

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON MAY 5, 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.

Pastor Jeff Parmer 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

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to move the Public Protection Classification Presentation by Skip Starling until he arrives because he was going to be late. 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.

Public Comments:

Robert Hallman expressed his concerns about the new housing project The Village at Ben Hill because they are already having issues with the sewer, traffic, and standing water on Merrimac Drive. Mr. Hallman also provided photos of the problems.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on April 06, 2015. 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 Bennie Calloway made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on April 07, 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.

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting held on April 15, 2015. 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 for the motion.

The Village at Ben Hill Presentation/Mandy Young

Mandy Young gave a brief update on the Tax-Credit Housing Development. This project is estimated at \$9 Million to construct that will include 48 units. It will also create 4 new jobs in the community. She stated these projects have made a \$15 Billion impact on the economy.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve a Resolution of support for The Village at Ben Hill Project. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Public Protection Classification Presentation/Skip Starling

This agenda item was postponed.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Department Head Reports:

Road Superintendent Tim Kegebein gave an update on the roads condition because of the storm that came through on April 25th. He reported 40 trees were down; but thanks to volunteers and two deputy sheriffs they were able to clean up the roads.

County Extension 4H Agent Jeri Gelliland gave an update of all activities for 4-H and agricultural.

EMS Director Mark Shealy reported they received another ventilator from Wiregrass Hospital Coalition.

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.

Ms. Whitman introduced Rose Smith. Ms. Smith is Director of the Alapaha Tutoring Center Inc.; where they sponsor the Summer Food Service Program in Alapaha, GA. Ms. Smith is interested in serving Ben Hill County during the summer and would like to be the sponsor. She gave the Commissioners a statistic sheet showing the number of meals that were given out in Ben Hill last summer.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve Rose Smith, Director of Alapaha Tutoring Center Inc., as Ben Hill County sponsor for the Summer Food Service Program. 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 for the motion.

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Frank Feild reported the following:

Federal Building

This 2011 SPLOST project is being supplemented with County labor and equipment. The contractors completed the remediation and retesting of the Federal Building. There was no evidence of asbestos in the retest, the building is safe to work in, and we will follow-up with some of their recommendations. Two industrial dehumidifiers are currently operating in the building to keep it dry.

The landscaping and trees were removed by County staff and contractors; and the County staff has cleaned-out the obstructions in the gutter system. We removed stumps, the concrete ramp and will be excavating the foundation using County labor and equipment. Yesterday, contract masons began sealing the below-ground windows with block and brick. The work was completed this afternoon.

Low Country Basements of Savannah has ordered our materials and equipment, and will begin work on May 26th. This contractor will seal the basement walls on the inside and outside, install a special French drain system and sump pumps, install industrial dehumidifiers, and give us a lifetime warranty on the work.

The County staff will replace the suspended ceiling tile; remove the non-load-bearing interior walls; clean or replace the ductwork; rewire and re-plumb; and replace the HVAC system.

This is still a very complex operation, but we are on schedule and operating within the budget.

Commission Office

Michael Goodman and Jack Smith of our Maintenance Department have completed the installation of an underground sprinkler system around the County Commission Offices; and then installed sod. They did a great job, and it has made a big difference in the appearance of this building.

Fitzgerald Utilities decommissioned the gas service to the Commission Office at our request. It had not been used on many years, so we did this for safety reasons. If we need to re-establish service in the future, it will be easy to do.

Courthouse Windows

The new windows for the courthouse are being built. We expect them to be completed and ready to install in about a month. This will do the installation in phases to accommodate the court schedule.

Telephone System

Our phone system needs to be upgraded, and the instruments can no longer be serviced. The City is in the same situation, so we are collaborating to upgrade both of our communications at the least cost to the taxpayers.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application:

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the alcohol licenses for Ravi Thakkar dba MBT Corporation. 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.

Old Business:

Transportation Update

We expect to receive our 3 vans later this month and to begin operations of the Ben Hill Transit System by mid-June. All three of these vans will have lifts for wheelchairs and scooters. We plan to provide service to all the citizens of Ben Hill County; from one point to another within Ben Hill County for a one-way fare of \$ 3.

After the system is operating, we will look at the possibility of offering service to and from selected locations outside Ben Hill County. We will also be offering contract services to businesses that want to insure their employees arrive on time to start a production line, to students, and to planned trips and excursions.

Hospital Authority Board Nominations

The Commissioners nominated Will Hammond, Alice Hobson, and Prentiss Brown for the Hospital Authority Board.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to close nominations. 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.

Library Board Nominations

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to nominate Marsha Stenbridge to the Library Board. Commissioner Scott Downing seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Scott Downing, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter all voting for the motion.

New Business:

New Bank Account/USDA RLF

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve opening a new account for the USDA RLF funds. Vice-Chairman OD Netter 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.

Division of Mental Health Developmental Disability & Additive Diseases Board

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to reappoint Steve O'Neal to the Division of Mental Health Developmental Disability & Additive Diseases Board. Vice-Chairman OD Netter 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.

Ben Hill Irwin Joint Development Authority Appointments

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to appoint Philip Jay and Ron Paulk to the Ben Hill Irwin Joint Development Authority. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Scott Downing all voting on the motion.

Board of Health Nomination

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to appoint the Administrator of Dorminy Medical Center or appointee of the Administrator to the Board of Health. Vice-Chairman OD Netter 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.

Employee Health Insurance

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve renewal of the Employee Health Insurance Plan (GAP2L) at \$ 636.36 per month per fulltime employee, with the employee contribution remaining at \$35.53 per month, set-aside of \$ 25,000 to be included in the 2016 Budget for a deductible bridge, and approve a 2015 budget amendment of \$ 57,073 to cover the increase. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Scott Downing, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

2015 RBDG Grant Application

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the submission of a 2015 Rural Business Development Grant Application and authorize the Chairman to sign all documents. Vice-Chairman OD Netter 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.

Community Facility Grant Application

Commissioner Scott Downing made a motion to approve the submission of the Community Facility Grant Application and authorize the Chairman to sign all documents. 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 on the motion.

Employee Agreements

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

Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Scott Downing updated the Commissioners and the public on bills that Governor Deal signed.

Commissioner's Remarks:

Commissioner Scott Downing said it has been a pleasure serving with the Commissioners and an honor serving the citizens. He also said he appreciated the staff and the entire employee. He also mentioned it was a pleasure serving with previous Commissioners' Kathy Davis and the late Richard Goodman.

Chairman Philip Jay thanked Commissioner Scott Downing for his years of service and commitment to serving Ben Hill County.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter stated Commissioner Scott Downing was an asset to the Commissioner Board and great steward to ACCG. He congratulated Commissioner Downing and wished him good luck.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk