

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2022

Board members present: Cal Stiles, Chairman; Jan Griggs, Vice-Chair; Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, member; Randy Phillips, member; and Ben Adams, member.

Others present: Randy Wiggins, County Manager; Maria Hass, Asst. County Manager/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

Invocation

Invocation given by Randy Wiggins.

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of Ethics Statement by Clerk to the Board

Presentation of Agenda by Chairman

Proposed Modifications of Agenda

There were no modifications.

Agenda Adoption

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to adopt the agenda, as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum

The following persons spoke in public forum concerning various issues and concerns: Shannon Greathead, Margaret Ackiss, James Ellis, and Dori Mitchen.

Robin Caldwell, EM Update

Robin Caldwell, Emergency Services Director, gave an update on the recent hoax at Murphy High School. Mrs. Caldwell commended all responding agencies and personnel.

School Consolidation Resolution

Chairman Stiles read a resolution opposing the current school consolidation plan. After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to adopt the resolution. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Griggs, Adams, Stiles and Eichenbaum. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Phillips. Motion passed 4-1. A copy of the resolution is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment A.

Withdraw Authorization of \$2.5 Million Match for Proposed Consolidated High School

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to withdraw authorization of \$2.5 million local match for Cherokee County Schools consolidated high school grant. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Griggs, Adams and Stiles. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Eichenbaum and Commissioner Phillips. Motion passed 3-2.

Cherokee County DSS Board Re-establishment Resolution

After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adopt a resolution to re-establish the DSS Board, and to hold a public hearing on the matter at the January 3rd board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Needs and Solutions Advisory Committee Establishment

Commissioner Griggs read a resolution authorizing the board to establish a Needs and Solutions Advisory (NASA) Committee. The NASA committee “shall serve to identify the needs and challenges facing the citizens of Cherokee County and to develop possible solutions to fulfill such needs and solve such problems facing Cherokee County.” After discussion, a Motion was made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to adopt the resolution. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Griggs, Adams, Stiles and Eichenbaum. Voting against the Motion was Commissioner Philips. Motion passed 4-1.

Crypto Mining Resolution

Commissioner Adams read a resolution calling for legislative action to restrict crypto mining businesses in Cherokee County. Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adopt the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

County Pictometry Program and Contract – Eagle View

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve a contract with Eagle View for pictometry services. Motion passed unanimously.

Commission Representation on Board of Health

Motion made by Commissioner Eichenbaum and seconded by Commissioner Griggs to appoint Commissioner Adams to the Board of Health as the commissioner representative. Motion passed unanimously.

Commission Representation on VAYA Health Board

Motion made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Adams to appoint Commissioner Griggs to the VAYA Health Board as the commissioner representative. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance

Motion made by Commissioner Phillips and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to approve the increase in the Finance Officer Bond, due to a change in N.C.G.S. 159-29, which will take effect on January 1, 2023. Motion passed unanimously.

Revision to Board Rules of Procedure

a) Modification of Rule 9 (c)-Actions on matters introduced by modification of agenda; and

b) Modification of Rule 5 - Limitations on consecutive terms as Board Chair

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Eichenbaum to adopt the revisions, as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Western Carolina Regional Airport Fencing Project

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve relocating the airport fence and gate project to county property, so as to avoid right-of-way issues and allow for completion of the project; and, to approve a budget revision for the use of airport ARPA funds to complete the project. Voting in favor of the Motion was Commissioners Griggs, Adams and Stiles. Voting against the Motion was Commissioners Eichenbaum and Phillips. Motion passed 3-2.

Western Carolina Regional Airport FBO Lease and Agreement

Motion made by Commissioner Griggs and seconded by Commissioner Phillips to terminate the current FBO lease, effective immediately, with a 60-day notice to tenant. Commissioner Griggs and Commissioner Phillips cited non-compliance issues and said the lease was approved against the advice of FAA and legal counsel. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Items

Chairman Stiles announced that citizens can sign up to be on the Board's Sunshine List and Agenda List.

Commissioner Stiles asked the county attorney to draft a noise ordinance for the Board's review at the January 3rd meeting.

Commissioner Adams said he would like the Board to allow the county attorney to draft a resolution requesting the State to develop a state park in Cherokee County. All board members were supportive of the request. The county attorney will present a resolution for board consideration at the January 3rd meeting.

Commissioner Adams asked the county manager to get an update on the new projectors and screens for the commissioner's boardroom.

Adjournment

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

ATTACHMENT A

RESOLUTION OPPOSING CURRENT SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION PLAN

WHEREAS, on the 28th day of November 2022, the prior Cherokee County Board of Commissioners by a 3-2 vote did authorize the acceptance of a grant from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for a consolidated high school located near the campus of Tri-County Community College.

WHEREAS, the prior Cherokee County Board of Education and Superintendent submitted the grant for approval by the Board of Commissioners.

WHEREAS, the citizens of Cherokee County have a newly constituted Board of Education, a newly constituted Board of County Commissioners, and a new superintendent of schools.

WHEREAS, the newly elected Boards, respectively, will determine guidance for the future of Cherokee County Schools.

WHEREAS, the citizens of Cherokee County have overwhelmingly expressed opposition to the currently proposed consolidation plan.

WHEREAS, Cherokee County Schools has failed to perform its due diligence in studying the impact that high school consolidation would have on the communities where high schools would be closed.

WHEREAS, the children of Cherokee County and the communities that they grow up in are invaluable assets that are deserving of better than the poorly contrived plan that has been presented.

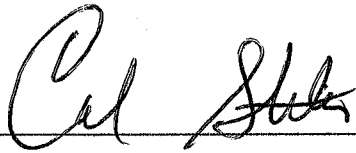
WHEREAS, better use can be made of the \$50,000,000 grant, and that such use should reflect the vision of the citizens of Cherokee County, the health of Cherokee County communities and the best interests of present and future students of Cherokee County Schools.

WHEREFORE, the currently constituted Cherokee County Board of Commissioners does resolve and declare that it will not support the high school consolidation plan as stated in the approved DPI grant instrument. Furthermore, the currently constituted Board of Commissioners declares that it will not appropriate any matching funds for the current grant instrument nor support any project ordinance to initiate the construction of a consolidated high school in Cherokee County under the current proposed plan. The Cherokee County Board of Commissioners does hereby request that our State Representative Karl Gillespie and Senator Kevin Corbin advocate with the Department of Public Instruction for a modification in the grant issued that

reflects a plan that better serves the interests of Cherokee County,
its communities and, most importantly, its children.

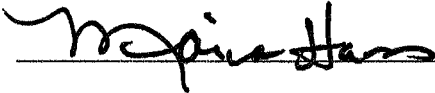
The Cherokee County Board of Commissioners invites the Cherokee County
Board of Education to engage in joint work sessions with the Board of
Commissioners to hear public input and to develop plans for the
improvement of Cherokee County school facilities.

This the 5th day of December 2022.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cal Stiles", written over a horizontal line.

Cal Stiles, Chairman

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maria Hass", written over a horizontal line.

Maria Hass, Clerk to the Board