

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
August 5, 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 “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”.

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to add the Tax Collectors Tax Settlement Report and Charge of Tax Collector to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to add discussion of a Donation Policy to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to add discussion of the Sheriff’s request to accept a vehicle from Sandy Springs Police Department. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to add discussion of a September 16th worksession with the Board of Education. Motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Public Comment Period

The Board took no action on a request by Arlin Phillips for funding to assist with repair and maintenance of a private road.

Budget and Finance

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a budget revision in the amount of \$80,050 for Cherokee County Schools request for use of article 40/42 sales tax for various capital expenditures. After discussion, Commissioner Adams amended his Motion to approve the Andrews shower stall addition project, but to table the “Whites IC Bus for EV Infrastructure” item until it is known what strings are attached. Commissioner Griggs seconded the amended Motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business Discussion

- Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to deny the request for funding for engineering services for a metal arch to be placed at Konehete Veterans Park. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Phillips, Eichenbaum and Stiles. Voting against denying the request was Commissioner Griggs and Commissioner Adams. Motion passed 3-2.

New Business

- Eli Setless, 4-H youth representative came before the Board for a brief introduction. Eli has been chosen as the 4-H youth delegate and will attend the 2024 North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Youth Voice Summit in Winston Salem to represent Cherokee County’s youth. The Board congratulated Eli on this prestigious honor and paused the meeting for a photo.

- Shelly Foreman, came before the Board to give an update on VAYA Health’s “Go Live” as a tailored plan to manage Medicaid services.

- After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to stay within the airport’s advertising budget and provide \$2,500.00 to the Welcome Home Event Committee. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Stiles, Griggs, Eichenbaum and Adams. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Phillips, who wanted to increase the funding. Motion passed 4-1.

Note: The committee’s original request to the county was \$15,000.

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve the tax releases, tax refunds and NCVTS report. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to allow commissioners to elect or retain coverage under the county’s health plan, effective December 1, 2024, at the commissioner’s sole expense. Commissioner dependents are not eligible for coverage under the county’s health plan. Motion passed unanimously.

Note: An effective date of December 1st will allow commissioners time to investigate private insurance options vs. county option.

- Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to take no action on reactivating a Needs and Solution Advisory Committee at this time. The Board will provide feedback and suggestions to the county attorney for developing guidelines and parameters for any future committee. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to accept the Tax Settlement Statement and Reports, as submitted by the Tax Collector, and to charge the Tax Collector with collection of 2024 taxes. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve a donation policy, establishing formal guidance for consideration, acknowledgment and management of donations made to Cherokee County and departments of Cherokee County Government. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to schedule a worksession with Cherokee County Schools on September 16th at 6:00 p.m., with the location to be determined at a later date. The joint worksession will replace the commissioners regular board meeting on that date. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the Sheriff's request to receive a 2011 Ford F-350 with 111,584 miles from the Sandy Springs Police Department. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Adams, Eichenbaum, Phillips and Griggs. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles, who did not agree with accepting a vehicle that was beyond its useful life and in need of stated repairs, at an unknown cost. Motion passed 4-1.

Commissioner Comment Period

Commissioner Griggs

- Announced upcoming MANNA food distribution at Hiwassee Dam Nutrition Site.
- Shared her appreciation for volunteers

Commissioner Stiles

- Attended the Southwestern Commission Annual Dinner held on July 22nd.
- Attended a tour of the Hiwassee Dam with Senator Budd on July 16th.

Closed Session

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to go into closed session pursuant to §143-318.11 (a) (1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes; and (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body. Motion passed unanimously.

During closed session, the Board met with Economic Development Director, Paul Worley, and members of a local industry to discuss an expansion project.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Adams to return to open session. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Session

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve a modification to the October 2, 2024 High Impact Facility Moratorium removing the following provision: “Facilities utilizing a generator or generators capable of producing 600 kilowatts or greater of electricity by the use of fossil fuel power.” is hereby repealed and declared null and void.” The revision is effective as of August 5th at midnight and shall be effective for as long as the Moratorium shall remain in place or until further action of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Adams to extend the High impact Facility Moratorium from October 2, 2024 to February 3, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

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