

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
January 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Board members present: Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, Gary Westmoreland, Jan Griggs, Randy Phillips, and Cal Stiles.

Others present: Randy Wiggins, County Manager; Maria Hass, Assistant County Manager and 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 and Ethics Statement

Members were advised of their duty under the Local Government Ethics Act.

Invocation

Invocation given by Joe Wood.

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Chairman Eichenbaum.

Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to add the following items to the agenda: 1) Tree and limb removal at Konehete Park; 2) Paramedicine/telemedicine grant; and 3) Ranger VFD financing approval. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Adoption

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve the agenda as modified. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum – No Comments

Minutes

- a) September 7, 2021; October 4; October 14, 2021 and November 8, 2021

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve all minutes, as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance

- a) Budget Revision for Cherokee County Schools Multiple Projects

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a budget revision for Cherokee County Schools request for the following three projects: 1) Andrews HS Boiler Line Emergency Heat Changer Order, \$4,676; 2) Stools for MHS science lab, \$2,774; and 3) Network System Data Storage Device and Licensing Fee, \$16,760. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Budget Revision for Receipt of Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Grant.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the DSS Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Grant in the amount of \$57,820. There is no county match required. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Budget Revision for use of Sheriff's Designated Funds

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve the sheriff's request for use of designated funds in the amount of \$17,000 to purchase uniforms, officer equipment, drone program, and challenge coins and awards. Motion passed unanimously.

d) Budget Revision for Airfield Lighting Project and Approval of Work Authorization for the Project

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve the Airfield lighting project and work authorization. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Westmoreland, Phillips and Eichenbaum. Voting against the Motion was Commissioners Griggs and Stiles. Motion passed 3-2.

e) Tree and Limb Removal at Konehete Park

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to accept a quote from Atlantic Tree Service in the amount of \$6,500 for removing hazardous trees and limbs at Konehete Park. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

a) EMS Station 2 Options

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve option D for the EMS Station 2 project, using the layout of Station 4, which includes private bathrooms. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Rebid EMS Station 1 Projects

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to rebid the EMS Station 1 project. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Airport Fencing and Gate Project Completion

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to complete the airport fence and main gate project, locking the gate in an open position. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Westmoreland, Phillips and Eichenbaum. Voting against the project was Commissioners Griggs and Stiles.

New Business

a) Tax Releases w/Refunds Report, Tax Refund Report, and NCVTS Report

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve all of the tax items, as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Old Hiwassee Dam Fire Department Building

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to deed the old

Hiwassee Dam Fire Department Building to Hiwassee Dam Volunteer Fire Department. HDVFD will cover all costs associated with the property transfer. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Hanging Dog Rescue Truck

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to transfer the Hanging Dog rescue truck to Culberson Volunteer Fire Department. Motion passed unanimously.

d) NCDOT Request for Resolution to Abandon a Segment of Martins Creek Ridge Road (SR1633)

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation abandon a segment of Martins Creek Ridge Road, State Road #1633. The section to be abandoned is the final 106 feet of Martins Creek Ridge Road, as petitioned by property owner Ms. Gretchen Marquardt. Motion seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion passed unanimously.

e) Paramedicine/telemedicine Grant

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a paramedicine/telemedicine grant. Motion passed unanimously.

f) Ranger Volunteer Fire Department Financing Approval

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

County Manager Items

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve sending a letter to Senator Corbin and Representative Gillespie seeking support and assistance with the North Carolina Utilities Commission, related to the continued decline of wireless service by Verizon in Cherokee County. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair/Commissioner Items

Commissioner Stiles shared concerns about a proposed noise ordinance. After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to appropriate up to \$5,000 for an independent sound study for the Harshaw Road crypto mining operation. Motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session- Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (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.

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland to go into closed session to consult with the county attorney. Motion passed unanimously. While in closed session the board discussed the county's cybersecurity, a personnel matter and acquisition of real property for EMS Station 2.

Open Session

After returning to open session, a Motion was made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by

Commissioner Stiles to approve the hiring of a User Support Specialist, Grade 66, for the Information Technology Department. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

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