

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2019
6:30 P.M.
Cherokee County Courthouse

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

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

Meetings are recorded by Local TV 4 and WKRC Radio Facebook Live.

I. Call to Order

II. Ethics Statement

Ethics statement read by Chairman.

III. Invocation

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

V. Modification of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to add a budget revision for striping the basketball court at Konehete Park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Agenda Adoption

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adopt the agenda as modified. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. Public Forum

Oscar Valdes and Jan Griggs spoke in support of replacing signage at Konehete Park and renaming Konehete Park to Konehete Veterans Park.

VIII. Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Dickey to approve the minutes of August 28, 2019. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve the amended minutes of September 3, 2019. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Finance and Budget

Motion made by Commissioner Dickey to approve a budget revision for Use of Insurance Proceeds to Repair Sheriff's Department Tahoe. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve a budget revision for use of Disability Determination Service Reimbursements Revenue to Cover DSS Trust Overages and Increase Designated Fund Balance for DSS Trust. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve a budget revision for striping the basketball courts at Konehete Park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

X. New Business

Chad Cook, District Fire Manager for the US Forest Service (USFS), came before the board to request use of the National Guard Armory as an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Incident Command Center (ICC). Mr. Cook said that the extreme dry season has put us at an increased risk of forest fires. He said USFS is planning ahead, so that in the event of an emergency, the EOC and ICC could be immediately activated and able to provide necessary administrative and logistical support to firefighting efforts. Mr. Cook said that there would be no need for the facility beyond that purpose. Board members told Mr. Cook that they had already promised use of the building to the Murphy High School wrestling team. No action was taken on the USFS request.

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve tax releases, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to approve the tax refund report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Dickey to approve the NCVTS Report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum. Motion passed unanimously.

Eddie Allen, Cherokee County Tax Assessor, and Chris Ferriss of C.B. Ferriss, Inc. came before the board to present the 2020 Schedule of Values. A public hearing has been scheduled for the November 4th board meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision to tint the interior door and windows along the judge's corridor on the second floor of courthouse. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dickey. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Stiles, McKinnon, Dickey and Eichenbaum. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed.

The county manager shared the landfill update, as provided by the landfill director.

Chad Simons, Murphy Town Manager, and Joe Stilwell, Town Public Works Director came before the board to request permission to install a manual bar screen at the detention center. Mr. Simons said that the cost of installation would be covered 100% by grant dollars. He said that the Town's water and sewer crews have experienced issues with solids leaving the detention center and jeopardizing one of their manholes. He said that he and the county manager have had conversation over the last year and a half about how to correct the problem. He said that he talked to Sheriff Palmer and the sheriff confirmed that inmate labor could be used to provide the routine maintenance/cleaning of the bar screen. He added that if inmates were assigned to maintaining the bar screen that it might incentivize or encourage them not to flush illegal items into the sewer system. Commissioner McKinnon shared his concerns with the county being responsible for the maintenance. Mr. Stilwell explained how the bar screen works and said that it comes with equipment which prevents anyone from having to touch the solids with their hands. Mr. Simons shared photos of waste in the manhole and Mr. Stilwell explained that the photos came from a drop-in monitoring system earlier in the day.

In his written proposal to the county, Mr. Simons shared that the jail is the only large customer entering that particular manhole, which is located above the propane station off of Regal Street. Mr. Simons said a manual bar screen at the detention center would protect the Town's gravity sewer system from the jail to the Konehete Lift Station. He said if the sewer main from the jail to the Konehete Lift Station is obstructed, it would shut down all of East Murphy; creating a large sewer overflow and jeopardizing the 150 horsepower pumps, which would cost \$80,000-\$100,000 to replace. Commissioner McKinnon said that he would like to look at a similar system before he voted yes to it. Commissioner Dickey said that he would like it tabled to allow Commissioner McKinnon time to go look at one. After further discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve the installation of the manual bar screen. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Westmoreland, Stiles and Dickey. Voting against the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum and McKinnon. Motion passed.

XI. County Manager Items

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles to approve a budget revision for a survey of the Jackson Street property, which was donated by NCDOT for the new EMS Station 1. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Stiles, Westmoreland and Dickey. Voting against the Motion was Commissioners McKinnon and Eichenbaum. Motion passed.

The county manager shared that the Board had received a letter from NCDOT in response to the Boards letter of inquiry requesting to know the intent of NCDOT concerning the Andrews-Murphy Branch Rail Line. The NCDOT concluded that the rail line should be preserved with the opportunity to restore the line for future freight and tourism services. The letter also stated that they are "committed to work closely with the County, its

communities and the property owners along the corridor on next steps, including reduction of the corridor width".

XII. Chairman/Commissioner Items

Commissioner Eichenbaum commented on the request made in public forum for changing the name of Konehete Park and replacing the sign, saying that it presented some issues. He agreed, as a veteran himself, that our veterans should be honored. He said that there are annual events held for veterans, like the Benghazi Ride and Veterans Appreciation Day. He said that we also have an excellent veteran's services department and that he thinks the County has done some incredible things for veterans.

Commissioner Eichenbaum shared that the Town of Murphy had approved changing the name of Connahetta Street to Veteran's Memorial Lane and that he would move that the County approve the same. A Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to change the name of Connahetta Street to Veterans Memorial Lane. Motion seconded by Commissioner Westmoreland. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner McKinnon to set the public hearing for the road name change for the next meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Westmoreland to approve 911 Addressing to make the new signs for Veterans Memorial Lane. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKinnon. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Stiles thanked David Higdon and Higdon Construction for the work on the basketball court at Konehete Park.

XIII. Closed Session

Motion made by Commissioner Dickey to go into closed session, pursuant to 143-318.11 (a) (3) To consult with the county attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege, concerning the Hogan case and the opioid class action lawsuit; and (a) (5)-to discuss terms of the FBO renewal lease contract. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously.

After returning to open session, a Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve changes to the airport lease with Mr. Gayland Trull and to approve the 30 day advertisement of terms. Motion 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.

The county manager noted that the changes to Mr. Trull's lease included a 60 day out-clause for both parties, removal of taxiway and runway from leased property map. The lease term is five years.

XIV. Adjournment

There being no further business, a Motion was made by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stiles. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON NOVEMBER 4, 2019.**