

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON JANUARY 6, 2015 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
Bennie Calloway	Commissioner
Frank Feild	County Manager
Donna Prather	County Clerk
Toni Sawyer	County Attorney

Chairman Philip Jay III called the meeting to order.

Revenue Steve O'Neal 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, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

**Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes**

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to remove the agenda item Special Revenue Fund and add agenda items Public hearing, Street Lights, and Executive Session to the agenda. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**Public Hearing**

Building and Zoning Administrator Jason Miller stated Bethlehem Baptist Church wants to change their zoning from general farming to commercial in order to put up a billboard in compliance to DOT standards. He stated the Zoning Board had already approved the changed.

There were no public comments.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voted for the motion.

### **Public Comments:**

Volunteer Fire Department Allen Conger gave an update of activity within the department. He requested a Workshop Meeting with the Commissioners to discuss other issues.

### **Required Annual Actions**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Frank Feild as County Manager. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Donna Prather as County Clerk. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Toni Sawyer as County Attorney. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Meeks CPA as County Auditors. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Wells Fargo, Planters First, Colony Bank, Community Bank, Bank of America, and Local Investment Pool as County Financial Institutes. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion. Commissioner Scott Downing abstained from the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve The Herald Leader as County Legal Organ. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to table agenda item Rehiring of all County Employees until later on the agenda. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to re-appoint Vice-Chairman OD Netter as Vice-Chairman of the Commission Board. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

### **Acceptance of Prior Minutes**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on December 02, 2014. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to withdraw his motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on December 02, 2014. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, 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 Minutes held on December 02, 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. Vice-Chairman OD Netter abstained from the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on December 08, 2014. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on December 16, 2014. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes held on December 30, 2014. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**Constitutional Officer: NONE**

**Department Head Reports:**

Road Superintendent Tim Kegebein gave update on the roads condition due to the rainy weather. He also mentioned his trash truck was not working; but he borrowed the City's truck to collect trash.

Ben Hill County Development Authority Executive Director Courtney Whitman thanked everyone for her job and budget

Ms. Whitman also announced there will be a Will & Estate Planning meeting on January 22, 2015 at 6:00 pm. She will announce the place at a later date.

**County Boards Report: NONE**

**County Manager's Report:**

County Manager Frank Feild stated that all the bills and TAN note were paid by December 31st.

He also mentioned the new ambulance was picked-up at the factory in North Carolina on December 15<sup>th</sup>; and is now in service. BB&T has processed all the paperwork and we have begun paying on the note.

**Annexation Request: NONE**

**Rezoning Application:** *Bethlehem Baptist Church*

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion approve rezoning Bethlehem Baptist Church property from general farming to commercial property. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**Alcohol Application: NONE**

**Old Business:**

**Public Transportation**

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the selection of RMS as our 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Operator for the Public Transit System and authorize the Chairman to sign the necessary documents. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**Zero Tolerance Alcohol & Drug Policy**

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to adopt the Zero Tolerance Alcohol & Drug policy and authorize the Chairman to sign it. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**New Business:**

**Excess Property Resolution**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Excess Property Resolution and allow the County Manager to dispose of the property. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

**Evergreen Road**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter stated he received a call from City Councilman Rickey Jefferson concerning putting up a street light on Evergreen Road beside the Goodman's resident because the area is dark and small children get on the bus in that area.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to allow County Manager Frank to look into the situation. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

**Executive Session**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to enter into Executive Session for personnel issue with County Attorney Toni Sawyer. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

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

Vice-Chairman OD Netter stated for the record there was no decision made in Executive Session.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to enter into Executive Session for legal matters with the County Attorney Toni Sawyer. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

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

Chairman Philip Jay stated no decision was made in Executive Session; but the Commissioners will have a Special Called Meeting on Friday, January 9, 2015, at 10:00 am.

**Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE**

**Legislative Report:**

Commissioner Scott Downing mentioned the final paper from the Transportation Committee is completed. He suggested everyone interested in transportation should read the report.

**Commissioner's Remarks:**

Vice-Chairman OD Netter sated he is proud to be sitting with the Commissioners again; but in 2016 he will resign to run for Tax Commission.

Commissioner Scott Downing stated Joe Worthington, a previous Commissioner; son had passed away and to please keep their family in their prayers

Commissioner Daniel Cowan welcomed a new baby girl to his family.

Courtney Whitman stated the Affordable Housing project in the works. All paper work will be completed in May. We will know in December if Ben Hill County is approved for this \$10 million project. This project will include 50-60 units and will create an estimated 4 job.

Meeting adjourned

\_\_\_\_\_ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk