

CHEROKEE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

December 20, 2011

Cherokee Hall at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Chairman began at 3:04 p.m. with all members of the Board present. He spoke about Risk, referencing the "Essence of Leadership". He read the quote "Bold ideas are worth nothing until a leader has courage to take actions."

1. CHN Wellness update by Jackie Warren.

Jackie Warren stated that due to the cooperation of Cherokee County employees, the screening process and results review went very smoothly and enabled them to get finished in a timely manner. She said that there are only two or three employees who still need to schedule a screening. Preliminary results (about 900 tested) are showing that 52% of employees were in the High Risk Category; 32% were in the Moderate Risk Category; and 17% were in the Low Risk Category.

2. Discussion of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board's responsibilities.

Commissioner Bosch said that she wanted to discuss the Advisory Board's role in light of some recent conversations involving issues that had not been brought before the Advisory Board. She said it may be time to ask if we want to keep the board and use them as outlined in the ordinance, particularly concerning fees, or do away with the board and save money. She said one of the purposes of the board was to be a liaison between the citizens and elected officials to keep the politics out of issues but this doesn't seem to be the case in some instances.

Commissioner Johnston asked if she was talking about present or past issues. Commissioner Bosch replied that she was talking about past and present.

Commissioner Johnston said he was not aware that the current fee structure was being disputed or had not been approved by the Advisory Board.

Commissioner Bosch replied that the current fee structure was approved but that the way they are being paid is not always how it was set up. Commissioner Bosch said that the issue is about equity.

Commissioner Bosch asked Advisory Board Chair Chris Hampton to give some details on

issues the Advisory Board is having. He stated that the Youth Association contract states that 20% of recreation fees would go to the County. He said that based on the numbers given to the Advisory Board by the Soccer Association in July, they should have paid 24,500 but it appears they paid \$15,041.

Mr. Hampton said that Mr. Cooper had posed the question of recouping fees from soccer during the period of no-contract status. Mr. Hampton said that he sat in the meeting with the Youth Associations in December 2010 where they were all told that the same terms would be in effect until August and that everyone was under the assumption that this would be the case. He said that basically it was a grace period as many of their fees would go up in August. Angie Davis said that it would be helpful for her to see the original contract as to what it says about holding over and extending. Angie Davis said that it would seem that we should be able to collect the fees during the lapse in contract since they were still receiving the service.

Commissioner Bosch asked if the Soccer Association had removed the lights at Hobgood Park. Commissioner Johnston commented that he understood that they did remove the lights before they were to be torn down. Commissioner Hubbard commented that if the lights were County property, it should have gone through Greg Dodgen in Procurement. He added that he thought it would be a good idea to have an audit system in place.

Commissioner Nelms thanked Mr. Hampton for his and the board's work and asked him if he was asking the BOC to let the Advisory Board do their job? Mr. Hampton replied that there have been situations where a recommendation from the Advisory Board should have been presented to the BOC instead of the issue being brought before the BOC. He also said that although they are not the final answer, which lies at the BOC, that many issues could be resolved and ended if the Advisory Board were allowed to do their job.

Chairman Ahrens commented that the BOC should deal with exceptions, after issues have gone before the Advisory Board.

Chairman Ahrens mentioned to Mr. Hampton that he'd like him to get with Bryan Reynolds on the Blalock Road issues and maybe between the two of them to find out what works and what doesn't work regarding running our parks overall.

3. Review Woodstock City Council's approval of Horizons Group outlet center at Ridgewalk and discuss next steps as appropriate.

Chairman Ahrens said he invited Jeff Moon, Woodstock City Manager, (Mayor Henriques is out of town), Council member Chris Casdia, and Woodstock Downtown Development Director, Billy Peppers to go over the project. He said that the investor, Horizons, is prepared to begin in January and expected to open in 2013. He also said that the project is at the new interchange which is supposed to open in December 2012 if not much sooner.

Chris Casdia with City of Woodstock spoke about the importance of the Ridgewalk Interchange for the citizens of Woodstock and the County to relieve traffic, especially at

East Cherokee Drive and beyond. He said it will also open up economic development and provide commercial opportunities.

Jeff Moon said that improvements will have to be made to the Ridgewalk Parkway with or without the outlet mall project. He said the project is so important to Woodstock, that the city has already invested \$3.8 million for the right-of-way for the interchange. They are asking the County to invest \$700,000 from the \$3 Million from the SPLOST funds that the County had budgeted for the Arnold Mill by-pass project since there are the issues to be resolved with the Army Corp of Engineers.

Commissioner Bosch asked several questions pertaining to the road improvements including exit lanes and connectivity to Hwy. 5. Mr. Moon explained the plans and said that he would email additional information to the Board, including the DRI.

Chairman Ahrens asked if a resolution was being made requesting the \$700,000. Commissioner Bosch commented that she would like to see the formal request.

Commissioner Johnston mentioned that the County invested in Riverstone Boulevard in a familiar situation.

Mr. Peppers presented details and potential benefits of the project to the County: Tourism is number two industry in Georgia and generated \$31.3 billion in total economic impact for Georgia in 2010, equating to \$1.5 billion in state and local tax revenues; Offer retail amenity to nearby recreation opportunities including J.J. Biello Park, and the planned Aquatic Center; Provide a good location for food options and possible hotel construction; Is within Woodstock City limits so they would supply the necessary public safety through their budgets, etc.

4. If information has been received, review Majestic/Taubman project for possible outlet center at Hwy. 92 / I-75.

The project is a mixed use development further up I-75 in Bartow County. Their proposal would place an outlet center at exit 277 in Cherokee County. More details expected in early January 2012.

5. Review topics for January 26/27 retreat.

No other topics were brought up since last discussion. The Chairman asked everyone to please get any additional topics that they would like to see included to him as soon as possible in order to gather background information, etc. He said that a formal notice will go out to the public at the next meeting in January.

6. Discussion of Regular Agenda Items.

The Chairman asked if there was anything else. Hearing none, Vice Chair Commissioner Hubbard made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 5:18 p.m. to discuss personnel issues, pending litigation and property acquisition. Commissioner Nelms seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session to Follow