

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON DECEMBER 04, 2018 AT 6:00 PM IN THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Steve Taylor	Chairman
Daniel Cowan	Vice-Chairman
Bennie Calloway	Commissioner
Hope Harmon	Commissioner
Michael Dinnerman	County Manager
Donna Prather	County Clerk

Commissioner John Mooney was absent.

Call to Order

Chairman called the meeting to order.

Reverend Steve O'Neal gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

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

Acceptance of Prior Minutes

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes held on November 06, 2018. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting minutes held on November 11, 2018. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Public Hearing

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to enter into the Public Hearing regarding the 2019 Proposed Budget with the right to return to the Regular Monthly Meeting. Commissioner Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Commissioner Hope Harmon, and Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

County Manager Michael Dinnerman stated the Commissioners have discussed the 2019 Proposed Budget, the Public Hearing was advertise in the local newspaper, the budget is posted on the County's webpage, and a copy is on display in the Commissioner's Office. Mr. Dinnerman stated the proposed revenues and expenditures for 2019 is \$8,959,719.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Steve Taylor thanked County Manager Michael Dinnerman and Chief Finance Director Darlow Maxwell for putting the budget together.

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

Constitutional Officer: NONE

Department Head Reports:

Road Superintendent Tim Kegebein gave an update on the recent rain. Mr. Kegebein stated some of the county roads have severe damage and it will take a couple of weeks to repair them. The Road Department is working as quickly as possible.

4H Agent Geri Gelliland gave an update on activity regarding the Ag Agent and 4-H. Ms. Gelliland also reported how the Extension Office is helping farmers post hurricane Michael to generate accurate data regarding yield loss in cotton. She also reported the problem farmers are having with silverleaf whiteflies. University of Georgia is helping growers to combat the silverleaf whitefly by conducting research on new control methods.

County Board Reports:

Regional Director Sandy Hester introduced the new Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library Branch Manager Jennifer Johnson. Ms. Johnson thanked the Commissioners for their continued funding and support for the Library. She also gave a report on the upcoming events that will be happening at the library.

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Michael Dinnerman reported he and Finance Director Darlow Maxwell worked hard on the budget. Mr. Dinnerman stated he is pleased to announce as of today our cash position is \$1,126,789 and we have only borrowed \$2,000,000 on the TAN Note. He said this was due to the hard work of the Constitutional Officers and Department Heads to make it happen.

Annexation Request:

The City of Fitzgerald sent notification on said property located at 243 Perry House Road regarding an application for approval of Annexation to the City of Fitzgerald. The Ordinance Number is 18-1527 and this went into effect November 1, 2018.

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application: NONE

Consent Items: NONE

Appointments: NONE

Old Business: NONE

New Business:

Ben Hill Procurement Policy

County Manager Michael Dinnerman stated the Georgia Department of Transportation required some changes to the Purchasing Policy for Resource Management System. The changes are micro purchases changed from 0-\$3,500 to \$0-\$10,000 and small purchases change to \$10,000 but not more than \$250,000.

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the changes to the Procurement Policy. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Title VI Plan Updated

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan made a motion to table this agenda item. Commissioner Bennie Calloway seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Hope Harmon all voting for the motion.

Board of Elections Appointment

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan nominated Dr. Tom Green for the Board of Elections.

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan made a motion close nominations. Commissioner Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Hope Harmon, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

T-SPLOST Contribution

County Manager Michael Dinnerman reported the first contribution for T-SPLOST was \$32,170.63. He stated it was lower than expected; but with the holidays approaching he is expecting more.

Agenda Changes and/or add on:

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Hope Harmon reported the following:

ACCG held their Annual Legislative Conference, October 10-12, 2018. During the business meeting discussed funding and legislative priorities for 2019. The funding priorities are Replacing Georgia's voting equipment and Lack of appropriate mental health and substance abuse/prevention services. ACCG does commend the creation of the Secure, Accessible and Fair Elections Commission to examine replacement of Georgia's dated voting equipment and are grateful this also includes county officials input in this process. We are pushing for the state to include provisions to replace voting equipment with the same technology statewide, fully funded by the state and for the state to provide funding to adequately train local election officials on the use of the selected technology.

ACCG urges the General Assembly to develop regional systems of care for mental health and substance abuse services to divert citizens in crisis from local jail to appropriate treatment services. We would also like for the General Assembly to fund at least two additional Behavior Health Crisis Centers each fiscal year. More and more people are entering jails are being taken to local emergency rooms when they truly need help. This would be a cost savings to jails by not having to house people who do not belong there while also giving those individuals the help they so desperately need.

The 2019 legislative priorities are: Enhanced wireless service, small cell deployment and local government right-of-way; fees on property tax bills and increase tag and title fees. ACCG is trying to protect our right to decide what will or will not be place on local tax property bills. Tag and title administration is a state function but counties provide most of the equipment and personnel to administer the tag and title system. Counties have not received an increase in compensation for the services provided. The costs to provide these functions are increasing, especially with the new driver records system. ACCG recommends that title and tag fees be raised to an amount that fully fund the cost for provides the services, with additional funds being paid directly to counties to be used to help pay for the operations of the county Tax Commissioners Office.

Commissioner Harmon stated we will keep working closely with ACCG to see how we can help as local elected officials. The complete 2019 legislative toolkit can be found at https://www.accg.org/docs/policy/2019ACCGToolkit_web.pdf.

Public Comments: NONE

Executive Session

Commissioner's Remarks:

Commissioner Hope Harmon thanked County Manager Michael Dinnerman, CFO Darlow Maxwell, and staff for the budget.

Chairman Steve Taylor thanked County Manager Michael Dinnerman and CFO Darlow Maxwell for the budget. He acknowledged Payroll & Human Resource Clerk Pamela Turner for completing her certification as Human Resource Manager and Commissioner Hope Harmon for speaking at the Newly Elected Commissioners Training in Athens.

Mr. Taylor also reported he received a Thank You Note from Judge Hobby regarding the passing of his mother and a notification from Mediacom notifying us of a rate increase that will be in effect January 1, 2019.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Steve Taylor, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk