

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024

Board members present: Randy Phillips, Chairman; Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, Vice-Chairman; Cal Stiles, member; Jan Griggs, member; Ben Adams, member.

Others present: Randy Wiggins, County Manager; Maria Hass, Asst. County Manager/Clerk to Board; Candy Anderson, Chief Financial Officer; and, Darryl Brown, County Attorney.

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Cherokee County Courthouse, Room 342.

Call to Order by Chairman Phillips

Invocation

Pledge

Ethics Statement read by Clerk to the Board: “Members of the County Board of Commissioners are advised, hereby, of their duty under the Local Government Ethics Act and should avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflict; and, further, are instructed to refrain from participating in any matter coming before this Board of County Commissioners with respect to which there is a conflict of interest or appearance of such conflict as may be allowed by law”.

Public Comment Period

Public comment period offered; no public comments.

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve the following additions to the agenda:

- 1) Cherokee County Schools Budget Revision for items tabled from March 18th meeting; and
- 2) Budget Revision to receive contribution of funds to the Veteran Services Office for the purchase of flags.

Motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to adopt the agenda, as modified. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to adopt the

following minutes, as presented: January 22, February 12, March 7, March 19, and April 1. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to table the Sheriff's request for funds in the amount of \$75,361.00 to purchase a 2024 Expedition and for upfitting the vehicle, until the budget work session. The sheriff stated that his county vehicle is a 2016 Tahoe with 100,000 miles. He said he will give the 2016 Tahoe to his Chief Deputy, and the new Expedition will be his vehicle. Board members questioned the cost of the vehicle and asked if he had looked at less expensive new vehicles. The Sheriff said funds were at his discretion and this is the vehicle he wanted to purchase. The Finance Officer explained that while the funds have to be used for law enforcement, it is solely at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners how those funds get appropriated within the budget for law enforcement purposes. After discussion, Commissioner Eichenbaum withdrew his Motion. Commissioner Adams made a Motion to approve the vehicle purchase. Motion seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion failed 2-3. Voting against the Motion was Commissioners Stiles, Griggs and Eichenbaum. *Note: Per county fuel card records and purchases, the 2016 Tahoe is currently assigned to the Chief Deputy and actual mileage is 64,329 miles. Per county fuel card records and purchases, the Sheriff is driving a 2019 Tahoe with 72,210 miles. Mileage for both the 2016 Tahoe and the 2019 Tahoe is as of April 17, 2024.*

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$65,603.00 for Home Community Care Block Grant funds to support the Senior Center Meals on Wheels Program. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: There is no county match.*

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$550.00 for donations to the Veteran Services Office. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: The budget revision is for reimbursement to the Department for expenses incurred for the new Konehete Veterans Park sign.*

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision for use of fund balance in the amount of \$44,635.00 for additional expenses related to the May 14th runoff election. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$92,573.00 for Cherokee County Schools request for use of Article 40/42 sales tax for various capital expenses. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: The revision is for items remaining from the request previously tabled at the Board of Commissioners March 18th meeting.*

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$300.00 for receipt of contribution of funds to the Veteran Services Office for the purchase of flags. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

After presentation by Mrs. Victoria Ivie, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and

seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$1,820.00 for two additional surveillance cameras to be installed at Konehete Park. Motion passed unanimously.

Captain David Williams came before the Board to present the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) Community Policing Development Program, and to seek Board approval to apply for a Promoting Access to Crisis Teams (PACT) grant for Cherokee County. He explained that the grant award is up to \$400,000 and spans a period of two years. The deadline to apply is May 14th. Captain Williams also talked about the Cahoots program in Eugene, Oregon, a similar program which has seen great success. After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to allow Captain Williams to apply for the PACT grant. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: Per USDOJ fact sheet, the program provides grants to state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies for the creation or expansion of crisis intervention teams and to embed mental and behavioral health services with law enforcement agencies so they can better respond to individuals in crisis in the community.*

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$6,000.00 to participate in the Beaver Management Assistance Program. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: BMAP provides damage management services to landowners at a reduced cost. Cherokee County Soil & Water will administer the program and reimburse Cherokee County for the \$6,000.00 participation cost.*

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$24,010.00 for jury box renovations in the main courtroom. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: Renovations include enlarging the jury box, installing new seating, constructing a ramp to the jury box, and new cork flooring in the project areas.*

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the Rock Gym bathroom renovation project plan and to advertise the project for bids. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: The renovations will include interior and exterior renovations, addressing important accessibility issues.*

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve the Plans and Masters' Bidding and Construction Administration Proposal for the armory renovation project. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the Architectural & Planning Services Proposal for EMS Station 2 in the amount of \$12,900.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the tax releases and tax refund report, as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Comment Period

Commissioner Griggs – Announcements

- *Anti-litter coalition. Encouraged citizens to not litter.*

- *Manna Food Bank*
- *Peachtree Broadband meeting at Bear Paw on April 27th*
- *Planning Board meeting on April 30th*

Commissioner Adams - Announcement

- *Telecommunicator Week – Appreciates telecommunicators*

County Manager Items

- Broadband updates: Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program - Legislators are trying to get county match requirement reduced. The Broadband Equity, Access, and Development Program (BEAD) program will follow the CAB program.
- Budget calendar – Need to add Public Health, Nantahala Regional Library, VRHS and Town of Andrews to the budget work sessions.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to reschedule the May 13th budget work session to May 7th, and to schedule May 29th as an additional work session date. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to cancel the June 10th joint work session with Cherokee County Schools and to request the date of June 13th or May 30th, as alternate dates, since the county manager and finance officer cannot attend the June 10th meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to go into closed session, pursuant to §143-318.11 (1), to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Session

After returning to open session, no action was taken.

Adjourn

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON MAY 6, 2024.