

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

Chairman Philip Jay III called the meeting to order.

Reverend Steve O'Neal gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Amendments To The Rules Of Order

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to relax the rules so Commissioners can address Commissioners and the public can talk during public comments or is they are on the agenda. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to add Drug Task Force Interagency Agreement to the agenda and move agenda item 2014 Audit Summary presented by Pat Ashley immediately following Constitutional Officers Report. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Public Comments:

Tim Anderson addressed the Open Meeting laws. He stated its purpose is to protect the citizens of Georgia to allow for more open government. One of the aspects of the Open Meetings laws is the purpose and use of closed sessions. Three specific areas are allowed to be discussed in closed session personnel, real estate transactions and pending litigation. But even those areas have restrictions. You may, by law, discuss and deliberate personnel matters in closed session, but you must vote on those matters in open session. The law also calls for you to take any testimony on employee grievances or any other personnel matter in open meetings. He stated he was disturbed by the fact that at your last regular meeting, you went into closed session and invited two County employees into that session and took testimony from them. That is a violation of the law. I know the Chairman is a fan of transparency, as am I. I hope you will take this into consideration in the future.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on September 08, 2015. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes held on September 14, 2015. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on September 21, 2015. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

2014 Audit Summary/Pat Ashley

Pat Ashley of Meeks CPA gave a brief summary of the 2014 Audit. He stated we were \$7,059.00 over and that was taken from the fund balance. He also mentioned if the Commissioners had any questions, he would meet with them to answer their questions.

Department Head Reports:

EMS Director Mark Shealy gave a summary of all activities concerning EMS responsibilities, the services it provides, expenses, revenues and future funding requirements. He also reported they were awarded \$15,000 for supplies.

EMA Director Jason Miller reported he was on stand-by because of the Hurricane that scheduled to make land fall in South Carolina with the potential threat of flooding.

Executive Director of Economic Development Courtney Whitman gave an update of all activity concerning the Development Authority of Ben Hill County and the trip that was made for inland ports in Savannah GA. She thanked all that attended the luncheon and tour.

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report:

Budget Review

Mr. Feild gave a brief update on the revenues and expenditures as of August 31, 2015.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application: NONE

Old Business:

Othar Lee Rodgers Subdivision

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to rescind the motion that was made on September 8, 2015 at the Regular Monthly Meeting that included, "closing the road that runs between lots 1 and 2 and move 60 foot right-of-way between lots 4 and 5."

Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan

Hospital Update

This agenda item was postponed.

New Business:

Drug Taskforce

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to approve the South Central Drug Task Inter-agency agreement. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Bank of America Authorization Request

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to add Accounts Payable Clerk Antavia Blount to the Bank of America account as an authorized contact person to do business on behalf of Ben Hill County. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

USDA Grant/Elections

Elections Supervisor Cindi Dunlap stated the Elections Department has an opportunity to apply grant funds through USDA up to \$25,000; but the County will be responsible for contributing 25%. She stated if awarded, the funds would be used to purchase equipment.

Vice-Chairman OD Netter made a motion to authorize Elections Supervisor Cindi Dunlap to apply for the grant. Commissioner John Mooney seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

City & County Consolidation Study

Chairman Philp Jay stated the most frequent ask question is concerning the City and County Consolidation. Chairman Jay would like for County Manager Frank Feild to contact the Carl Vinson Institute to see when they can arrange for a presentation for the Commissioners and the public to see if it is feasible to combine some departments.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion for County Manager Frank Feild to contact the Carl Vinson Institute to see when they can arrange for a presentation for the Commissioners and the public to see if it is feasible to combine some departments. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Vice-Chairman OD Netter Commissioner all voting for the motion.

2011 SPLOST

County Manager Frank Feild stated it has become increasingly obvious that there will not be enough funds in the 2011 SPLOST to build the gym and offices at Paulk Park. Rather than allow this money to be idle, we have identified other needs in the Paulk Park project area which can be accomplished quickly. This includes making essential ADA improvements, adding an additional exit to Perry House Road for safety, and adding additional paved parking. We believe all of these can be done with a budget of \$60,385.

We recommend the Commission approve the expenditure of \$60,385 of 2011 SPLOST funds for the Paulk Park Project Area; including ADA improvements, a new exit to Perry House Road, and additional paved parking; and that it is accomplished before the end of December with the County serving as the General Contractor.

County Attorney Toni Sawyer stated the Commissioners couldn't reallocate the 2011 SPLOST funds because of the SPLOST law. She stated she was made aware of this by Joe Parrish; because he stopped by her office.

After further discussion, DLS Director Keith Morris was asked to come to the podium to discuss plans for spending the 2011 SPLOST Recreation funds. Commissioner Netter asked Mr. Morris to come back before the Commission with plans of spending the funds.

Executive Session/Personnel

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Personnel. Vice-Chairman OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chairman OD Netter, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

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

Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE

Legislative Report: NONE

Commissioner's Remarks: NONE

Meeting adjourned

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk