for All-Stars – Josh Briggs for his outstanding play at 1st Base; Most Valuable Hitter for All Stars – Braxton Gross who was the Team RBI Leader; and Most Valuable Player for All Stars – Carson Thomure for Outstanding Overall Performance. The team is coached by: T.J. Thomure (Head Coach); Josh Briggs; Wes Gross; John Upton; Josh Walker; and Keith Weigartz. Players are: Josh Briggs; Brayson Francois; Braxton Gross; Legend Ledford; Zyler Morris; Remington Phillips; Eli Smith; Carson Thomure; Wyatt Upton; Easton Walker; Hudson Wallace; and Gavin Weigartz

Commissioner Langley also recognized several teams and students for their recent accomplishments. The Beauregard FFA was recognized at the Alabama FFA State Convention as a Top 5 Chapter Award winner; First place State Crime Prevention Program Award; and Second Place Building Our Alabama Communities Award. Individual recognitions include: Tanya Martinez, First Place in Employment Skills. This allows students to practice and demonstrate essential skills needed for employment in the agriculture industry and simulates real-world activities used by employers providing participants with practical job searches, job document creation and interview experience. She will compete in October at the National FFA Convention. Jonna Currin received First Place in Equine Science Placement Proficiency. She has worked in the equine industry for the past four years providing excellent professional care to clients and horses. Her project is now competing against 51 other applicants across the country. Third Place Veterinary Science winners were Jonna Currin, Merely Vega. Veterinary Science participants demonstrate professional ethics, decision-making, business competency, communication and problem-solving skills. In addition, the chapter has been recommended to advance to Nationals to be judged in the National Chapter Award Program where they will be ranked by a star system. Star

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Leaders included Dylan Hawkins, chapter representative.

Commissioner Langley also recognized the Beulah JV and Varsity cheerleaders. The squads competed at the cheer camps held at Auburn University and received several honors. The Varsity squad received first in Camp Routine; first in Varsity Cheer; second in Spirit Championship; and second in Sideline Cheer. The squad is led by Coach Laura Griffin with members Marley Ewbank; Emmy Willingham; Gabby Ritch; Logan Eason; Nikki Ortiz; Taylor Walburn; Gracie McVeigh; Claire DuBose; Jesse Strickland; Gracie Cole; and Kumya Foreman. The JV squad received first in Camp Routine; first in Cheer; second in Spirit Championship; and second in Sideline Cheer. The squad is led by Coach Kim Grant with members Lily Grant; Trinity Goree; Kylie Lindsey; Bristol Browning; Averie Grace Brock; Hayden Procise; Shelby Kerns; Izzie Gardner; Aubrey Chapman; and Kinley Danford. Among both squads, there were 13 All-Americans, four Pin-It Forward Recipients, Top Banana award, Nightly Spirit Sticks and Gold Superior Ribbons for Evaluations.

Commissioner Langley then recognized the 2025 Diamond Youth Baseball 10u All-Stars from the Beulah Recreation Association. The team was the Diamond Youth Baseball District 10 Runner-up which qualified the team for State where they finished 6th out of 18 teams for Diamond Youth Baseball. Player recognitions include: Most Valuable Hitter for All Stars – Riley Yarbrough; and Most Valuable Pitcher for All Stars - Kaden Snyder. The team is coached by: Cody Sims (Head Coach); Anthony Adams; and Billy Brock. Players are: Eli Beck; Brantley Bolt; Charlie Brock; Hudson Glass; Greyson Haynes; Forrest Marshall; Westin Ragsdale; Landen Sims; Kaden Snyder; Braxton Taylor; Parker White; and Riley Yarbrough.

Commissioner Langley then recognized the 2025 Diamond Youth Baseball 10u All-Stars from the Beauregard Recreation Association. The team was the Diamond Youth Baseball District 10 Champion and finished 2nd out of 18 teams at the Alabama State Championship Tournament for Diamond Youth Baseball. The team had an overall team batting average of .500 for the All-Star Season scoring 173 runs and allowing 83. Player recognitions include: Most Valuable Hitter for All Stars – Charlie Scales and Most Valuable Pitcher for All Stars – Chase Borum. The team is coached by: Cody Kirk (Head Coach); James Danzey; and Daniel Turner. Players include: Chase Borum; J.T. Brown; Will Thomas Bryan; Pedro Cruz; Easton Danzey; Weston Grant; Trace Gullledge; Cade Ingram; Sawyer Kirk; Charlie Scales; and Jack Turner.

Following the recognition of the students and athletes, the agenda resumed with public comments. Prior to public comments, Commissioner Drury read the Commission's policy on decorum.

John Sophocleus said he applauded the Commission for having work sessions and having budget work sessions held during that time. He also thanked County Administrator Holly Leverette

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for completing the public records request. He thanked Commissioner Drury for holding a town hall meeting for his constituents and encouraged others to do the same. He said he was concerned with item 7b regarding grants and stated grants were good when they make people better off and asked the Commission to not look at grants without a discussion on if matching funds could be better spent elsewhere. He closed by stating that following the discussion of an intern, he recommends the Probate Office utilize interns as well to help provide relief.

Lance Farrar thanked the Commission for the release of the public records following a 45-week wait. He stated he was encouraged to know policies were in place to correct or fix the issues which he had experienced and thanked Ms. Leverette and Commissioner Langley for their assistance. He said he had submitted a request for the bond and public oath of office for a former county employee and looked forward to receiving those records.

Lisa Bland addressed the Commission regarding issues with Lee Road 262. She stated it has been severely damaged due to dump trucks removing dirt and relocating it to a Cusseta construction site. She said she hoped taxpayers would have to pay for repairs as that responsibility should fall to the entity who contracted for the work to be done. She also questioned the weight limit of a portion of the road over a pipe as she felt a loaded dump truck would exceed the limit. She also asked for the roads to not be sprayed or for new subdivisions to be paved due to costs to taxpayers as that should be an HOA responsibility.

Gary Smith thanked the Commission for all they do time spoke and Commissioner Drury for showing up with a chainsaw to help with the wind damage; he also urged the Commission to consider the installation of bike paths on county roads. Mr. Smith thanked them for reopening dump sites while suggesting it could be organized better if allow for specific items to be recycled on certain days as is done elsewhere.

Lakeshia Young thanked Commissioner Langley for helping a neighbor in need and all the Commissioner for the personal time they take to assist citizens; it is recognized and appreciated.

Judge Colley recognized the elected officials in attendance: Sheriff Jay Jones and District Attorney Jessica Ventiere. News media in attendance: Alex Husting with the Opelika- Auburn Nes and Hannah Goldfinger with the Opelika Observer.

Resuming presentations Mike Holt and Justin Hurst with Beam Broadband provided an update on their grant projects. Mr. Hurst stated they were currently working in five grand-funded zones, two of which were Phase I and the remaining three in Phase II. The Phase I area included Salem and South Central with Phase II including East Central, South Central (expands on Phase I footprint) and Southeast. He stated BEAM is currently building out fiber infrastructure to bring fast, reliable internet directly to homes and businesses; each area is being planned for future

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growth as the network is being built to handle 2-3 times the number of homes currently in place. In addition, a 100gig ring is being installed through this area which can be upgraded to 400gigs as the demand for higher speeds increases.

Mr. Holt stated the Phase I Salem project has been completed and is 10.5 miles servicing more than 110 homes; Phase I South Central is currently under construction with approximately 11 miles passing 187 homes with an estimated full completion date of December 2025. He stated Phase II East Central is currently under construction with some areas already activated; ultimately approximately 370 homes will be included; this project has an estimated completion date of November 2025. Phase II South Central is currently under construction and when completed will have 23.6 miles of new fiber passing 127 homes; activations will begin in October 2025 with a full completion date of March 2026. The Phase II South East project is in the early stages with construction scheduled to begin in January 2026 and an estimated full completion date of September 2026. Following a question by Commissioner Drury regarding activation, Mr. Holt stated they try to turn areas up as they go. When asked what these projects mean for the future, Mr. Hurst stated the hope is the design and hub sites created sets up the coverage areas capacity wise for the next 40-50 years. Commissioner LaGrand asked a question about the Loachapoka area with Mr. Hurst stating that area was not part of Beam's grant coverage area; Ms. Leverette stated Spectrum has a project in Loachapoka which is slated to begin construction in September. Commissioner Drury thanked Mr. Hurst and Mr. Holt for providing an update.

Samantha Godsy provided an update on the Horseshoe Bend Regional Library and respectfully requested the Commission to consider its appropriation request. She stated the library serves a large portion of the Lee County citizens and currently has more bookmobile and community stops than any other county it serves. The amount provided by the Commission, while small, is essential funding. The library receives support from the four counties it serves, the state and as a passport acceptance center in Tallapoosa County. She stated monies received from the state are used to purchase books and pay 50% of staff salaries, but local monies must be used for building upkeep as well as paying the remaining 50% of staff salaries. She stated that every dollar donated to Horseshoe Bend is managed wisely and carefully and audited annually to ensure it is used properly. The library has added additional bookmobile stops and is currently working with the Opelika and Auburn Housing Authorities. In addition, the library is working on adding a daycare in the Smiths Station area. Following information from survey responses, she stated the library is working on increasing knowledge of electronic services available to Horseshoe Bend library patrons through access to Auburn and Opelika libraries.

District Attorney Jessica Ventiere provided an update on the Helping Families Initiative Program. She stated the program was created in response to the increase in juvenile crime and juvenile victims in the County. The juvenile court is now staffed by two full-time assistant district attorneys and an administrative staff position. In addition, the DA's Office has created a

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juvenile diversion program where, upon successful completion, the record is wiped clean; each enrollee has an individualized service plan tailored to their specific offense and requires an end-of-completion proctored essay. The HFI has also decreased the truancy rate from 29.79% in 2022-2023 to 12.84% in 2024-2025. She outlined two new programs: the Next Man Up Mentoring Program, which is a nine-week initiative specifically focusing on 7th-10th grade boys to fill a mentoring gap within this age group. The program will launch initially in Loachapoka High School followed by Beulah, Beauregard and Smiths Station, then Opelika and Auburn City Schools in Phases two and three. The second new program is the Lee County Student Summit, which will be a one-day event focusing on below-the-radar high school juniors and seniors who are unsure of what to do following graduation. The goal of that program is to serve 80 students at a time and close the gap between those students and set up goals and plans for their future.

Governmental Relations Coordinator Wendy Swann provided an update on the launch of the county's new text messaging service, TextMyGov. She stated the service will officially launch on Aug. 4. Currently, there are 42,669 numbers that have been uploaded into the system. Also, lists have been created for specific notifications such as agendas and garbage billing. Lists have also been created for each Commission district, with several already signed up for Commission District 3. Widgets are on each commission district page as well as the website itself. A Facebook ad campaign has also been pushed to spread the word regarding the service.

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, and a copy of the minutes from July 14, 2025. Also needing approved were an additional list of supplementals. Commissioner Morris made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda which was seconded by Commissioner Cannon. The motion carried unanimously.

Under old business, Commissioner Langley provided an update on the public records request by Mr. Farrar. He stated Mr. Farrar had received all the information and copies from his previous request. Commissioner Langley thanked Ms. Leverette and Ms. Anna-Kate Padgett for their efforts and assistance in resolving the issue. A new request has been submitted which will be addressed per policy.

Commissioner Cannon presented an agreement to hire Basic Administrative Solutions to provide grant writing services for the County. The motion was made by Commissioner Cannon and seconded by Commissioner Morris to approve the contract. The motion passed unanimously.

In New Business, Commissioner Drury requested to table the Termination of Subdivision

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Review and Approval Process Agreement to the next meeting.

Sheriff Jones presented an application for a Lounge Retail Liquor (Class I) license from Chalk it Up Bar & Grill LLC located in District 4. Sheriff Jones stated there were no objections to the license. Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, to approve the following Resolution for issuance of the license to Chalk it Up Bar & Grill LLC. The motion passed unanimously.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Lee County Commission hereby approves the application for a Lounge Retail Liquor (Class I) license for Chalk it Up Bar & Grill LLC located at 2102 Alabama Hwy 169, Opelika, Alabama.

Sheriff Jones presented an application for a Special Retail (More than 30 days) license from Clubs and Hatchets located in District 4. Sheriff Jones stated there were no objections to the license. Commissioner Langley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cannon, to approve the following Resolution for issuance of the license to Clubs and Hatchets. The motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner LaGrand voting no.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Lee County Commission hereby approves the application for a Special Retail (More than 30 days) license for Clubs and Hatchets located at 2487 Lee Road 266 Suite 3, Cusseta, Alabama.

Sheriff Jones presented a service agreement with Perigrine Technologies, Inc., for a unified data platform service. The service would allow for data integration within all current data systems utilized by the Sheriff's Office and make it easily accessible and searchable without having to go into each individual database. The systems would increase efficiency and allow for sharing of collaborative information in multi-jurisdictional investigations. The funds are being requested to begin in the Fiscal Year 25-26 budget with a payment of \$94,200. Approval and signing of the contract prior to August 1 would present a significant cost savings over the life of the contract, which is five years. Commissioner Cannon made motion to approve the agreement, which was seconded by Commissioner LaGrand. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leverette presented a request to nominate a representative to the 2025-2026 ACCA Legislative Committee. She stated that per previous discussions, the Commission wished for Commissioner Langley to be nominated and serve a second term on the committee. Commissioner LaGrand made the motion to nominate Commissioner Langley which was seconded by Commissioner Cannon. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leverette presented a county attorney search process and announcement for consideration. She stated the announcement would be distributed through the Lee County Bar

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Association inviting qualified attorneys to submit letters of interest which would then be reviewed by the Commission. The Commission would then make a decision on who to interview; letters would be accepted through Aug. 19. In addition to the Lee County Bar, Ms. Leverette said she would reach out to the Alabama State Bar for posting as well; it will also be listed on the county's website and Facebook page. Following the end of the posting period, the proposed timeline allows for three weeks for interviews and decisions. Commissioner Drury made a motion to approve the county attorney search process and timeline which was seconded by Commissioner Morris. The motion passed unanimously.

For her final item, Ms. Leverette presented proposed dates for the 2026 Budget Work Sessions. The proposed dates are Monday, Aug. 25 at 4 p.m. and upon completion of the Regular Commission Meeting; Monday, Sept. 8 at 4 p.m. and upon completion of the Regular Commission Meeting; and Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 4 p.m. Should any additional dates be needed, those will be added at a later time. Commissioner Drury asked about the process with Ms. Leverette stating she would reach out to the departments to coordinate presentations based on timeframe. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to approve the dates which were seconded by Commissioner Morris. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hardee presented the bid results for Local Resurfacing Bid LCP 41-RALR-25 for Full Depth Reclamation, Resurfacing and Traffic Striping on various Lee County Roads. He stated the FDR process is complete road reconstruction, and this bid covers approximately 7.6 miles of roads in Districts 3 and 4; a complete breakdown of the bid and a location map were included in the packets. He stated bids were opened on July 16 with one bid received by D&J Enterprises for \$2,207,596.25, which is in line with the original estimated cost. As they are a responsible bidder, Mr. Hardee stated he would respectfully request the Commission to award the bid to D&J Enterprises. Commissioner Langley made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Drury. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hardee presented the bid results for the annual Local Striping Bid LCP 41-SRPM-25 for Traffic Striping and Pavement Markers on various Lee County Roads. This bid covers approximately 151 miles of roads and complete breakdown of the bid and a location map were included in the packets. He stated bids were opened on July 16 with three bids received from JLD Enterprises, LLC; TRP Construction Group, LLC; and Ozark Striping Company, LLC. The low responsive bidder was Ozark Striping Company, LLC, for \$325,050. As they are a responsible bidder, Mr. Hardee stated he would respectfully request the Commission to award the bid to Ozark Striping Company, LLC. Commissioner Cannon made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

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Mr. Hardee presented a final plat for approval for MAAP Subdivision, located in District 4. Mr. Hardee said it is creating eight lots with the smallest just over one acre. The development will utilize existing road frontage and has been reviewed and meets the minimum requirements of the Lee County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Mr. Hardee said the subdivision is located adjacent to Lee Road 345 and a copy of the plat and location map were included in the packets. Mr. Hardee said adjacent property owner(s) were notified of the development via letters sent out July 16, 2025, so they may attend and voice their support, opposition, or obtain more information. Judge Colley asked if anyone in attendance wished to speak. There being none, Commissioner Langley made a motion for approval with Commissioner Drury seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hardee presented a request by the Farmville Fire Department for parking area assistance. He stated both he and Commissioner Cannon had been approached by the Department requesting assistance in paving the parking area for the new station located on Lee Road 188 in District One. The Commission had previously approved the Highway Department to assist with land clearing and construction of the station pad. This request would finish that project with an asphalt parking area. Mr. Hardee said in recognition of all the services and assistance provided by the fire departments, he respectfully requested the Commission to approve the project which will include cost sharing for additional crush&run needs. Commissioner Cannon made a motion to approve which was seconded by Commissioner LaGrand. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.