

**CHEROKEE COUNTY**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Pre-meeting Work Session**

**December 7, 2010**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Cherokee Hall**

**MINUTES**

Chairman Ahrens opened at 3:10 p.m. reading several quotes from the web site, [www.despair.com](http://www.despair.com) ; very humorous. All members were present with the exception of Commissioner Nelms who is at Newly Elected Commissioners training. After the reading, Chairman Ahrens turned the meeting over to Robby Westbrook.

**1. 1<sup>st</sup> Training Session-Hazard Mitigation Program Overview-Robby Westbrook**

Robby began the brief session by explaining what "hazard mitigation" is and then asking if anyone knew the most successful mitigation project ever launched in the US; no one could answer the question and most were stunned when they learned the answer was the "smoke detector". He continued the PowerPoint presentation on Hazard Mitigation answering the question when do we mitigate with the response of before, during and after the disaster. He also spoke of the goals of the multi-jurisdictional plan that had been approved in November as being prevention, property protection, public education and awareness, natural resources protection and structural projects. He showed several slides detailing each of the topics visually and verbally. Robby finished saying that next month, the topic would be the Local Emergency Operations Plan.

Chairman Ahrens then told Jeff Watkins to come forward as he had an announcement he wanted to make. Jeff said that the planning staff as members of the American Planning Association take an exam from the American Institute of Certified Planners that certifies the knowledge, skills and background. He said that since November 26, there was now 4 certified planners on the staff and introduced Allison Stori, who had taken the test and passed.

Chairman Ahrens asked Chief Raymond Gunnin to come up and give a status update on the 3 firemen who were injured at a fire on Sunday.

Chief Gunnin said he was happy to report that all were doing pretty well, they had been burned around their wrists because of a known deficiency between the gloves and the coat, with one who was still at home and was probably looking at skin grafts for the severity of his burns. Chief Gunnin explained the situation where they got the injuries and said it could have been much worse, but for the excellent training they had received.

## 2. Discussion of Regular Agenda items

Chairman Ahrens briefly went over the announcement for Lake Arrowhead, after mentioning that Commissioner Nelms was in Athens at the Newly Elected Commissioners conference; then he asked about the Public Hearing/Appeal.

Vicki Taylor Lee came up to explain that it is a land use issue, so it was advertised as a public hearing, but it is a request for clarification also. In the Zoning Ordinance in the 69 and 88 versions, it did not differentiate between Recreational Vehicles, saying that it could be an RV, camper or boat; in 1992 and now, boat sales and service were moved to GC, but boat storage was put in LI and boats are not now mentioned as a recreational vehicle. Whether this was simply a scrivener's error, a typo or deliberate cannot be ascertained. The applicant Mr. Minkara is asking to be able to make his lot a storage facility for RV's, campers, jet skis and boats. That is the reason this is a land use issue rather than a variance, since the property is zoned GC and right now, boat storage is only allowed in LI.

There was lengthy discussion on this subject with Commissioner Bosch saying that she would prefer not to take action tonight before she had a chance to get together with the Zoning staff and take a look at the property.

In the Chairman's portion, he mentioned the issue raised by Mr. Thomas Weaver and the fact that Mr. Weaver had brought another piece of information today. Mrs. Davis said it would be her recommendation that the Board direct her office to look into the matter and bring it back to them at the next Work Session for discussion and action if necessary.

Next the Chairman gave a brief update of the Development Authority outing at Hawk's Ridge on November 5<sup>th</sup> called "Developers Day"; saying that he, Commissioner Bosch and Mr. Cooper had been in attendance. The Chairman said there was a good turnout and this was an excellent marketing tool used to bring new businesses into the County.

Commissioner Johnston said that he thought the name was really misleading because when most people hear developer, they think residential, and that is not the case. It is directed toward commercial and/or business developers. The Chairman agreed.

Chairman Ahrens mentioned two publications where Cherokee County would be a feature story in the next 2 months; and then went to the survey the Authority is still conducting on commuters going out of the County, saying it would be available for most of the month of December. He also said that they are doing a lot of outreach, trying to get a good cross-section of the County to participate.

The Chairman said he had put the item about the Boards and Committees appointees on as an open-ended topic, as there are timelines that should be worked towards. The Development Authority in particular has 4 up, 3 who wish to be re-appointed and one, Larry Lusk, who does not wish to be re-appointed. They do have one candidate who has expressed interest.

Chairman Ahrens said he had not attended the Airport Authority last night, but it was his understanding they have 6 candidates lined up to vet for the unexpired term they need to fill. Chairman Ahrens also brought up the Board of Health appointment saying that Russ Flynn would like to be re-appointed. Then he asked Commissioner Bosch if she would like to talk about her topic.

Commissioner Bosch said yes and then handed out some copies she had brought on the subject. She reminded the board that she had contacted them via e-mail and spoke to them about the issue of re-establishing the Cemetery Preservation Committee. She had been recently contacted by 2 gentlemen, Dave Audia and Jim Derr about the Cemetery Preservation Ordinance and the Cemetery Preservation Committee.

They were currently working on the preservation of Enon Cemetery, which is still active and that is part of First Baptist Woodstock. There is also another gentlemen who has done extensive work locating, what he believes, are all the cemeteries in the County, there are 172, some active and some not. She gave his name and contact information to the other gentlemen.

She is very interested in re-constituting the Cemetery Preservation Committee and having the members work with staff on the Ordinance to have it reflect more of the present day concerns and questions. Commissioner Bosch believes that the preservation of cemeteries is as important as funding for the Arts.

Commissioner Bosch said she would really like to get the committee going. She said she had made it clear that there were no funds available and they had told her that they have identified several sources, from grants to philanthropies that are willing to fund projects such as this. Commissioner Bosch asked Margaret Stallings to come up and talk about the draft that she is working on.

Margaret said that in the past year or so, they have seen people who are interested in establishing a family cemetery or family burial plot and because there has been no process to do this, the staff was trying to address this in the revisions they were working on.

Margaret said that the revisions need to better define the role of staff, the coroner and the Committee as well and how they can all work together.

After further discussion, it was decided that Commissioner Bosch would go ahead tonight with her appointment as part of the motion to re-establish the Committee; Chairman Ahrens said he was ready to make his as well and the other appointments could wait until December 21.

The Chairman asked Commissioner Bosch for an update on the recent All Hazards Council; first she had discovered that Mayor Henriques from Woodstock was also a member of the Council, when they had attended the first meeting. She reported that so far in 2010, approximately \$19 million dollars had been provided to Georgia in the form of various Federal grants.

The Chairman asked Mr. Cooper to review the Consent Agenda items next. There was no discussion on these, so Mr. Cooper proceeded to his portion of the agenda.

The only discussion took place on the Amendment under Mr. Cooper regarding the Resolution providing for medical payments for retirees and some changes the Board asked have clarified.

When Mr. Cooper completed his portion of the agenda, Chairman Ahrens said that he would have an amendment as well, under his portion, to consider signing a Resolution of Support for the City of Woodstock's application to bring the Georgia Music Hall of Fame venue to Woodstock.

When the Chairman asked if there was anything else, hearing none, Commissioner Hubbard made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 4:48 p.m. to discuss personnel issues, pending litigation and property acquisition. Commissioner Bosch seconded and the motion was approved 4-0.

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