

Public Comment before the Macon County Commission on April 11, 2016  
Frank Dillman  
frank@frankdillman.com

Because of the four district meetings, there is only eight months worth of meetings out of the entire calendar year being considered this evening.

If it is a concern of employees working outside their normal work hours – that should not be a problem as most are salaried. “Comp time” should be offered to the one or two eligible employees.

If the concern is poor attendance at the work sessions, I fault the commission for not advertising those meetings along with the general meeting announcements.

Those of us who regularly attend both morning and evening meetings can attest to the larger audiences at the evening meetings. I offer a small sampling. The 9 a.m. Feb 22 meeting had only two Zoning Board members, whose presence was requested, and me in the audience. The Sep 22, 2015 morning budget meeting had but a couple of non-county employee citizens in attendance. Last but not the least, the morning meeting on Mar 17, 2015 had only a Tuskegee News reporter in the audience.

It was interesting to hear during the Feb 22 morning meeting that Ms. Knight of the Zoning Board wanted to attend but could not because of her job.

86% of the respondents to my Facebook poll are in favor of evening meetings while 14% voted for workday meetings.

Government should be pro-actively transparent, convenient, and provide encouragement for citizen participation.

When we the citizens and our elected commissioners vote this evening, I ask everyone in the chamber to consider for the moment their friends and family members who are not here right now. As most of us may recall, parental responsibilities of bathing, assisting with homework, fixing dinner, and getting children ready for school tomorrow is no easy task after a long workday. These parents should not be faulted for not attending these meetings and when the need arises, should not be required to take vacation time to participate in THEIR county government.

I ask each of you, in particular my commissioner, the Honorable Mike Berry, to continue with evening meetings, or option 1, for the majority of our citizens and best governmental practices.