

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON APRIL 7, 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
Bennie Calloway	Commissioner
Daniel Cowan	Commissioner
Frank Feild	County Manager
Donna Prather	County Clerk
Toni Sawyer	County Attorney

Chairman Philip Jay III called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing:

Development Authority of Ben Hill County/Rezoning Application

There were no public comments. County Manager Frank Feild gave a brief summary.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to close the Public Hearing. 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.

Pastor Wanda Thomas 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, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

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

Public Comments:

Julie Fussell expressed her concerns about the noise pollution and health hazards from the rubber strips that are on Lower Rebecca Road. She asked the Commissioners if they would consider replacing the strips with LED warning lights. She also provided a Noise Pollution Study.

Executive Session:

Pending Litigation

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Pending Litigation. 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.

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

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

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to deny the claim of inmate Little. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting on the motion.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to proceed with attempting to settle the Darden case with the Plaintiffs for the amount of 60% of the proposed Circuit Public Defender's budget, in conjunction with the other counties. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting on the motion.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on March 02, 2015. 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

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on March 03, 2015. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting for the motion.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Department Head Reports:

County Extension 4H Agent Jeri Gelliland gave an update of all activities for 4H and agricultural. She also thanked the Commissioners for the new roof and HVAC system.

Judge Lisa McCard told the Commissioners she is changing Magistrate system form Ikon to MCIS. This system is offered by the state for free and she will save about \$2,800 from the old system.

Executive Director of Economic Development Courtney Whitman gave an update of all activity concerning the Development Authority of Ben Hill County, Revolving Loan Fund, and the Appleseed Program.

Gwendolyn Slacks of the Department of Juvenile Justice gave an update on the Youth Bill Grant. She said the due date is June 5, 2015. She asked the Commissioners to consider Ben Hill County being the fiscal agents for the grant because it is essential to keeping kids in school and helping those kids that dropped out of school get back in.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve Ben Hill County as the fiscal agent for the Youth Bill Grant. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting on the motion.

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Frank Feild reported the following:

Panic Buttons

Mr. Field reported panic buttons are being installed at Magistrate Court.

Telephone System

The telephone system at the Commissioner's Office is being upgraded by

Extension Office

We have put a new roof on the AG Extension Office and Maintenance Building. They cut down the dead sycamore tree and replaced two air conditioners. We are also upgrading the security of the parking area in anticipation of storing the Public Transit Vans there.

Courthouse Renovations

We have contracted with Drawdy Roofing of Albany to replace the Courthouse windows. We expect this work to begin in mid-April.

Federal Building

We began the upgrade of the Federal Building on March 25th. This is a 2011 SPLOST project, and Jason Miller is serving as the General Contractor. We are sub-contracting the remediation, basement work, masonry, windows, and landscaping; and we will also be using County labor and equipment to reduce costs. This is a 3-phase project; with the first two phases scheduled for completion by the end of July. The landscaping has been removed to permit excavation of the foundation. Remediation is ongoing inside and will be completed by Thursday. Retesting will be done immediately after that, and dehumidifiers will be installed.

2005 Splost Recreation/ West Wood Park & Lions Park

The basketball backboards and the swing set frame have been installed at Westwood Park. The basketball court will be professionally striped, and the swing set frame is being painted before the swings are hung. This is becoming a very nice community park. We have finished the project at the Monitor Center. The only remaining project in the 2005 DLS SPLOST account is the Concession Stand and bathrooms at Lions Park; and DLS is in

charge of this construction. We hope to see this work completed by summer so we can close out the 2005 DLS SPLOST account.

County Morgue

We have acquired a walk-in cooler reefer and are reconfiguring it as a County Morgue. The County Coroner will control its use. It will be installed inside the fence at the Sheriff's Complex, with access controlled by the Jail staff. Neither Irwin nor Wilcox Counties have any capability to store remains. Our hospital can only handle 2 sets of remains; so they are very anxious to see us do this. This unit will easily accommodate 8 sets of remains, and they will be in a secured area; which is very important if they are being held for evidence. The Interim Irwin County Coroner has asked to share the cost with us in return for being able to use it. I will discuss this with the Irwin County Chairman and the possibility of an Inter-Governmental Agreement.

Senior Citizen Generator

We have also acquired a 130 KW generator; which will be permanently installed at the Seniors Center. This will give us a community center that can host displaced citizens or refugees during a prolonged power outage.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: Development Authority of Ben Hill County

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the rezoning of address 1009 N. Merrimac Drive from Residential 15 to Multiple Residence. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting on the motion.

Alcohol Application: Real Live Entertainment Center

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the alcohol licenses for Willie Morgan dba Real Live Entertainment. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Scott Downing, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting on the motion.

Old Business:

Transportation Update

Department of Transportation we can expect to receive our new vans at the end of May. That means we are probably looking at a mid-June start date for the Ben Hill Transit System; rather than April. We will keep the public informed as we get better information.

Chamber Agreement

In February, the Commission agreed to give the new Chamber Chairman John William Moody 90-days to implement changes to the Chamber's operations before finalizing a new fee for services agreement for 2015. The County has paid the Chamber for January thru April of 2015 under a Commission-approved extension of the 2014 agreement. The County Manager Frank Field stated they can extend the 2014 Agreement for another 30 days in order to review the proposed 2015 Fee for Services Agreement with the Chamber

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, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

New Business:

Coastal Plain Area Economic Opportunity Authority Vacany

Chairman Philip Jay appointed Ann Jordan to fill the position.

Hospital Authority Vacancy

No action was taken.

Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library Board Vancy

No action was taken.

Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Scott Downing highlighted the bills that passed and fail. He stated he would get an update at the upcoming ACCG Conference in Savannah.

Vice Chairman OD Netter reported that at some point the Commissioners need to meet with the Board of Education, City of Fitzgerald concerning the LOST Tax.

Commissioner's Remarks:

Commissioner Bennie Calloway reported he was impressed Douglas and Valdosta Chamber of Commerce at the Transportation Summit in Atlanta. They were there networking and trying to get business for their area. He stated ben Hill County needs to be represented to advertise the community at the Conference.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk