

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON **April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026, AT 6:00PM** IN 4H AND BEN HILL COUNTY EXTENSION  
SERVICE BUILDING LOCATED AT 321 DEWEY MCGLAMRY RD

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Hal Wiley	Chairman
Hope Harmon	Vice-Chair
Daniel Cowan	Commissioner
John Mooney	Commissioner
Hampton Raulerson	County Manager
Pamela D Turner	County Clerk

**Call to Order**

Chairman Hal Wiley called the meeting to order

Commissioner Bennie Calloway gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes**

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the agenda with changes to add Crime Victims' Rights Week Proclamation. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

**Acceptance of Prior Minutes**

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes that was held on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting minutes that was held on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to close Regular Monthly Meeting and enter Public Hearing. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

## **Public Hearing**

- Rezoning 245 Pine Level Church Road from GL (General Farming to WLI (Whole Light Industrial)

Jake Hughes Building and Zoning Director stated that we received a rezoning application from Howard Sawnsen for, requesting to change a 1-acre tract from GL to WLI. The purpose of the rezoning is to open a small engine and auto repair shop, due to lack of business in the area. This will provide service for Ben Hill County and Irwin County.

- Special Exception County Farm Road off Dewey McGlamry Fitzgerald GA

Jake Hughes Building and Zoning Director reported that there is a special exception application to erect a cell tower petition by Crown Castle Towers c/o Parker Adams and Berstein, located at 710 Dewey McGlamry Road Ben Hill County Georgia. This request is to replace the old cell tower that was demolished back in October with a new one.

There are three temporary towers sites up, they are not providing the service that we need, the new tower will fill in that gap.

A concerned of the property owner adjacent to the County property, Southeast of the cell tower had a question about flagging in the woods near his home. It was explained to him that the flagging was to delineate the wetlands on the County property to help with the cell tower survey.

The surveys delineated the wetlands throughout the property as part of the overall project and does not mean that any portion of the cell tower structure or supports would be going near his property.

The special exception has met all requirements.

## **There were no Public Comments**

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to close Public Hearing and enter Regular Monthly Meeting. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

## **Constitutional Officer: None**

District Attorney Brad Rigby presented Crime Victims' Rights Week Proclamation which will begin April 19<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> 2026. Also, victim rights candle visual will be Thursday night April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, in Cordele Georgia at the Community clubhouse all victim in crime are invited.

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to adopt Victim Rights Week Proclamation. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

### **Department Head Reports:**

Hunt Sanders 4H agent reported as follows:

- Corn, watermelons planted, pecans budding/breaking dormancy
- Big talking point right now is the drought. Irrigation ponds are dry when they are normally at full capacity under typical conditions. This could lead to irrigation ponds going completely dry early in the growing season.
- Aquifer is depleting, roughly 20ft below its normal point.
- We need to start thinking about conserving water, no rain in the forecast.

Hunt Sanders also welcomes the new 4H Agent Devan Godbee. Godbee introduced herself to the Board.

- 4H Agent Devan Godbee reported two weeks after she started, she headed to Rock Eagle for 4H excursion and took 5 juniors and seniors 4Hers to district project achievement. Two qualified to go to our State Congress, which is the State competition in Atlanta Georgia in July.
- Went to Clover Leaf District Project Achievement where I took 16 of our 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders to compete in Perry Georgia, great turnout.
- Focus now on summer programs, camp coming up in July at Rock Eagle

### **County Board Reports: NONE**

### **County Manager's Report:**

County Manager Hampton Raulerson reported:

- Tire Amnesty Event will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> at 147 County Farm Road (Road Department) From 7am-6pm. No rims and No tires from any businesses. Bring Proof of residency.
- SB33 property tax reform bill passed the House of Senate and goes to the Governor next.
- The end result will be beneficial for the homeowners, Cities and Counties.
- This mandates Cities, Counties and School Boards opting into the Floating Homestead Exemption Statewide
- It will allow additional penny sale tax and this tax will first be applied to rolling back homesteaded properties.
- Once homestead properties are fully rolled back from City and County taxes, then it gets applied to the rest of the properties. This will not apply to the School Board taxes, only to City and County taxes. This should benefit our businesses and renters as well.

### **Annexation Request/Notification: NONE**

### **Rezoning Application:**

- Rezoning 245 Pine Level Church Road from GL (General Farming to WLI (Whole Light Industrial)

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the rezoning at 245 Pine Level Church Road from General Farming to Whole Light Industrial. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

**Commissioner John Mooney opposed.**

**Alcohol Application: NONE**

**Appointments:**

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to appoint Willis Alonzo McCauley and Sujette Giddens to the Board of Elections. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Bennie Calloway and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting on the motion.

Commissioner Daniel Cowan made a motion to reappoint Chris Calhoun to the Ben Hill Planning and Zoning Commission. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Bennie Calloway and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting on the motion.

**Old Business: NONE**

**New Business:**

*Special Exception Crown Castle Inc. for Cell Tower -County Farm Road off Dewey McGlamry Road*

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Special Exception for Crown Castle to erect a cell tower located County Farm Road off Dewey McGlamry Road.. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner John Mooney, and Vice-Chair Hope Harmon all voting on the motion

*Agreement Between Ben Hill County and Hofstadter & Associates*

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Agreement between Ben Hill County and Hofstadter & Associates, the 2026 CDBG for Eastside Church Road and East Road. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

*Contract Between Ben Hill County and South Georgia Regional Commission for the 2026 CDBG*

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Contract between Ben Hill County and South Georgia Regional Commission for the 2026 CDBG. Commissioner John Mooney seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

*Yancey-2021 140-Caterpillar trade In*

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to approve the surplus and to trade in the 2021 140-Caterpillar valued at \$135,981.00, making the new Caterpillar \$175,497.00 with the trade in. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

*Approval of Roads for 2026 LRA*

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon made a motion to approve FY 2026 LRA (Local Road Assistance) funding of \$591,123.46 for the resurfacing of Frank Road, Sunflower Road, Grace Ave., Lucile Lane and Hampton Court. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner John Mooney and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting for the motion.

*Resolution for FY 2025 Budget Amendment*

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to approve the Resolution for FY 2025 Budget Amendment. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Daniel Cowan and Chairman Hal Wiley all voting on the motion.

**Legislative Report:  
Executive Session**

**Commissioner's Remarks:**

Chairman Hal Wiley invited the Board to the Georgia FLEX Final event that will be held in Tifton Georgia on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026. This is a good program for our community.

**Meeting adjourned.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Hal Wiley, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Pamela D. Turner, County Clerk