

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
October 7, 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; 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 Phillips

Invocation

Pledge

Ethics Statement – Chairman Phillips reminded the Board to adhere to its adopted Ethics Statement.

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to add to the agenda, a Resolution of Appreciation to Bladen County, N.C. Motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2024; July 15, 2024; August 5, 2024; August 19, 2024; and September 3, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

Budget and Finance

- Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$288,085 for Cherokee County Schools request for use of Article 40/42 sales tax for multiple capital expenditures. Motion passed unanimously.

-No action was taken on Cherokee County Schools request for use of Article 40/42 sales tax for EV infrastructure for buses. Board members had concerns with the contract, which was entered into by the Board of Education in March 2023.

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve and

accept a quote in the amount of \$128,433.43 from Shore's Construction for renovation of the new Emergency Operations Center. Motion passed unanimously.

The Finance Officer provided to the Board of Commissioners in its agenda packet, a list of budget transfers between county departments, effective October 1, 2024. This was for informational-purposes only, and required no action.

New Business

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to reject Cherokee County Board of Education's offer to sell surplus property, located at 85 Temple Street in Andrews, to Cherokee County. Motion passed unanimously.

- After the reading of a resolution by Commissioner Stiles, a Motion was made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the resolution requesting N.C. Department of Transportation name a bridge at Axle Creek in Murphy, N.C. in honor of the late Franklin Barnett. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Barnett's daughter, Sharon Hicks McDonald and grandson, Trevis Hicks were in attendance. Mr. Hicks spoke fondly of his grandfather and thanked the Board for passing the resolution.

- After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to allow Cherokee County Transit to provide transit services for the October 26, 2024 Welcome Home Veterans Event at Western Carolina Regional Airport. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to accept an amended application for property tax exemption for Bellview Volunteer Fire Department for only parcel number 4488-00-39-1285. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the release of taxes in the amount of \$2,332.51 for parcel number 4488-00-39-1285 for Bellview Volunteer Fire Department. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the tax releases, tax refund report and NCVTS report, as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

-Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to appoint the following persons as Review Officers, pursuant to §47-30.2:

Cherokee County GIS - Deborah Tomlinson; Trevor Lovin; and Allison Mathis

Cherokee County Tax Administration - David Pipes and Teresa Ricks

Cherokee County Register of Deeds - Karen Wright

Town of Murphy - Chad Simons, Town Manager

Town of Andrews - James Reid, Mayor

- Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to table the appointment of commission members to the School Facility Planning Committee until the December 2nd meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to move the October 21st meeting to October 28th, and to hold only one meeting in November, on Tuesday, November 12th. Motion passed unanimously.

-The Clerk to the Board read a resolution of appreciation from Cherokee County to Bladen County, NC, expressing the County's appreciation to Bladen County for handling the routing of 911 calls for Cherokee County during Hurricane Helene. After the reading of the resolution, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

County Manager Items

The County Manager updated the Board on plans for the new Senior/VA facility saying that the architect would be at the Board's November 12th meeting to update the Board on the design bid process, and also to share an alternate design for health facility.

Commissioner Comment Period

Commissioner Griggs

- Announced MANNA food distribution center in Asheville was damaged during Hurricane Helene and local MANNA food banks are struggling
- Read a post from Cherokee Clay Food Alliance concerning the disruption of MANNA's local food supply and how that is affecting the organizations ability to provide weekend wellness bags for Cherokee County School students. The post is requesting help from the community to meet the needs, as many children do not have food to eat over the weekend, aside from the weekend wellness bags. The Clerk to the Board will share the post on the county's website.

Commissioner Adams

- Announced he would be holding a town hall meeting tomorrow from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Ranger community.

Commissioner Stiles

- In response to a comment from public forum, Commissioner Stiles informed the audience member that the \$400,000 paving job he referenced, was Cherokee County Schools, not Cherokee County Board of Commissioners. He also added that all votes of the county are taken at open meetings, addressing a comment about lack of transparency.

Closed Session

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to go into closed session pursuant to §143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged; and (6) to discuss a contractual matter. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion and consultation, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to return to open session. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Session

After returning to open session, a Motion was made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to eliminate Pay Grade 92 from the county's pay plan, and to increase the max of Pay Grade 91 to \$204,000 to be compliant with the Office of State Human Resources. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

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

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON OCTOBER 28, 2024.**