

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2023

Board members present: Cal Stiles, Chairman; Jan Griggs, Vice-Chair; Randy Phillips, member; and Ben Adams, member. Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, member, participated remotely, but was unable to vote.

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

Time: 6:30 P.M.

Location: Cherokee County Courthouse, Room 342.

Call to Order

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of Ethics Statement

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Adams to remove airports fees and closed session. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to add a Budget Revision for use of Article 46 sales tax for athletic trainer salaries. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Adoption

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to adopt the agenda, as modified. Motion passed 4-0.

Recognition of Anti-Litter Coalition Volunteers

Commissioner Griggs read a proclamation of appreciation and recognized the following persons: Martin Barros, David Mackey, Kim Mackey, John Mason, Karen Herring, and Mike Herring.

Public Forum

The following persons spoke in public forum: John Leder; Becky Wright, Penny Harrison; and Ron Wright.

Budget and Finance

a) Franklin Shook, Director of Nantahala Regional Library, came before the board to provide an overview of library services.

b) Rebecca Costello, the Sheriff's Administrative Assistant, presented a request to transfer \$82,000.00 from the Sheriff's fuel line to capital expenditures to purchase one new vehicle from Brannen Motors and one used vehicle from Andrews Police Department. Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the transfer. Motion passed 4-0.

c) Major Monty Ward, Detention Center Administrator, came before the Board to present a request to increase the fees for holding out-of-county inmates to \$96.00 per day. Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion passed 4-0.

d1) Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve a budget revision for use of Article 46 sales tax in the amount of \$153,551.00 for athletic trainer salaries, contingent upon the Board of Education approving the use of sales tax for said purpose at their next meeting. Motion failed. d2) Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to table the budget revision until the Board of Education makes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to use the sales tax for this purpose. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioner Stiles and Commissioner Griggs. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Phillips and Commissioner Adams. Motion failed.

e) Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a budget revision for use of fund balance in the amount of \$119,518.00 for the development of the new Joe Brown Highway Convenience Site and for upgrades to the Texana Convenience Site. Motion passed 4-0.

New Business

a) Audrey Smith Ware came before the board to request the board adopt a resolution honoring her late mother and to support the family's request to North Carolina Department of Transportation to name a segment of Old Highway 64, beginning at SR-1550 (Fall Branch Road) and ending at NC 141 in the Peachtree Community, in honor of Marcella H. Smith. After presentation and discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to adopt the resolution, as presented, and to submit the resolution and character reference form to NCDOT for consideration. Motion passed 4-0.

b) Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to reappoint Linda May to the Area Agency on Aging for a three-year term, and to appoint Andy Ziemann as a new member to the Area Agency on Aging for a three-year term. Motion passed 4-0.

c) Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to reappoint Denise Cross to the Joint Community Care Advisory Committee for a three-year term. Motion passed 4-0.

d) Patrick Bowen, of Bowen National Research, gave a presentation on the recently completed Cherokee County Housing Needs Assessment. A copy of the assessment is on the county's website for public viewing.

e) Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve the tax refund report and NCVTS Report. Motion passed 4-0.

f) Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the FY 23-24 Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Certification and Annual Plan, as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

County Manager Items

a) The county manager presented the FY 23-24 budget message, noting the following highlights:

- No increase to the property tax millage rate of 61 cents
- No increase in fees
- \$500,000 addition to the General Fund Balance
- \$2,928,572 addition to designated General Fund Balance for the July 15, 2024 DSS suit settlement payment
- An increase in budgeted sales tax proceeds of 7% or approximately \$805,466 over FY23 approved budget
- An increase in budgeted TVA Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) of \$250,000
- 2% Cost of Living Adjustment
- Operational expansion of the Solid Waste Program – staffing of the Texana and soon to be developed Unaka solid waste convenience sites - \$64,831
- \$400,000 appropriated as Contingency to address unexpected needs or opportunities
- \$133,234 increase in funding to Valley River Humane Society
- \$192,000 increase in insurance & bonding
- \$1,567,841 use of General Fund Balance for major capital needs:
 - o Articulating dump truck - \$260,000
 - o Front-loader solid waste collection truck - \$393,710
 - o Frazier ambulance remounts (3 units) - \$664,131
 - o Health Department flooring system replacement - \$250,000
- 64.9% of the general fund expenditures are allocated to the following functions:
 - o Public Safety - 27%
 - o Human Services - 23%
 - o Education – 14.9%

b) Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve a budget revision for use of fund balance in the amount of \$5,400.00 to construct an ADA ramp at the pickleball courts at Konehete Park. Motion passed 4-0.

Chairman/Commissioner Items

Commissioner Griggs said she recently attended a meeting of the Needs and Solutions Advisory Committee and announced that the meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates are posted on the county's website calendar.

Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to adjourn. Motion passed 4-0.