

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2020
6:30 P.M.
Cherokee County Courthouse

Members present: Roy Dickey, Chairman; C.B. McKinnon, Vice-Chairman; Cal Stiles, member; Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, member; and Gary Westmoreland, member.

Staff present: Randy Wiggins, County Manager; and Candy Anderson, Finance Officer.
Participating from Commissioners Boardroom: Maria Hass, Assistant County Manager/Clerk to the Board; and, Darryl Brown, County Attorney.

Meeting recorded by Local TV 4 and WKRK Radio Facebook Live. Also present: Penny Ray of the Cherokee Scout.

The Chairman called the meeting to order, and reminded the Board of their duties under the Local Government Ethics Act.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Modification of Agenda-None

Agenda Adoption

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles to adopt the agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum-None comments.

Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve the meeting minutes of February 17, March 19, and March 27. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

Finance and Budget

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a budget revision for schools use of Article 46 tax for various school projects. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a budget revision for schools use of Article 46 sales tax to cover FY20 school debt service payments. Commissioner McKinnon questioned why lottery funds were not covering debt payments. The County finance officer explained that due to the schools receiving the grant for the School of Innovation and

Technology that lottery funds to Cherokee County are suspended for five (5) years from the date of the grant. She said she only discovered it when she tried to draw down lottery funds from the state to cover the debt service payments and was told they were suspended. Commissioner McKinnon expressed concern that Cherokee County Schools did not share that information with the Board at the time they requested the five (5) million dollar county match. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a budget revision for Wells and West Pay Apps 1 & 2 for the School of Innovation and Technology project. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve a budget revision for foster child assistance funds received in FY19 & FY20, requiring no county match. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a budget revision to accept a grant from Murphy Power Board to assist their customers with power bills, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The grant will be administered through DSS. The board shared their appreciation to the power board and to Murphy Power Board customers. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision to receive additional funding from NC DHHS for the health department in administering the WIC Program. There is no county match required. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve the FY20 Audit Contract. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve the FY21 Juvenile Crime Prevention Council funding plan. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve a budget revision to accept a U.S. Health and Human Services Cares Act Stimulus payment to be used for Emergency Medical Services and the Health Department for Covid-related expenditures. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve Cherokee County Schools request to purchase property from IOI. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve sending a letter of support to the U.S. Department of Transportation, as requested by NCDOT in support of the Corridor K Improvement project. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve a resolution requesting NCDHHS Certificate of Need Division to withdraw Cherokee Valley, LLC's Certificate of Need for an assisted living facility. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Westmoreland, McKinnon, Eichenbaum and Dickey. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed 4-1.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles for modification of landfill hours for gate closure at 3:45 p.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve moving forward with armory renovations. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum, McKinnon, Dickey and Westmoreland. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed 4-1.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to allow the county to be the contractor for the armory renovation project and to sub-contract work that cannot be completed by the maintenance department; and, that the renovation project begins immediately. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum, McKinnon, Dickey and Westmoreland. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed 4-1.

A Motion was made by Commissioner McKinnon to start the process of selling the old maintenance building and the old post office building, contingent upon code enforcement vacating the old post office building when renovations at the armory are done. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum, McKinnon, Dickey and Westmoreland. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed 4-1. The county manager will have the disposal procedures ready for discussion at the next meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles to approve tax releases. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve tax refunds. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

County Manager Items

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve the Hiwassee Dam VFD request to increase their fire tax for FY21 from 1.7 cents to 1.8 cents to allow for financing of the new building. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Stiles, Dickey, Eichenbaum, and Westmoreland. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner McKinnon. Commissioner McKinnon said that he could not support the Motion, because he said this was not the project that was presented to the community at the community meeting, and that community members did not support a fire tax increase. Motion passed 4-1.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve adding permanent sneeze guards in the following county offices: Tax Collections, Mapping office, Register of Deeds, and Clerk of Court. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Items

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner McKinnon move commission meetings back to the regular board room, beginning with the next meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to approve Murphy Fire Department's request of donation for a piece of property at the armory for a new fire station. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Commissioner Eichenbaum expressed concerns with potential parking issues. Commissioner McKinnon and Commissioner Dickey said that they would like the board to think about it a little more before making a decision. Motion failed.

Commissioner Dickey and board members thanked Tom O'Brien and IOI for their production of masks, during the Covid pandemic.

Commissioner McKinnon thanked media outlets for their coverage of Covid-19 information and keeping the public informed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON JULY, 20, 2020.**