

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON MARCH 5, 2013 AT 6:30 PM IN THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Philip C. Jay III	Chairman
OD Netter	Vice-Chairman
Scott Downing	Commissioner
Daniel Cowan	Commissioner
Frank Feild	County Manager
Toni Sawyer	County Attorney
Donna Lampkin	County Clerk

Commissioner Bennie Calloway was absent.

Chairman Philip Jay III called the meeting to order.

Reverend Annette Brooks gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Amendments To The Rules Of Order

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to relax the rules on addressing the Chairman, Commissioners, and the public. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to change the agenda by adding Executive Session. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Approval of the Agenda

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Public Comments:

Drue Moyer addressed the Commissioners concerning his delinquent mobile home taxes. He stated he had sold the mobile home in 2007 and should not be receiving a bill.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes held on February 06, 2013. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion, which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting minutes held on February 26, 2013. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Elected Officials and Department Head Reports:

Road Superintendent Tim Kegebein reported on the conditions of the roads because of the hard rain Ben Hill County received.

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report

County Manager Frank Feild reported the County Extension Agent Scott Carlson last day was March 1, 2013. He was employed 9 ½ years. He was also a dedicated and loyal team member. The Commission and UGA will continue to partner and fill this position as soon as possible.

He recognized Tim Kegebein and the Road Department for all they did during the recent rains. He stated they were out in the nastiest of weather at all hours of the day and night working to provide whatever services needed. He wanted to tell them Thank you for a job well done.

He also acknowledged EMA Director Jason Miller for his work behind the scenes with the School System. As a result, they made a decision to close the schools for safety reasons.

He stated the Mayor and Public Works were impressed with how well the City was draining and the few areas where there was water backed-up. This is directly attributable to the work our Road Department did last year in cleaning out Turkey Creek tributaries. He said the City still has a lot of work to do on their drainage systems and so do the County; but our community is in a lot better shape than it was this time last year.

Mr. Field said they concerned about two choke points in the Turkey Creek drainage system. The first one is where it crosses Appomattox Road near the Sheriff's Office and the other is where it crosses Ed Ward Road by the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The water handling capacity of each of those crossings must be increased and it is going to be very expensive.

Mr. Feild stated the Department of Transportation is verifying and updating its database on road miles that are maintained by Cities and Counties. Centerline road mileage and the population served are the two factors used to determine how much money a government receives each year under the LMIG Program.

He mentioned many of the City's annexations have used road right-of-ways and utility easements to extend the City limits and incorporate areas for development. This has created a great deal of confusion about who is responsible for road maintenance including culverts and ditches. This is also causing confusion for first responders, code enforcement, animal control, and other departments of the City and County when responding to accidents, incidents, or complaints. E911 has problems determining which fire department to dispatch or whether the Sheriff or the Police should respond to an incident.

He reported we began a detailed inventory of our rolling stock and fixed capital assets in order to continue building our Capital Improvement Plan. We have obtained information on vehicles and HVAC vendors that we purchased from over the years and now comparing their lists with our list. This is very helpful in accounting for our capital items.

He also reported the Auditor Pat Ashley and himself met with the Sheriff and they reached an agreement to a possible salary savings of \$180,395 in 2013, the reduction in the Sheriff Department, Jail, and E911 staff by 8 employees, the net effect of pay raises and reductions in 2012 was \$33,500, and the E911 revenues will be paid directly to the General Fund to improve internal controls on handling funds; but a summary will be provided to the Sheriff for his revenue report.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application:

Commissioner Scott made a motion to approve John Daniel Glenn rezoning application. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Alcohol Application: NONE

Old Business:

Multi-Purpose Building Design

County Manager Frank Feild asked the Commissioners for directions to proceed on with the Multi-Purpose Building design. After further discussion, the Commissioners remember this agenda item had been voted on previously.

New Business:

Communities In School

Executive Director Becky Gay presented a fact sheet that disclosed the positive impact the program is having on the youth in our community.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Executive Director Christi Schirack reported the Chamber is getting more information to the newspaper and community to build the moral. She stated the Chamber is bringing back the Women's Business Luncheon and the Manufacturer Luncheon; they are also hoping to bring back the Leadership Program.

The Chamber is having Economic Development forums and hopefully committees can be established from the forum to help market Fitzgerald.

The Chamber has added Warren Manley and Nancy Whidden as Chamber Board Members. She stated she spoke with Charles Coney concerning getting the African American community involved in the Chamber and she is also reaching out to the Hispanic community as well. They are also updating their website at this time. She stated they are encouraged by the support they received at the Chamber Annual Banquet.

Christi stated the Colony Cash Committee is working on the gift certificate program to help keep money in Fitzgerald, Georgia and Ben Hill County.

Excess Surplus Property Resolution

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the Excess Surplus Property Resolution. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Proposed Road Closing

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to close Wood Duck Road, Big Sandy Road, north end of Big Sandy Road, north end of My own Road, Davis Road, Shop Road, and Dixie Street. Commissioner Daniel Cowan second the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to have a Public Hearing on April 9, 2013 at 6:00 pm. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Proposed Street Renaming Protocols

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to postpone this agenda item. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Project Paperless

County Manager Frank Feild announced Ben Hill County won the 8th Annual Georgia County Excellence Award in the Organizational Efficiency/Operations category for "Project Paperless". The article for the award is featured in the Georgia Trend Magazine March edition. The Annual Georgia County Excellence Award is sponsored by Association County Commission Government.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter pointed out on page 41 of the Georgia Trend Magazine is a picture of the Ben Hill County Courthouse. He also thanked Donna Lampkin, Michael Santee, and Frank Field for their work on Project Paperless. He stated we were the first in Georgia to travel down this road of going paperless; but a lot of other Counties are following. Mr. Netter said he didn't think we would save as much as we did until we started looking back and adding up the savings.

Collection of Delinquent Taxes Resolution

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to postpone this agenda item. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Reimbursement For Services Provided Resolution

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to postpone this agenda item. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

April Monthly Meeting Date

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to change the regular scheduled monthly meeting date to April 9, 2013 instead of April 2, 2013. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss pending litigation. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to resume the Regular Monthly Meeting. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to allow the County Attorney Toni Sawyer to contact the Attorney General to find out who is responsible for the bailiffs. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Scott Downing stated last week was the crossover and a lot of things going on at the Capitol. He told the Commission he has been emailing them information regarding everything and ACCG take on it. He said he feels like our Senator and Representative knows where we stand on it. He ask the Commissioners to let him know if they see something they may have extra knowledge about or give them a call. He mentioned the Auto Tax Bill is dead for the moment because the GIDA wanted to add some stipulations in the bill for the taxes paid by the buy here pay here car lots. The ACCG is concerned about is the Removal of Fees. This bill doesn't to affect Ben Hill County because we don't put fees on the tax bills but we would like to have that capability if we wanted to.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter reported that he attended the NACO Legislative Conference in Washington DC. He stated he didn't know what was going on in Washington right now; but there was a lot of talk concerning cost being passed down to local government. He said he would know more in two weeks and he would email everyone the information he received at the conference.

Commissioner's Remarks:

Commissioner Scott Downing stated water is draining out everywhere. Hard work was done to move water. Because of that people homes and roads were saved.

Chairman Philip Jay stated he missed Commissioner Bennie Calloway at tonight's meeting.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Lampkin, County Clerk