

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BEN HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON JANUARY 08, 2019 AT 6:00 PM IN THE
BEN HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

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

Call to Order

Chairman called the meeting to order.

Pastor Terry Cole gave the invocation.

Everyone gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda/Agenda Changes

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to add Solid Waste Truck/Ratify and Probate Judge Position/Non-Partisan agenda items to New Business. Commissioner John Mooney seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, 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 December 04, 2018. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting minutes held on December 27, 2018. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Required Annual Actions

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan made a motion to rehire County Manager Michael Dinnerman. Commissioner Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to rehire County Clerk Donna Prather. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to hire Hall, Smith & Booth Managing Partner Tony Rowell working with Nick Kensley as County Attorney. Commissioner Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Hope Harmon, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

County Manager Michael Dinnerman introduced Mr. Tony Rowell to the Commissioners and to the public.

Mr. Rowell stated he grew up in Douglas, GA. He has been with Hall, Smith & Booth Law Firm for 20 years and he also has 20 plus years working with local governments and litigation. He stated they are a full service firm.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to rehire Meeks CPA. Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Hope Harmon, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner Hope Harmon made a motion to approve Wells Fargo, Planters First, Colony Bank, Community Bank, & Local Investment Pool as the County Financial Institutes. Commissioner John Mooney seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan made a motion to approve the Herald Leader as the County Legal Organ. Commissioner Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Vice-Chairman Daniel Cowan, Commissioner Hope Harmon, Commissioner John Mooney, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner John Mooney nominated Commissioner Hope Harmon for Vice-Chair.

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

Commissioner Hope Harmon is Vice-Chair.

Constitutional Officer:

Tax Commissioner Barry Foster reported the 2018 property tax collection rate is 89% as of December 31st and this is 3% higher than last year. He also reported 2017 property tax collection rate is 98.33% and 2016 property tax collection rate is 99.4 %.

Mr. Foster reported DRIVES in house software training begins this month and will continue through May. They will go live on the new system May 28, 2019.

Department Head Reports:

Road Superintendent Tim Kegebein stated they have been working on the roads as best as they can. The recent rain has caused a lot of problems. Mr. Kegebein stated he is also working on a grant that will help pay for pipe.

County Board Reports: NONE

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Michael Dinnerman thanked the Board for believing in him and for the opportunity to continue his contract. Mr. Dinnerman stated he could not ask for a better Board to work for and they have the best interest of the County.

Mr. Dinnerman thanked Chief Finance Officer Darlow Maxwell, Constitutional Officers, and Department Heads for all they do for the County. He said he is blessed to work with them.

Mr. Dinnerman introduced Brandon Fletcher as the new E911 Director and EMA Director. He stated the E911 building is being renovated and new equipment has been purchased. The expected date to go live is February 20th.

Mr. Dinnerman stated our cash position is \$2,012,470.

Annexation Request: NONE

Rezoning Application: NONE

Alcohol Application: NONE

Consent Items: NONE

Appointments: NONE

Old Business: NONE

Board of Election Reappointment

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to reappoint Dr. Tom Green to the Board of Elections. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

New Business:

Budget Amendment Resolution

Chief Finance Officer Darlow Maxwell stated our accounting system tracks budgets, approved and amended, for at least five years and can issue reports containing multiple budget year detail. For that reason, it is important to ensure that line item budgets are amended to mirror actual expenditures to the extent possible. That is the purpose of this amendment presented tonight and explains why it covers nearly 200 expenditure line items.

The purpose of the February second budget amendment is to ensure as closely as possible that departments are within their budget as amended and will encompass significantly fewer expenditure line item adjustments.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to adopt the Budget Amendment Resolution. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Indigent Burial Policy & Procedures

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to adopt the Indigent Burial Policy & Procedures as presented. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Board of Tax Assessors Appointment

Commissioner Bennie Calloway made a motion to reappoint Jasper Stewart to the Board of Tax Assessors. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner Bennie Calloway, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner John Mooney all voting for the motion.

Solid Waste Truck/Ratify

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to ratify the fact that the Commissioners gave County Manager Michael Dinnerman permission to issue a purchase order number to purchase a Solid Waste Truck. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Probate Judge and Magistrate Judge Position/Non-Partisan

Chairman Steve Taylor stated Probate Judge Hobby requested at the last meeting that the Commissioners partition State Legislation to change his position to non-partisan.

Chairman Steve Taylor stated he didn't have a resolution in front of him but he is asking for permission to proceed with a signed resolution to partition State Legislation to change the Probate Judge position to non-partisan.

Magistrate Judge Lisa McCard raised her hand and asked if it was too late to add her position to the Resolution? Chairman Taylor asked the Commissioners what is their pleasure regarding Judge McCard request?

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to amend the motion by adding the Magistrate Judge position to the motion. Commissioner Daniel Cowan seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Commissioner Daniel Cowan, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, and Commissioner Bennie Calloway all voting for the motion.

Commissioner John Mooney made a motion to give the Chairman permission to proceed with a signed resolution to partition State Legislation to change the Probate Judge position and the Magistrate Judge position to non-partisan. Vice-Chair Hope Harmon seconded the motion; which passed with Commissioner John Mooney, Vice-Chair Hope Harmon, Commissioner Bennie Calloway, and Commissioner Daniel Cowan all voting for the motion.

Agenda Changes and/or add on:

Legislative Report:

Commissioner Hope Harmon reported the following:

Rural House Development Council

Rural House Development Council Recommendations for 2018 can be found online:
<http://www.house.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/HouseRuralDevelopmentCouncil.aspx>

Regional Development Authorities

As with most things, the state will be pushing regional development authorities.

According to the Council, "Promotion of regionalism needs to be encouraged and incentivized by statute, in which the state will recognize and support these efforts with enhanced benefits to assist in the success of the projects."

It does seem the state will be incentivizing regional industrial parks and also pushing for all members of development authorities to complete at the minimum basic economic development training.

Hospital Tax Credit

"Introduce legislation that increases the cap on the Rural Hospital Tax Credit to \$100 million, and require the Department of Community Health to provide and post on their website a list of qualifying hospitals in need of financial support. • Further clarify contributions rules and processes. • Further clarify qualifying expenditures. • Direct the departments of Community Health and Revenue to work together to ensure the intent and integrity of the credit is maintained."

One suggestion I think we need to ensure is that hospitals are actually in need the credit. Some reports have been made that some hospitals receiving the credit, aren't in financial duress- so maybe that's something we can speak to Clay about in the coming months.

ACCG

ACCG and GMA are co-hosting regional 2020 Census workshops. These series of workshops will provide information on how communities can ensure a good count by organizing local count committees. These workshops are free to elected and appointed officials.

"Why is the Census Important?"

- The information collected in the census is used to:
- Allocate federal funding to states and local governments
- Assist federal and state agencies in administering programs
- Determine Congressional representation
- Redistricting
- Future planning for counties in terms of resources needed for their communities

The Role of Counties in the Census

Ensuring that each county has an accurate census count is very important. Each person who participated in the 2010 Census brought in approximately \$1339 to the state in federal funding per year. Failure to count just 10 households containing 2.5 people in your county could result in the loss of \$334,750 over the 10 year census period."

https://www.accg.org/2020_census.php

Public Comments: NONE

Executive Session

Commissioner's Remarks:

Vice-Chair Hope Harmon thanked the Commissioners for nominating her as Vice-Chair. Ms. Harmon congratulated Regional Library Director Sandy Hester for being nominate Public Librarian of the Year for Georgia. She thanked Sheriff Lee Cone and staff for keeping the community informed.

Ms. Harmon announced the itinerary for the upcoming Martin Luther King celebration.

Chairman Steve Taylor thanked Sheriff Lee Cone for his service to the community.

Meeting adjourned

_____ Steve Taylor, Chairman

_____ Donna R. Prather, County Clerk