

A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
CHEROKEE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 19, 2016

A regular meeting of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners was held in the Commissioners Boardroom, also known as Multi-Purpose Room 342, of the Cherokee County Courthouse in Murphy, North Carolina on the 19th day of January, 2016 at 6:30 o'clock p.m.

The following Commissioners were present for the meeting: C.B. McKinnon, Chairman; Dan Eichenbaum, Vice-Chairman; Cal Stiles, member; Gary Westmoreland, member; and Roy Dickey, member. Also present were the following: Randy Wiggins, County Manager; Maria Hass, Assistant County Manager and Clerk to the Board; Candy Roberts Anderson, County Finance Director; and, R. Scott Lindsay, County Attorney/Assistant Clerk to the Board.

Media present were the Cherokee Scout and Local TV4. DVD copies of commission meetings may be purchased at Local TV4.

The Chairman read the boards adopted ethics statement.

The invocation was given by Scott Lindsay.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by all.

Agenda Modification:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Dickey to add two items to the agenda. Item 1) Budget revision for Use of Schools Sales Tax dollars as item "d", under Finance Items; and Item 2) NCDOT Request to use an area at Hanging Dog Community Center for dumping excess dirt from road construction. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed.

Agenda Adoption:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adopt the agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.

Public Forum:

Susan Fredrickson, former Adopt a Highway volunteer, came before the board to complain of roadside trash and encourage the community to come together to clean up our roadways. The board thanked Mrs. Fredrickson for her concern.

Finance and Budget:

- The finance director shared the December 2015 financial report for the Hiwassee Valley Pool and Wellness Center. The Hiwassee Valley Recreation Foundation provided \$22,358.72 to the pool operations, which resulted in a positive cash flow of \$11,387.52 as of 12/31/2015.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision for Use of Sheriff's Designated Funds for drug informant money. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision for use of contingency and fund balance to purchase a patrol car. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to repair a 2011 Dodge Charger, currently owned by the sheriff's office, and transfer it to DSS. The State will pay for the vehicle, which will offset the repair cost. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision for Use of School Sales Tax to replace a heating unit at Murphy High School, and repair lightning damage at Murphy High School. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed.

Copies of budget revisions and finance items are available in the County finance office.

New Business:

- The board acknowledged receipt of the Tourism Development Authority's Quarterly Report for October 1 through December 31, 2015.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve an indemnity agreement and waterline easement for the Peachtree Assisted Living Project. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed.
- Ralph Crisp, Dr. Jason Chambers and Lawrence McNabb came before the board to present the final version of the Cherokee County Tomorrow Plan. Mr. Crisp said that in fine tuning the plan, that the committee had conferred with the Economic Development Commission, the Board of Realtors, the Extension Service, the community and churches, and had also presented an online survey. Commissioner Stiles said that the committee had done a good job, and that the plan will give the county a good road map. Mr. Crisp said that the plan is a 20-25 year snapshot plan. He said the committee just needed the Board of Commissioner's input for the plan to be complete. Commissioner Stiles said that the committee had spent a considerable amount of time revising the plan, and that he is supportive of a worksession with the committee to finalize the plan. A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to schedule a worksession with the Cherokee County Tomorrow Committee, as the board is holding its other worksession, so that the committee can tweak the plan following commissioner input. Dr. Chambers said that they want commissioner input. Motion failed.

Commissioner Eichenbaum read a prepared statement, which he said is a three (3) part Motion. The Motion is as follows:

- 1. The Commission thanks each citizen of Cherokee County who worked on this project for the time and effort they contributed. Having successfully completed their assigned task, the Cherokee County Tomorrow committee is hereby dissolved.**
- 2. The Commission accepts the Cherokee Tomorrow Plan as a research and reference tool only and gives no consent or approval in any way for the implementation of any portion of this plan, its goals, or its objectives.**
- 3. Being in favor of orderly progress in our county, this Commission will continue to consider any individual projects derived from any source as long as those projects do not involve eminent domain abuse, rules and regulations that restrict a landowner's use and enjoyment of his private property, and restrictions on land use by zoning that make private property ownership meaningless.**

Commissioner Stiles said that he was disappointed that the board was not giving the committee the respect they deserved. Commissioner McKinnon said there is great information in the document and there are things in the document that he can support, and that he appreciates the committee's work; however, he supports Commissioner Eichenbaum's motion. During board discussion, members of the public were allowed to comment. Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Carus spoke in opposition of the Cherokee County Tomorrow Plan.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum, McKinnon, Westmoreland and Dickey. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed.

- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve the NCVTS Refund Report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve the tax refund report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve the request for tax releases. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a Memorandum of Lease and Lease Agreement with the NCDOT for 3.99 acres in the Ranger Township, adjacent to the Mountain Folk Center. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to appoint the following persons to the Fireman's Relief Board of Trustees for their respective fire districts:

Peachtree VFD-Megan Bateman and Roger Turner
Ranger VFD-Melissa Mariano and Tina Smith
Martin's Creek VFD-Pearlie Fleming and Joe Swain
Culberson VFD-Keith Hudson and George Shelton
Hanging Dog VFD-David Mashburn and Kevin Carter
Unaka VFD-Lewis Jones and Dallas McMillan
Bellview VFD-Danny Clayton and David Reid
Hiwassee Dam VFD-Michael Starks and James Langston
Grape Creek VFD-James Tague and Harold Coleman
Valleytown VFD-Mike Matheson and Nick Adams
Wolf Creek VFD-Eric Curtis and Jerry Bandy.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.

- A Motion was made by Commissioner Dickey to approve a resolution requesting the NCDOT abandon a 0.02 section of Griggs Road, as requested by Mr. Robert Griggs. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed.
- The board discussed Tri-County Community College's proposal to take on the office of economic development for the County. Paul Worley, director of the college's Economic and Workforce Development was in attendance. Hugh Williamson, member of the college's Board of Trustees was also in attendance. Commissioner Stiles made a Motion to hold a worksession with the Cherokee County Economic Development Commission (EDC) to discuss the county's options for economic development. The Motion failed. Commissioner Stiles expressed his concerns with the college taking on the economic development position and asked how they could do this as a full-time job, with the other responsibilities of Mr. Worley's department. He said that the county needed "someone that is proprietary to the County"; and added that the money for a fulltime director is still in the county's budget. He said that the EDC Board had requested a worksession and asked why the board is rushing the matter. Commissioner Eichenbaum said that he supports the college's proposal. Commissioner Westmoreland said that he also supports the proposal and that he thinks that economic development should come through the college. Commissioner McKinnon said he supports the proposal. Commissioner Dickey said that he supports the proposal, and if this plan doesn't work that the board can do something else. Commissioner Stiles shared his concern about the college's ability to promote economic development for Cherokee County, when the college is also supported by Clay and Graham counties. Competing with the other counties is a concern, and that is why it is important to have someone that is responsible to Cherokee County. Commissioner Stiles said that no other community college in the state is handling economic development for its county. Mr. Williamson said that he is in support of the college's proposal, but that he also is concerned about competing with other counties. After much discussion and debate, a Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to accept the Economic Development Proposal from Tri-County Community College. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Westmoreland, Dickey, McKinnon and Eichenbaum. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed. A copy of the proposal is available in the office of the Clerk to the Board.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to allow the NCDOT to use an area on the Hanging Dog Community Center property to dump excess dirt from a road construction project. The DOT will work with the VFD to spread the dirt in a manner that will enhance the property and benefit the VFD. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed.

County Manager Items:

The county manager asked the board to schedule a worksession date with the Town of Andrews to discuss the Town's request for financial assistance with the Andrews Pool. The board set the worksession for February 4th, and agreed to move their February 1st meeting to the 4th also, to avoid any special meeting pay.

Chairman/Commissioner Items:

The county manager gave an update on the Hanging Dog Campground discussions, and asked the board to review the joint agreement from the Forest Service concerning the Hanging Dog Campground, and be ready to take action at the February 4th meeting.

Adjourn:

There being no further business to come before the Board, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 o'clock p.m.

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A COMMISSION MEETING ON
FEBRUARY 15, 2016.**