

**Cherokee County Board of Commissioners**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 20, 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 Griggs to add the following items to the agenda: 1) Grant Project Ordinance; and 2) Health Resources and Services Administration. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to move Cherokee County Fair Funding Request prior to designated funds discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to table the Designated Funds Discussion. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioner Adams, Eichenbaum and Phillips. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Griggs and Stiles. Motion passed 3-2.

**Adoption of Agenda**

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

**Public Hearing on FY 25 Budget**

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to open the public

hearing. Motion passed unanimously.

- Comments received.

- Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to close the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period**

### **Budget and Finance**

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a Dogwood Health Trust grant project ordinance for a Medical Assisted Treatment Access Grant. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: Grant award is \$400,000, with no required county match.*

- Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve submission of an application for a Health Resources and Services Administration Grant for the Health Department. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: Potential for up to \$1,000,000 award over a two-year grant period. If awarded, no county match would be required.*

### **New Business**

- Commissioner Griggs, on behalf of Mr. Oscar Valdez, presented a request for permission to place an archway at Konehete Veterans Park. Commissioner Griggs said Mr. Valdez has already had the archway constructed. Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to grant permission, contingent upon approval by the Town of Murphy and review of Cherokee County Code Enforcement. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve a renewal contract between Cherokee County Transit and IOI for IOI client transportation. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: IOI will reimburse the county \$15 per passenger, per day for in-county transportation.*

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the Cherokee County Transit Director's request to run two Downtown and Around routes on Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. to assist with public transportation to and from the Texana Juneteenth Event, and to waive the rider fares for the two routes for all public users. Motion passed unanimously.

- Chief Jordan Messer, of Peachtree VFD, came before the Board to request additional rescue funds in the amount of \$8,528 for previously purchased supplies and equipment. After discussion, Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the request. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Griggs, Eichenbaum, Adams and Phillips. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles, who said he has an issue giving half of the budgeted rescue funds to one VFD, when there are so many with needs. Motion passed 4-1. *Note: Rescue funds approved for Peachtree VFD fiscal YTD is \$33,217.00.*

- Chief Jordan Messer, of Peachtree VFD, came before the Board to request a 2.5 cent increase in Peachtree Fire District's fire tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year budget. Chief Messer said Peachtree VFD wants to build a substation to reduce the fire districts insurance rating, and explained the tax increase would allow the Department to build a substation and pay for staffing. After discussion and questions from the Board, the county's Chief Financial Officer asked Chief Messer if the Department could provide 2 years financial statements to the county for review. Chief Messer agreed. *Note: The current fire tax rate for Peachtree is 6.5-cent per \$100 of valuation. If approved, the new tax rate would be 9-cent per \$100 of valuation.*

- Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to approve the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Certification and the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Annual Plan. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: There is no increase to the county's match from last year's appropriation.*

- Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to reappoint Dr. Jill Sonnenberg and Robin Sargent to the Board of Health for another three-year term. Motion passed unanimously.

- Airport Manager Chris Williams came before the before seeking permission to increase the ramp and landing fees at Western Carolina Regional Airport from \$50 to \$75. Motion passed unanimously.

- After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve the lowest submitted quote from Kevin Dockery for courthouse landscaping in the amount of \$3,000 for 57 white gravel and labor. Motion passed unanimously.

- After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to support a proposal submitted to U.S. Board on Geographic Names to name an unnamed summit in Cherokee County, "Will High Top". The proposal was submitted by local resident, Trevor Lovin. Motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the 2024 Cherokee County Fair. Motion passed unanimously. *Note: No budget revision required. The appropriation will be included in the upcoming FY 2025 budget.*

#### **Commissioner Comment Period**

- Commissioner Eichenbaum made a Motion to postpone discussions with Valley River Humane Society (VRHS) until the county has received all requested animal intake and financial information. Motion seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Motion passed unanimously.

- Commissioner Griggs shared various meetings and events that she recently attended, and announced the upcoming ribbon cutting for the DSS Hope Cottage.

- Commissioner Griggs made a Motion to have the county attorney and assistant county manager review and update airport hangar leases, following budget completion. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **County Manager Items - None**

#### **Closed Session**

Pursuant to § 143 318.11 (a) (1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential; and (3) to consult with the county in order to preserve the attorney client privilege.

While in closed session, the county manager presented information and proposed plans that contained proprietary information that could impact a competitive bid process, and also shared information that could compromise or impact the security of existing and potentially future buildings. After presentation and discussion, the Board sought legal advice from the county attorney, as it relates to the Board's ability to move quickly on the proposed plans.

#### **Open Session**

After returning to open session, no action was taken on matters discussed in closed session.

**Adjournment**

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

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON JUNE 24, 2024.**