

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

**CHEROKEE COUNTY**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Work Session**

**November 20, 2012**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Cherokee Hall**

**MINUTES**

The Chairman began at 3:05 p.m. with all Board members present. The Chairman read a piece about "What gives a man or woman the right to lead," including several aspects of true leadership.

**1. Presentation by Jeff Watkins on technology tools available for building permits, building inspections and business licenses.**

Mr. Watkins shared slides of the Development Service Center and the tools available through them. He began by stating this is the third straight year of increase in permits issued. In 2007, single family permits made up 30% of the total permits issued. This year we are just over 15%, a comeback from below 10% in 2009. When issuing a building permit, the construction value is added into the assessment. We had a 76% increase in revenue from 2011; some due to the adoption of new permit fees. This year we experienced five months of at least \$50,000 in revenue. Occupation Tax Certificates (OTC) continue to decline. The largest percentage goes to businesses with five or less employees. OTC is not based by revenue, but by number of employees. However, online renewals has decreased the cost of materials such as paper, postage, and time. Revenue from OTC are in the fourth year of decline.

Mr. Watkins moved on to Building Inspections. He showed a list of the top reasons for inspections. He stated that a lot of our communities have inspectors that are trade-specific. Our inspectors are not, they inspect everything. Commissioner Bosch asked

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

how it works when customers pay for their individual inspection needs. Mr. Watkins responded that the inspections are paid for by the building permit fees, unless it's a re-inspection. Mr. Watkins stated that during the summer of this year, we had a slew of commercial building plans under review. Commissioner Bosch asked if these were new buildings or existing since there were several foreclosures. Mr. Watkins replied that it is a combination of new and tenant finishes. Everything Mr. Watkins presented goes across the counter at the Development Services Center (DSC).

Back in 2007 they were given an idea to "create a one-stop shop where a customer can get any permit, submit any plan or get assistance with building and development." Their department called it the "Big Hairy Audacious Goal." At one point the customer would come in and speak to different people offering sometimes conflicting information and serving their own needs. Mr. Watkins then showed the new paradigm and how it streamlines the process. They began to cross-train employees in different areas. They set up a mission statement: "The Development Service Center will provide consolidated, efficient, and centralized services with enhanced information technology to Cherokee County citizens and the development and building community." Mr. Watkins shared four principles they used to develop the DSC. He also shared efficiencies and cost savings.

Mr. Watkins showed how we compared nationally. At the ACCG Conference, Cherokee County was awarded 2012 Counties of Excellence for establishing a process for speedy, friendly, and efficient county services and in the category of Financial Management/Organizational Efficiency.

Mr. Watkins proceeded to show how the Cherokee Status portion of the County website works and the various helpful tools. Commissioner Bosch commented that the only problem with this is that one can get spoiled if they go to another community and they don't have this service. Mr. Watkins then showed the back-end of the program specific for the DSC employees.

Mr. Watkins briefly went over the evolution of the DSC. All data has been available in a variety of formats. The technology is not the solution; they didn't have to buy anything. They understood their mission. They gained an understanding of who their customer is and what's important to them. They have a vision. Another vague idea: to get results of Building Inspections input from the field; explored several options over the years; decided on CityView mobile application for iPad. At the end of the presentation, Mr. Watkins named several people who were instrumental in making this all happen and asked them to stand to acknowledge their hard work.

Commissioner Johnston asked to go back to the licenses and what is the requirement in regards to e-Verify for alcohol licenses, occupational tax, having ten employees or more? Ana Silbernagel responded that employers with more than 10 employees must be registered beginning on July 1, 2013. If any employer has less than 11 employees, they

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

are exempt from this requirement, but must complete an affidavit attesting that they are exempt.

### **Update on Fire at Ball Ground Recycling**

The Chairman thanked Mr. Watkins then asked Chief Robinson for an update on the fire at the Ball Ground Recycling Center. Chief Robinson gave a summary of the situation where a large portion of unprocessed product had caught fire. They knew they would have to allow it to burn as there was nothing else they could do with it. The area is divided into two piles and they were able to get the small pile cooled and capped with a layer of dirt. The large pile has been turned to agitate and get air allowing it to burn for the remainder of the week into next week at which point they hope to begin the process for the larger pile. He added that they have greatly reduced the emissions. Chief Robinson stated that Cliff Harden and the Roads and Bridges crew have worked very hard.

### **Public Hearings Review**

- **Amendment to Cherokee County Code of Ordinances related to the regulation of dangerous dogs.**

Ms. Davis gave a brief overview of the proposed changes and she then asked Chief Collett if he had anything to add. He replied that he had nothing additional to add. She mentioned that basically coming into compliance with State law has given us a little bit more “teeth” with the dog control laws.

Chairman Ahrens went over the **Chairman’s portion**:

The Chairman stated that we are 99% complete on the open records log for our Transparency Page. He mentioned the volume for this calendar year which included 17 pages.

The Chairman said that although not written under his portion, he’d like everyone to keep in mind that they were still looking for potential candidates for the Cherokee County Development Authority and the Board of Ethics. He added that these positions are really important to fill and that we get the right kind of mix. He said that he had a conversation with Marshall Day, not about names but about scope, experience, job authority, etc. He stated that their first meeting of the new year isn’t until the fourth Monday of the month, so there’s still a little time. He would like to have four or five quality candidates to select from.

### **Commission Post 3 – Commissioner Bosch**

- **Discuss ACCG endorsed Coast2Coast Discount Prescription Card.**

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

Commissioner Bosch first asked Mr. Cooper if he had included a Power Point that he had mentioned to her. He replied that he did not. She asked Mr. Cooper to explain about the program. Mr. Cooper stated there is a program that ACCG selected earlier this year and was recently adopted by Cobb County. Coast2Coast is a discount pharmacy card that citizens of Cherokee County can receive if approved by the Board. There are 42 pharmacies in Cherokee County where the card can be used. He said that there will be an official presentation at the next meeting. The Benefits Committee reviewed it in August, and now they are working out the contract terms, etc. Mr. Cooper went over the some of the benefits of the card, one bring that the County would receive royalties on any use of the card for prescriptions. Commissioner Bosch added she had a constituent share with her and her neighbors that Cobb had just approved this and that she initially thought it was more of a supplement card, but it is not. There is no cost to the County, no personnel; everything is done through Coast2Coast electronically. The Chairman asked if there were any examples given on how the card works. Mr. Cooper stated that he would send the Chairman the full packet of information and will sit down with the Chair of the Benefits Committee Stacey Williams to discuss it and then with Angie regarding the contract terms. Mr. Cooper mentioned that Gallagher Bass would be at the next meeting to assist in the presentation and that a representative from Coast2Coast would also give an official presentation. Commissioner Bosch stated that this is for citizens, not just employees. She said that once the County approved the program, there would be a link on the County's website to click on to take them straight to Coast2Coast who does everything else including issuance of cards and providing access to those different discounts. Commissioner Johnston commented that there seems to be no downside to this program. Commissioner Bosch added that ACCG looked at this program extensively and there are about 30 counties involved in it right now. Commissioner Johnston confirmed that it won't restrict anyone. They can still go to their own choice of pharmacy. Commissioner Nelms referenced the handout in the agenda packet where Richmond County employees experienced a 50% net savings. Commissioner Bosch stated she didn't see it so much as a big plus for employees as it is for constituents who may not have access to it or may not have insurance.

Mr. Cooper went over items under the **Consent Agenda** portion:

- Consider approval of execution for quit claim deed for right-of-way in conjunction of Cochran Lane by the City of Canton.
- Consider authorization of budget amendment to accept grant funds in the amount of \$2,598 for purchase of bullet proof vests for Sheriff's Office personnel from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.
- Consider authorization of FY2013 budget amendment in the amount of \$52,899.80 to move personnel costs associated with the Sheriff's Office Deputy position from

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

Crime and Investigation Division to Internal Affairs Division as an organizational measure with no net change to the budget.

- Consider approval to renew contract for services to Fire One, Inc. to provide ground ladder inspection, testing, and repair services. The renewal cost is the same as 2011 at \$13,000 initially plus additional funding if required by testing results.
- Consider approval to award a Professional Services Agreement to the most responsive, responsible proposer, EMS Technology Solutions, LLC, in the amount of \$11,220 for the first year for an Inventory Management System including implementation and 30 licenses for Cherokee Fire/Emergency Services. (Following years in the amount of \$9,720 per year.)
- Consider acceptance of state grant from Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) for the operational funding of the DUI Court in the amount of \$12,395 for the remaining 9 months of FY2013. This is a no match grant.

Mr. Cooper went over items under the **County Manager's** portion:

- Consider approval of a budget amendment and acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$70,000 from Clayton Volunteer Fire Department. Requesting approval to contribute an additional \$8,000 in SPLOST funds for the acquisition of a 2012 fire truck chassis.
- Consider approval to issue a "Letter of Intent to Terminate" our contract with Advanced Data Systems and Related Professional Service Agreement dated April 22, 2003. Commissioner Bosch asked if they can terminate their service. Mr. Cooper responded they could not but the contract does not end until March.
- Consider approval of a design services contract with The Barnhardt Group, LLC for the preparation of a Pavement Management and Distress Evaluation for Towne Lake Parkway in the amount of \$29,282.45.
- Consider of a proposal from Martin-Robbins Fence Company, Inc. for the installation of guardrail along portions of Shoal Creek Road in the amount of \$39,850. Martin-Robbins holds the annual contract for guardrail repairs with the County. Commissioner Bosch posed a question to Mr. Watkins, on Sixes Road, we probably have a deer a day that gets hit by Blankets Creek. She asked if they would take a look and see if they could possibly put a sign up on both sides of the road.

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

Commissioner Bosch asked Geoff Morton about installing a "Deer Crossing" sign near Blanket's Creek and he replied that he would look into it.

- Consider approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement between Cherokee County and the City of Woodstock Downtown Development Authority for use of the CATS trolley for the month of December 2012.
- Consider approval of contract amendment between Cherokee County and Georgia Department of Human Services for an increase in funding in the amount of \$47,690.36 to the CATS demand response service.
- Consider of a contract with low bidder Enterprise Holdings for Operation, Management and Marketing of the Cherokee County CATS Vanpool Program. In addition to \$1,750 annual savings over current vendor, will save each vanpool group approximately \$158 annually.
- Consider approval of a revision to the definition of Local Recreation Provider under Cherokee Recreation and Parks Agency's Athletic Field Use Policy as recommended by the CCPR Advisory Board.

Commissioner Bosch asked Chris Hampton to speak about the revision. Mr. Hampton clarified that the purpose of the request was to make it easier on an organization with non-profit status with the state to be non-profit with the County as long as all other qualifications were met. Commissioner Johnston mentioned concerns with verifying the accuracy of participation percentages and Mr. Hampton stated that everything is done through a database and is very easy to track.

Commissioner Bosch then asked Mr. Hampton if he knew the status on the gate issue at the Soccer Complex. Mr. Hampton replied that he didn't have an update since the Advisory Board discussed the issue. He said that all Advisory Board members had received requests from the public to be able to go use that park during the day. He said the Advisory Board voted to uphold the contract which states the gates should be opened. He said that he had conversations with the Chairman and Mr. Cooper through Bryan Reynolds about the issue due to Cherokee Soccer being resistant and defiant, wanting to control who comes through the gate. Mr. Hampton stated that it is his position as a citizen and Mr. Reynolds' position as Director of Parks and Recreation that the facility was built with public funds and should be open to the public within the guidelines of the contract. Commissioner Bosch stated that the contract says it, so we either need to take measures to have the gate open or do something about the contract. She said that she feels the Board needs to make a decision when an organization refuses to do something that is in their contract not just look the other way – that we wouldn't do that with anything else. Commissioner Johnston confirmed the

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

gates have been closed at all times. Mr. Hampton replied that it has been locked unless the group is out there. Commissioner Nelms asked the outcome of the vote on having the gate opened. Mr. Hampton says it was unanimous, 5-0. Mr. Hampton said a question of vandalism was brought up by Soccer, but that issue was spelled out in the contract as well. He received comments from the public and gave an example of a citizen who had to park at the gate with twin infants in a stroller and had to push them up the hill in the stroller just to enjoy the facility. Commissioner Bosch asked what we are going to do about it. Commissioner Nelms asked what the Advisory Board voted on specifically about the gate. Mr. Hampton responded that the vote was specifically that the gate should be opened, as spelled out in the contract, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. He added that he suggested it actually close at 10:00 p.m. since typically any association isn't going to be out there past that unless they're prepping for a tournament and if that's the case, then the CRPA Director would have the discretion for the gate to stay open longer. He stated a question came up about security. He said that this park is no different than Sequoyah Park and there has been a low percentage of vandalism there. Commissioner Bosch added that Soccer should adhere to their contract and if they're not, then a change in the contract needs to take place. The Chairman said there should be consequences for not adhering to the contract. Commissioner Nelms asked as a result of the vote, who would be in charge of handling that. Mr. Hampton responded that he asked Mr. Reynolds to write a letter to the Soccer Association and that they had ignored the letter. He said that Mr. Reynolds had a conversation with them and they said to him basically that they are stalling and will not open the gate because they want to control who comes in and out. He added that at that point, he suggested that Mr. Reynolds contact Mr. Cooper and he contacted the Chairman. He also stated that Soccer should be dealing with Mr. Reynolds on a regular basis on anything, but they are not doing that. He said the battle is a continuous cycle and it shouldn't be that way, but it is that way with this association every time. Mr. Hampton went on to say that out of all the associations we have in the County, Soccer is the only association they have trouble with as far as direction. Commissioner Nelms stated that it is up to the Board now on how to get that lock opened. Mr. Hampton mentioned CRPA can go over there and take off their locks, but Soccer would go right back and put their own on there. The Chairman added that that's not the solution. Commissioner Johnston mentioned that at other parks, some gates are automatic, but others someone has to go around and open it up and lock it back. Commissioner Bosch suggested that if Soccer wants to cut the County a check for the park, they can have their lock on it, but until then, it needs to come off. Commissioner Johnston stated that we could have someone to go out there in the morning and evening to unlock and lock. Commissioner Bosch asked if that was in the contract for the Soccer Association to do. Mr. Hampton confirmed so. Mr. Hampton suggested with this particular situation, to have an automatic gate, then no one can do anything about that. Commissioner Johnston explained that he has

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

close ties with CSA and has explained to them at CSA that he could not help them on this issue. He also said he told them if they didn't like it, then why did they sign the contract. He suggested to them to come up with a compromise of some sort, but to no avail. Mr. Hampton stated the Advisory Board's stance is firm with as much power as they have. The County has met or exceeded everything on their end of the contract, but we constantly have to battle with them to uphold their end. Commissioner Nelms agreed with their position and included that it is up the BOC to back up the Advisory Board's stance. He added that the only issue is to find out how much the automatic gates are going to cost. Commissioner Hubbard asked Mr. Reynolds what an automatic gate would cost. Mr. Bill Echols interjected that they would have to run power to the gate and that there is a transformer on the gate side. He went on to say that they were looking at an overhead transformer to bring down power. Mr. Echols was asked if there were other options. He stated there were, but recommended the previous solution. Commissioner Bosch stated that in the meantime, someone needs to go open the gate and it needs to be us. Mr. Hampton stated that Soccer sent a letter to the neighborhood that the County was "forcing" them to open the gate in which Mr. Hampton responded with the contract attached, that they were just enforcing the contract they signed. Commissioner Johnston said he feels there will be controversy either way. Mr. Hampton stated that the gate being locked would not prevent any kind of trouble in that neighborhood should someone attempt it. Commissioner Bosch added that it actually provides a false sense of security. Mr. Hampton said it is just a hindrance to those who want to use the park. Commissioner Bosch asked if an amendment to the Agenda needed to take place. Mr. Cooper stated he could just have a new lock put on the gate and have someone open and close it. He said he had tried letting Recycling open it in the mornings since they are right beside the park and the Marshal's office lock it in the evenings but that it didn't work out. Commissioner Bosch restated that according to the contract, Soccer is supposed to be doing it. Mr. Cooper stated that Mike at Recycling would resume opening it, but the evenings would be the only issue. Commissioner Johnston stated that until we can get the electric gate, we could have Mike open in it the morning and a park employee lock it in the evening. Mr. Reynolds stated that it would be acceptable to close the gate at dark with Soccer being done for the season, there is no reason for anyone else to be out there after dark. Mr. Hampton asked if this needed to be amended in the contract. Commissioner Johnston said to just take charge of it. Mr. Hampton added that another issue he had concerns with was Soccer putting individual locks on each field gates. He stated he appreciates the support from the Board. Mr. Hampton offered to assist with closing if needed by Parks staff. Commissioner Johnston said he didn't feel comfortable with putting that responsibility on him. Commissioner Bosch stated she didn't care how it happened, it just needs to happen. Commissioner Hubbard added that he spoke to Mr. Reynolds about low-cost video surveillance. Mr. Hampton commented that there is never a shortage of Sheriff's

By policy, minutes are not official until approved by the Board at a future regular meeting.

patrol cars in the area as well as the Marshal's Officers. Commissioner Bosch stated that if Soccer is sending letters to residents, then it's only causing problems and putting ideas in their heads. A brief discussion on quasi-organized groups and what is in the contract regarding them ensued. Commissioner Hubbard offered the suggestion of signage at the parks forbidding this type of activity. Mr. Hampton stated prior to signage, he would suggest an evaluation period to see how things transpire. Mr. Cooper recalled a vandalism problem at Riverside and the solution they came up with seemed to deter further problems which was to alarm the concession building and that perhaps in the future they may have to alarm the concession building at the Soccer Complex as well.

- Consider approval of lease agreement to use Cherokee Charter Academy gymnasium facility for Cherokee Youth Basketball (CYB) practices and games for the 2012-2013 season. Lease cost is covered within the CYB program budget.
- Consideration of agreement with the City of Ball Ground for reimbursement in the amount of \$35,000 for the City's acquisition of the school gym for recreational purposes, as well as payment for landscaping and stream bank mitigation in the amount not to exceed \$35,000. Both will be funding from the Park Bond.

---

The Chairman asked if there was anything else. Hearing none, Commissioner Hubbard made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 5:05 p.m. Commissioner Nelms seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session to Follow