BHNA BOARD MEETING MINUTES
May 18, 2026

1. Minutes of April 20, 2026 Board Meeting approved, and the meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Board Members (put X in appropriate column)

	In Attendance:	Absent:
1. Eliza Hawkins	X	
2. Casey McLaughlin	X	
3. Mary Kay Falconer	X	
4. Donna Legare	X	
5. Jim Ward	X	
6. Tom Schulte	X	
7. Nancy Leiva-Krause	X	
8. Bill Behenna	X	
9. Mari-Jo Lewis-Wilkinson	X	
10. Amber Ward		X (excused)
11. Ron Salutsky		X (excused)

3. Motion was made and seconded to approve the April 2026 meeting minutes. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

4. The Board welcomed potential student board member Baia Terracciano and invited her to stay for the entire meeting (which she did).

** MJ will move (by email vote) to appoint Baia to the Board.

5. Tom Schulte presented the Treasurer's report.

6. President Jim Ward gave an overview of the Emancipation Day commemoration at the Betton Hill Plantation Cemetery. Approximately 50 people attended, including BHNA board members, Betton Hills residents, descendants of the

enslaved persons buried in the cemetery, and a number of people from other cities in Florida. Betton Hills resident and past Board member Mario Taylor organized the event and introduced Dr. Larry Rivers (also a Betton Hills resident) to speak about Emancipation Day in Florida (May 20). Ms. Althemese Barnes also spoke about her ancestors who are buried in the Betton Hill Cemetery, and introduced other living descendants of the enslaved buried in the cemetery. Volunteer Ashley Hopkins instructed the attendants on the safe, proper, and respectful methods for cleaning headstones.

Donna Legare proposed the Board consider fixing the steps leading into the cemetery. Mari-Jo Lewis-Wilkinson reported that Mario Taylor said such improvements were already in the works. Mari-Jo will contact Mario to inquire about the plan and schedule for those improvements and report back to the Board. Donna Legare also agreed to contact Brian Hopper of the City of Tallahassee to inquire about maintenance mowing of the cemetery.

7. Jim Ward discussed Spring Fest which occurred May 17. He said 13 members (new or renewing) signed up at the welcome table. The board also discussed ideas for improving the logistical administration of the festival (scheduling around the city's many other Spring events, weather concerns, tables, tents, t-shirts, city games, food trucks). Further discussion and specific actions were deferred until the August meeting.

8. Ron Salutsky (absence excused) reported by email that he will complete a draft Welcome Letter to new residents by the end of the week. Eliza will share a sample letter with Ron.

9. Jim Ward reported that Betton Hills resident Vanessa Crisler offered to assist in drafting a grant application under the Vibrant Neighborhoods grant program for a bat house to be erected at Harriman Circle Park. Eliza Hawkins agreed to draft the grant proposal with Vanessa's assistance.

10. The board discussed the Centerville Road electric line project, scheduled to begin May 26. The board will send a neighborhood-wide email about the project. Mari-Jo suggested and will pursue scheduling a neighborhood meeting with an appropriate city representative before the project starts.

11. The board discussed the May 2 neighborhood garage sale and the lower-than-average participation rate, likely due to the rain that morning, the conflicting college graduations that weekend, as well as the challenges in finding a free weekend during the city's crowded Spring festival season (also pertinent to scheduling Spring Fest). Casey McLaughlin suggested moving the garage sale to the Fall. The issue was tabled until the August board meeting.

12. Jim Ward reported that a resident complained about the dues solicitation header in the board's e-mail blasts. The board discussed alternatives: moving the dues notice to the bottom of the emails; sending quarterly single-subject dues reminder emails in lieu of being appended to all neighborhood emails; or alternating placement of the dues notice—at the top of Spring Fest and Fall Fest emails; at the bottom of other emails throughout the year. The issue was tabled until the August meeting.

13. **Unagendaed item:** Nancy Leiva- Krause shared a notice she received from and discussed with Brian Hopper of the City of Tallahassee regarding the maintenance plan for the Evelyn Randolph Nature Preserve (attached).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm. The next meeting will be on Monday, August 17th at 7:00 PM at Eliza's house.