

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON FEBRUARY 2, 2016 AT 6:30 PM IN THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Philip C. Jay III	Chairman
Daniel Cowan	Vice-Chairman
OD Netter	Commissioner
Bennie Calloway	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.

Pastor Bennie Calloway gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Amendments To The Rules Of Order

No action was taken

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

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

Public Comments:

Gudrun Mills, representing the Board of Elections and a private citizen, stated the Election's Office is facing a difficult year due to all the election year. She stated the previous supervisor left to work for another County and they need the best qualified person in the position. She also mentioned she want to get by without any conflict with the Secretary of State.

Mrs. Mills stated Kathleen Searcy is already certified and doing the job at this time. A person that is not certified can't conduct elections.

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on January 4, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Public Hearing Meeting Minutes held on January 5, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes held on January 5, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on January 11, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on January 14, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes held on January 15, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes held on January 26, 2016. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner OD Netter, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Department Head Reports: NONE

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report:

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application:

Frank Reider submitted an alcohol licenses; but couldn't complete the process because Ben Hill County Commission Office had to apply for an ORI number in order to run a background check on him.

Mr. Reider asked the Commissioners for special exception in his case. He wanted the Commissioners to go ahead and approve his licenses without the background check.

County Attorney Toni Sawyer stated if the Commissioners approve the licenses without the background check they would be setting a precedent. Her recommendation to the Commissioners was it is best to wait on the ORI number. No further action was taken.

Old Business:

Jail Construction & Staffing Agreement

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to approve the Jail Construction & Staffing agreement and authorize the Chairman to sign it. Vice- Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner OD Netter all voting for the motion.

New Business:

2016 Tax Anticipation Note Resolution

County Manager Frank Field reported Community Bank has approved the 2016 TAN. The TAN will be in the amount of \$2,500,000; accruing 3.5% interest; maturing on December 30, 2016. The note will be secured by the pledge of ad valorem taxes.

Mr. Feild stated Community Bank has requested a legal opinion from the County Attorney and a Resolution of the Ben Hill County Board of Commissioners authorizing the TAN Note.

Commissioner OD Netter made a motion to adopt the resolution authorizing the TAN; authorize the Chairman to sign the necessary documents; and request the County Attorney provide a legal opinion letter. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Board of Health Appointment

Jim Turner's term has expired on the board of Health. Commissioner OD Netter has also resigned. The Commissioners nominated Jim Turner and will vote on the both seats in 30 days.

Zoning Board of Appeals Re-Appointments

County Manager Frank Field reported Appendix B, Section 12 of the Ben Hill County Code of Ordinances requires the Commission to appoint two Ben Hill County citizens to 5-year terms on the Zoning Board of Appeals; and to jointly appoint an attorney with the City. Tony Adkison and Farise Taylor are the County appointed members of this board and have agreed to continue their service for another term. Toni Sawyer has been serving as the jointly appointed attorney, and is also willing to be reappointed.

Mr. Feild suggested since they currently serve on the Planning & Zoning Board, it may be more appropriate to nominate other people to these positions.

After further discussion, the Commissioners decided to vote on the seat in 30 days.

Department of Leisure Service Facility

County Manager Frank Field stated the City and School Board have reached agreement on the future ownership of questioned properties. Part of the agreement is that the Jessamine Street Gym and the remainder of the block on the east side will be transferred to the City. The Department of Leisure Services Board has recommended that new DLS Offices and swimming pool be constructed at this site, and that the Gym be upgraded. This is a convenient centralized location where citizens can easily walk to and it can also be used by the School System.

Mr. Feild stated since there has been so much discussion about where to locate this facility, we recommend the County Commission and City Council adopt a joint resolution supporting the DLS Board recommendation, and encourage the Board to move this project to construction as soon as possible.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to adopt a joint resolution supporting the DLS Board recommendation. Vice- Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner OD Netter all voting for the motion.

Sheriff Vehicles

County Manager Frank Feild reported the outstanding note with BB&T Bank on the Sheriff's vehicles have been paid off.

The Sheriff has been promised new vehicles. Commissioner John Mooney obtained a quote from Fitzgerald Ford for two 2016 model Ford Police Interceptor Utility Vehicles with equipment. The vehicles will cost \$31,517.20 each, and Ford Credit will finance them on a lease-purchase agreement at 6.00 % interest for 24 months. The monthly payments will be \$2,803.85. The fees and financing cost will be \$4,258. The total cost for the County to purchase these vehicles will be \$67,292.40. Mr. Field stated we can service this note with projected 2011 SPLOST collections and pay it off before the current SPLOT ends.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to approve the lease purchase of two vehicles through Ford Credit; authorize the Chairman to sign the necessary documents; and require the Sheriff to turn in two vehicles as excess within 30 days of taking delivery of the new vehicles. Vice- Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner OD Netter all voting for the motion.

County Legislative Coordinator Appointment

No action was taken on this agenda item.

Special Election/Commissioner OD Netter Seat

Commissioner OD Netter stated there is a need for a Special Election because he is resigning on March 4, 2016. The Commissioners discussed all possibilities of when an election can occur.

After further discussion, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan made a motion to contact the Secretary of State Office and the Governor's Office to request a May election. Commissioner OD Netter seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner OD Netter, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Coastal Plain Board Nominees

Chairman Jay nominated Shirley Brooks to the Coastal Plain Board to replace Board member Anne Jordan. The nomination will be voted on in 30 days.

Agenda Changes and/or add ons: NONE

Legislative Report: NONE

Commissioner's Remarks:

Chairman Philip Jay quoted his writing from the State of the County to Commissioner Netter, "A man of color who entered the political fray at a time when this required both courage and patience." For 23 years he has served meritoriously as Commissioner and Vice Chairman of the Ben Hill County Commission. His accomplishments over this record setting tenure was summarized in last week's paper so I'll just acknowledge the honor he brought to Ben Hill County in every state and national position he held. His progressive mark on our state and community will not soon be forgotten.

The fact that my relationship with him was often contentious is no secret. O.D.'s talent for parliamentary chicanery made meetings difficult for every chairman he served under but his intellect, experience with and knowledge of county government trumped by far any discomfort we had to endure. Beyond continuing to appreciate our hard won and frequently tested friendship, I will remember him in the light of Teddy Roosevelt's words: "As a man who knew it is far better to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even when checkered by failure... than to rank with those poor souls who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a grey twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.

Commissioner Bennie Calloway addressed the issue of a certified person already exist in the Election's Office and she is already doing the job. He stated it sounds like a win-win situation already. He also asked the question as to who hire for that position. The question was answered by stating the County Manager.

County Attorney Toni Sawyer stated the ordinance says the County Commission hires the Election Supervisor.

Administrative Specialist Michael Santee thanked Commissioner OD Netter for choosing him to work and he stated he was proud to serve under his leadership.

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan stated Commissioner Netter always worked with him, always listen to him and was very helpful.

Executive Director Courtney Whitman thanked Commissioner Netter for job opportunity he gave her.

Deputy Administrator Cam Jordan stated it has been a pleasure having a friend like Commissioner Netter and he will miss him.

Commissioner John Mooney stated Commissioner Netter is impressive to be around and he brings a level of professionalism to the board.

County Clerk thanked Commissioner Netter for giving her the opportunity work in 2001 and she has a great deal of respect for him. She thanked Mr. Netter for his service to this community and stated that he was fair to everyone.

County Attorney Toni Sawyer thanked Commissioner Netter for believing in her and for bringing her name to table as the County Attorney.

County Manager Frank Field thanked Commissioner Netter on behalf of the county employees and citizens. He stated Commissioner Netter is always looking out for people of the community and give opportunities otherwise they wouldn't have. He stated Commissioner Netter is a statesman that looks down the road and around the bend.

Reverend George Vereen Thank Commissioner Netter for his service as a Commissioner and took credit for him getting involved in politics.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Philip C. Jay III, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk