

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON AUGUST 29, 2012 AT 3:00 AM IN
THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follow:

Philip C. Jay III	Chairman
OD Netter Jr.	Vice-Chairman
Kathy Davis	Commissioner
Bennie Calloway	Commissioner
Scott Downing	Commissioner
Frank Field	County Manager
Donna Lampkin	County Clerk
Toni Sawyer	County Attorney

Chairman Philip Jay III called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing Comments

County Manager Frank Feild stated a summary of comments received during the Public Hearings on August 16th and 23rd are available. The Commissioners responses can be added below each public comment before the list is posted on the county website.

LOST Distribution

County Manager Frank Feild reported the City passed the LOST resolution on August 27, 2012 supporting 50/50 distribution between the City and County. The County has the responsibility of approving the distribution at a Special Called Meeting before September 1, 2012 to avoid triggering arbitration.

Associate Probate Judge Appointment

Judge David Hobby wants to appoint Melinda Stenbridge as a part-time Associate Probate Judge to allow him to participate in the County wide layoff; therefore there will not be any interruptions in service in the office. This does not involve any pay increase.

Voluntary Reduction In Force

County Manager Frank Feild stated a draft policy has already been provided to the Commissioners for review, along with a sample request for early retirement. He said a formal policy should be approved at a Special Called Meeting before announcement of a Voluntary Reduction In Force and accepting application.

He pointed out there are two employees who are requesting early retirement with incentives and another one requesting separation with incentives.

Personnel Handbook Changes

County Manager Frank Feild recommendation for changes in the personnel handbook included reducing the number of paid holidays in 2013 from ten (10) to four (4) and declaring the other six (6) Public Holidays, reducing the annual leave accruals of all employees by two (2) hours for each calendar month of service, authorizing sick leave to be accrued in excess of thirty (30) days, and authorizing the County Manager to approve written requests from Department Heads for transferring sick leave between employees on a case by case basis.

Local Energy Excise Tax

County Manager Frank Feild stated discussions have begun with the City on participating in an Energy Excise Tax. The City wants to be a participant. This tax will replace the local sales tax revenue that will be lost to the new statewide sales tax exemption on energy used in manufacturing beginning January 1, 2013. It is not considered a new tax; but a method of replacing local sales taxes that will be lost.

Documents to be approved include an Intergovernmental Agreement, Authorization for Chairman to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement, and adoption of a County Ordinance that would become effective January 1, 2013.

2011 Financial Management Awards

County Manager Frank Field reported the certificates are prepared for presentation at the September 11, 2012 Regular Monthly Meeting. The recipients are the Road Department, Solid Waste Department, and the Tax Assessor. He stated these are the only departments the auditors determined were under budget in 2012.

DA of the Year

County Manager Frank Field stated the County is drafting a resolution recognizing Denise Fachini as the Georgia District Attorney of the Year. It will be presented at the September 11, 2012 Regular Monthly Meeting.

Federal Building

County Manager Frank Field stated the Federal Building has three (3) tenants that include Right From the Start Medicaid, GA Department of Juvenile Justice, and the South Central Drug Task Force. He suggested Right From the Start Medicaid and the GA Department of Juvenile Justice relocating to the five story building downtown, and the South Central Drug Task Force could be housed in other offices in Ben Hill County or another participating Government.

The cost of utilities annually is estimated at \$12,000.00 and the maintenance is very expensive. Ben Hill County is responsible for the cost of all expenses. Mr. Feild is recommending declaring the property excess and making it available for sale.

Budget

County Manager Frank Feild informed the Commissioners that all accounts are up-to-date and the general fund has a little over \$300,000.00 in the bank. That will cover at least two (2) payrolls. He said all departments are participating in the lay-offs.

The Commissioners recommended putting all the names of the tax payers that owe taxes in the local newspaper every two weeks up to December 31, 2012. This will be updated every two weeks.

The meeting was adjourned.

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Lampkin, County Clerk