

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON DECEMBER 2, 2014 AT 6:30 PM IN THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Philip C. Jay III	Chairman
Scott Downing	Commissioner
Bennie Calloway	Commissioner
Daniel Cowan	Commissioner
Frank Feild	County Manager
Donna Prather	County Clerk

Vice-Chairman OD Netter was absent.

Chairman Philip C. Jay III called the meeting to order.

Reverend David Berg 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 Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Public Comments: NONE

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting held on November 03, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting held on November 04, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting held on November 18, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Public Hearing held on November 26, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting held on November 26, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Department Head Reports: NONE

County Board Report: NONE

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Frank Feild reported the following:

Municode

Municode is finalizing the recodification proofs. They will print us 5 hard-bound copies and post everything on-line. The County Ordinances will then be accessible from the MUNICODE.com website or the hyperlink from the County website at www.benhillcounty.com.

Speed Limit Reduced

The Road Superintendent has reduced the speed limit on Joshlyn Road from Briar Road going East to Camp Brooklyn Road; from 45 MPH to 35 MPH. This was done because of based on the deteriorating condition of the pavement in this area. This will include 1.8 mile section.

Dog Tag Fees

Sec. 10-78 of the County Ordinances requires dog owners to obtain licenses for their dogs every year. The fees are \$3 per dog if it is neutered or spayed; and \$5 if it is not neutered or spayed. Our ordinances also require proof of rabies vaccination.

The City has similar requirements in their codes (Sec. 5-141). They charge the same fees as the County; and also require proof of rabies vaccination. They require dogs to be licensed before March 31st of each year, and task the Humane Society Animal Shelter with administering the registration.

Code Enforcement

The Sheriff has deputized City Marshal Leon Johnson and authorized him to enforce County Ordinances. The Magistrate is satisfied with this and agrees to accept any County Ordinance Violation cases Leon Johnson brings before his court.

The City and County Staffs have met and recommend a fee-for-services agreement to address Code Enforcement. Marshal Johnson has completed his investigation of an alleged

Senior Congregate Meals Performance Review

A recent performance review by the Area Agency on the Aging determined we did not meet the quarterly headcount requirements for the Senior Center Congregate meals. Our contract with AAA requires us to serve at least 20 clients per day. Our numbers for July, August and September averaged 14, 16, and 13 respectively. If we do not meet the State requirement, we risk funding reductions. In addition, the state is in the process of implementing a change that will increase the minimum daily meal service requirement for congregate meals.

We have made serious efforts to reach out to the Senior Citizens in our service area and encourage them to participate; and will continue to do so. We hope that once the Public Transit System goes into operation, our numbers will increase.

AAA did not require a written response to their review, but it is clear we need to do better in this area if we expect to receive funding to continue providing these services to our seniors.

County Picnic

Everyone who attended the County Picnic on November 8th enjoyed it. We have had many employees ask that we thank the Commission for doing this. It appears this was the first time this has happened, and we hope to do it every year.

2015 Budget/Joint Services

Mr. Feild and Chairman Jay met with the Mayor and Finance Director concerning the Joint Services Budget. Mr. Feild recommended schedule a Workshop between the two governments. The Commissioners decided to have a Workshop on Monday, December 8, 2014 at 3:00.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application: NONE

Old Business:

Public Transportation

County Manager Frank Field reported we received bids yesterday for the 3rd Party Contract Operation of the Ben Hill Transit System. The bidders were MIDS from Valdosta, and RMS from Georgetown. We are reviewing the bids and will make a recommendation to the Commission as soon as we review.

Organization Review

County Manager Frank Feild stated the Carl Vinson Institute of Government will visit on December 10th. They will meet with the Commissioners from 10 am to 12 noon and the Constitutional Officers & Department Heads from 1 pm to 4pm.

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to approve the meeting with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government on December 10, 2014 from 10 am to 12 noon with the Commissioners and 1pm to 4pm with Constitutional Officers & Department Heads. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Ambulance

The BB&T representative will be visiting us the week of December 10th to complete the paperwork for the Ambulance Lease-Purchase Agreement. They will finance \$145,521 on a 72-month note at @ 2.12% interest. The monthly payments on this note will be \$ 2,154.18. Mr. Field thanked the County Attorney for completing the Attorney Opinion Letter.

The Manufacturer says the ambulance will be ready for pick-up at the factory in North Carolina on Monday, December 15th.

Round About

DOT has completed the promised safety study of the Dewey McGlamry Road and Lower Rebecca Road intersection. Their findings and recommendations are attached.

The Road Superintendent will work with DOT to implement all their safety recommendations as soon as possible.

Energy Excise Tax Ordinance

Mr. Field gave a recap of all activity concerning the Energy Excise Tax Ordinance.

New Business: 2011 SPLOST

Commissioner Scott Downing declared the \$80,000 budgeted for the Pull Loader (AKA Savannah Grader) and the \$17,500 saved on the backhoe as excess; and reallocate this \$97,500 within the same budget to be applied toward the purchase of two motor graders. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Excess Property Resolution

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the Excess Property Resolution, authorize the County Manager to dispose of the vehicles and equipment, and give the money back to the Road Department. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Capital Improvement Equipment

County Manager Frank Feild reported we have made a quantum leap in acquiring Capital Equipment and Rolling Stock in the last 2 years. This ranks with roads and bridges as our most difficult funding challenge.

Our success has been due to the creative skills and persistence of EMA Director Jason Miller; who has developed many new strategies for acquiring slightly-used Capital Equipment and Rolling Stock for pennies on the dollar. In most cases, he has had to drive great distances to haul them back to Ben Hill County. This equipment has benefitted the County, the City, the School System, the Georgia Forestry Service, and our regional partners.

EMA Director Jason Miller gave a brief presentation on all the vehicles and equipment acquires through the purchasing program through Georgia Forestry, Department of Administrative Service, and GSA. Mr. Miller reported a cost savings of over 2 Million dollars.

Amendment to Management Policy

County Manager Frank Field stated we have not had any employees take advantage of the Language Incentive Pay Policy, which was adopted by the Commission on January 7, 2014. We know there are employees who have been using their language skills for the County’s benefit, and that there are others who are studying to become conversant in Spanish so they can provide similar services.

Since this program is paid for by the Commission out of the General Fund, and does not come out of departments or constitutional offices’ budgets, we recommend the County Manager be authorized to designate up to two (2) employees as the County’s Spanish-Language Translators and award them monthly pay supplements on a fee-for-services basis. This authorization would be for the 2015 fiscal year; and would temporarily replace the approval process identified in the Management Handbook, Par. 3-500 Language Incentive Pay.

Commissioner Scott Downing made to authorize the County Manager to designate up to two (2) employees as the County’s Spanish-Language Translators and award them monthly pay supplements on a fee-for-services basis. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Agenda Changes and/or add on: NONE

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Scott Downing reminded the Commissioners the Legislative Conference is coming up in February. He stated the legislative session begins the first week of January. He announced the Legislative group was voted top ten by a trade magazine.

Commissioner’s Remarks: NONE

Meeting adjourned.

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk