

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2025

Board members present: Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, Chairman; Cal Stiles, Vice-Chairman; Ben Adams, member; Alan Bryant, member; and Mark Stiles, member.

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

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Cherokee County Courthouse, Room 342.

Call to Order by Chairman Eichenbaum

Invocation

Pledge

Ethics Statement

The Clerk to the Board read the Ethics statement.

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to add a capital project ordinance for the Schools of Innovation project. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to add a capital project ordinance for the EMS Station 2 project. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to remove item “d” from New Business. Motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Mark Stiles to approve the following meeting minutes: April 21, 2025; May 6, 2025; May 12, 2025; May 13, 2025; May 14, 2025; May 20, 2025; and May 22, 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Commissioner Mark Stiles to approve

Cherokee County Schools request to use the NCDOT reimbursement from the Hiwassee Dam paving project in the amount of \$38,761 for maintenance costs or other projects, to offset costs and extend fund balance and available quarter cent sales tax balance. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Cal Stiles to approve a budget revision for Cherokee County Schools request for use of Article 40/42 sales tax in the amount of \$38,694 for various projects. Motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken on the quotes for a new sound system in commissioner's boardroom. The quotes will be considered at the July board meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to approve the FY-end budget revision in the amount of \$340,821. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Commissioner Mark Stiles to approve the FY 2026 Budget Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve a Capital Project Ordinance in the amount of \$496,276 for construction of the new mechanic's building at Landfill. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Mark Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve the FY 2025 Audit Contract for a price not to exceed \$51,045. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve a Capital Project Ordinance in the amount of \$20,822,301, to close out the Schools of Innovation and Technology project. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve a Capital Project Ordinance in the amount of \$714,700 for the EMS Station 2 project. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to approve a request by Murphy Booster Club for use of the pickleball courts at Konehete Park on August 9th for a pickleball tournament fundraiser. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Mark Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve use of unspent elevator funds in the amount of \$23,435 to complete a playground and basketball court project at Texana Community Center. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve a request from Tri-County Community College Workforce Development Office to waive tipping fees and building permit fees for the Cherokee County Housing Project in Andrews. Motion

passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to approve the appointment of the following persons to the Bear Paw Service District Board of Directors, as nominated by the Bear Paw Property Owners Association: Linda Hughes; Bruce Roydes; Mike Stubblefield; Anthony Eymard; Stacey Galloway; David Black; and Stan Wise. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Commissioner Cal Stiles to approve use of rescue funds for Hiwassee Dam VFD in the amount of \$54,690 for the purchase of a swift water response boat with sonar. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Chairman Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve use of FY26 rescue funds for Wolf Creek Fire Department in the amount of \$4,000 to purchase a skid unit for a rescue ATV side by side. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to appoint Jessica Nicole Blair to Wolf Creek VFD Fireman's Relief Fund Board of Trustees to replace Keesha Curtis. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve use of FY26 rescue funds for Valleytown Fire Department in the amount of \$28,135.15 for the purchase of various rescue equipment items. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve the use of FY26 rescue funds in the amount of \$2,171.30 for rescue gear for Cherokee County Search and Rescue Team. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to increase airport ramp and landing fees from \$75 to \$100. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to approve applying for a Golden Leaf SITE Program Development Grant for site work at Marble Industrial Park. Motion passed unanimously.

Captain David Williams, of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, came before the board to request permission to apply for a federal COPS grant, for an award amount up to \$250,000. Captain Williams said the grant can be used to bring the office into compliance with issues discovered during the recent evidence room audit. He said there is no county match and there would be no recurring costs. Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Chairman Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to approve a Resolution in Support of Preserving Local Sales Tax Revenue. Motion passed unanimously.
Note: There is some push in the General Assembly to divert these revenues to other projects.

This is a preemptive effort to affirm to the General Assembly, the importance of protecting and preserving sales tax revenues for counties.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to accept the high bid of \$5,784 for the Granny Squirrel Drive surplus property (.78 acres). Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Mark Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to accept the high bid of \$4,076 for the Morris Ridge Drive surplus property (.84 acres). Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Cal Stiles to accept the high bid of \$5,380 for the Choctaw Ridge surplus property (.74 acres). Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Mark Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to table consideration of a private property donation of Lot 36 Angel Mountain Estates. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Bryant and seconded by Commissioner Mark Stiles to approve the Tax Releases, Tax Refund Report and NCVTS Refund Report. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to reimbursement Ed Wood in the amount of \$861.30 for fertilizer previously spread on field at entrance of airport. Motion passed unanimously.

The board discussed Cherokee County Board of Education's proposed consolidation plan for a Pre-K through 8th grade facility, which would consolidate Murphy Middle, Murphy Elementary, Martins Creek Elementary and Peachtree Elementary Schools. Chairman Eichenbaum shared his concern and said the plan needs to be based on educational needs and that is for a new high school. Board of Education member, Steve Coleman, and Superintendent Dr. Keevin Woody, were in attendance to answer questions and speak on behalf of the Board of Education. Community member and local physician, Dr. Brian Mitchell, was in attendance and also spoke in opposition of the proposed Pre-K through 8th plan and agreed with Chairman Eichenbaum that the greatest need is a new central high school. Concerning the Board of Education's proposed consolidation plan, the board asked for additional information, to include location and actual cost savings.

The board discussed requirements to be placed on Valley River Humane Society (VRHS) for continued public funding. The county manager will draft the board's requirements and send them to VRHS for review and consideration.

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to move the board's July 21st meeting to July 29th. Motion passed unanimously.

County Manager Items

The county manager updated the board on the new Senior Center/VA project. After discussion, a

motion was made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Chairman Eichenbaum to proceed with house demolition and lot grading (\$15,000), double-wide relocation (\$15,000) and storage unit relocation (\$600) at the project site. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Motion made by Commissioner Cal Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Bryant to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON JULY 29, 2025.**