

CHEROKEE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

July 2, 2013

3:00 p.m.

Cherokee Hall

MINUTES

The Chairman began at 3:03 p.m. with all Commissioners present except Commissioner Nelms who will not be able to attend today's meetings. He read excerpts from a book titled, "Secrets of the World Class: Turning Mediocrity in to Greatness."

1. 2013 Millage Rate Overview by Janelle Funk.

Ms. Funk began by reviewing the process for setting the millage rate. She also reviewed the options available and the rates associated with each. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of growth and changes in the tax digest that may result in slight changes in the rate.

The Chairman asked Ms. Funk about an update on title transfer receipts. Ms. Funk stated that May receipts were good and she expects June receipts to be in within the next few days.

Chairman Ahrens stated that he'd like to skip over the Rules of Procedure topic for now and come back to it if time permits.

2. Discussion of Regular Agenda Items.

Chairman Ahrens went over an item under the **Chairman's** portion:

- Discussion and possible adoption of Etowah Community Development Standards.

Chairman Ahrens asked Jeff Watkins to catch everyone up on this topic since it has not been discussed in a while to get everyone's thoughts out on the table. Jeff Watkins stated this development consists of 1,368 acres on the Etowah River and is zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development). He said that in 2008 they were approached by a company, at that time, Newland Development, about a plan to help make the project work better. Newland Development then came back with the document. The economy declined and the project sat dormant for quite a while. In 2011 the property owners have shown some interest in the project so we're here to take another look at it. He said that a new site plan was presented by Newland Development and approved by the BOC in December 2006 and since that time the document has been through DRI. Mr. Watkins added that a Public Hearing with no action was held in November 2012 and staff then took the document and incorporated the public input and the Commissioners' input, so the document they have before them tonight is slightly different, with a couple of items stricken from the permitted uses tables and some altering of setbacks. The Chairman asked if there are many standards and are they wide open as to what can be built, and setbacks, etc. Mr. Watkins stated it is a mixing of uses, usually used on larger projects. He further explained that a PUD was not intended to be a zoning district of and in itself as it was done here, and in the year 2000 that zoning category was eliminated. The Chairman mentioned that Patrick Clark and John Gornall were here tonight.

Commissioner Johnston expressed his concerns to try to keep the impact as low as possible and to not let it grow to more than what has already been approved. He read through a list consisting of basically five things:

1. Provision of live/work units throughout the residential area. The Chairman stated that this has been removed.
2. Lodging. Mr. Watkins stated that the document in front of them has this item taken out of residential.
3. Guest housing. His concerns were that it could be occupied by someone who is not a guest or related. Mr. Watkins stated that the guest house reference has been removed and the permitted use table states accessory structures such as a shed or pool house. He added that the owner must reside on the property.
4. Breakdown of the 1800 unit maximum. Commissioner Johnston added that this is probably the single biggest concern he has. The plan previously showed 1450 of those units had to be estate lots, 150 townhomes and 200 courtyard homes. Now we are seeing a different breakdown with units of broadly high density with the introduction of a new type of home defined as residential detached. Mr. Watkins said that this condition of zoning had been pointed out to Mr. Clark and that this condition (number of units) is going to have to be sorted out by the Board before we can move any further.
5. Lot widths and setbacks. Commissioner Johnston said the setbacks are pretty significant. He added that he would like to keep lot widths and setbacks per current zoning conditions. Mr. Watkins addressed issues of sloping lots, ridges, etc. He said that the further you push a house back the more negative environment impact. Commissioner Johnston stated that with 4 of his concerns being substantially checked off, if they could hold the breakdown of homes at

1800 units per the current zoning conditions, he could be flexible on the interior lots.

Commissioner Gunnin stated that he had concerns from a firefighting standpoint of the number of stories per house and street width. He said those factors can change the tactic and equipment needed to control a fire altogether. He added that another concern is density to the area.

Chairman Ahrens stated that there might be a way to create some flexibility by giving some allowances to shift between residential categories, possibly 40 to 50 additional high density, depending upon evolution, so up to 400 or so. Then have a corresponding decrease in estate lots to keep the target build-out at 1800 units. He added that another consideration would be to establish a build-out target of average lot size for the estate lots, maybe 13-14,000 square feet. These two elements would incorporate some flexibility as the project evolves.

Commissioner Johnston asked for confirmation that a decision will not yet be made this evening. He also asked if another public hearing should be held. The Chairman stated that his recommendation would be to briefly discuss tonight and indicate that they will call for a public hearing. Mr. Watkins agreed and said the earliest to hold a public hearing to meet advertisement requirements would be August 6, 2013.

Commissioner Johnston restated that 3 out of 5 of his concerns were substantially checked off. He added that a sixth has been added, now a net 3rd, which is the condition that that all perimeter lots will be 18,000 square feet. He said that this does not appear to be the case in this document.

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

- Authorize budget amendment to accept Insurance Recovery Monies for Fire Fund and Unincorporated County Services Fund for the FY 2013 Budget in the total amount of \$59,366.66.

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

- Approval to accept grant award to the DUI/Drug Treatment Court in the amount of \$42,341.00 and budget amendment in the amount of \$10,585.00 for the remaining three months of FY2013.
- Consider approval of change order to the Construction Services Agreement with CABLIK Enterprises, LLC for installation and construction of an emergency generator system in the amount not to exceed \$75,515.00 for the new Fire-ES Training Center.
- Consider awarding Professional Services Agreement to two (2) low bidders, Bliss Products & Services, Inc. and Best Litter Receptacles, for parks amenities.

- Consider approval of State FY 2014 GDOT contract in the amount of \$539,775.00 for the annual operating expenses associated with CATS 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program. County's obligation is to be \$269,888.00 (50%).
- ~~**Removed:** Consider approval of new provider, Conexis, for FSA (Flexible Benefit) and Cobra administrator as recommended by the Benefits Committee for the next plan year.~~
- Consider approval of the 2nd amendment to the ARC FY2013 Budget and budget amendment in the amount of \$55,662.00. The budget amendment will not affect the County budget.
- Approval to purchase a Tanker Apparatus conversion to a County owned chassis previously acquired for this purpose in the amount of \$113,017.00.
- **Amended:** Add Consider Agreement with Universal Alloy and Cherokee Child Advocacy Council property.

Discussion ensued regarding the transition and impact on both organizations and the County. County Attorney, Chris Hamilton, mentioned there are three conditions that must be met in the swap and it appears as though the document covers those areas. He also stated the County Attorney's office is in the process of reviewing the draft of the Agreement. Further discussion ensued regarding the value of both properties.

3. Discussion on Rules of Procedure

The Chairman suggested going over the Rules of Procedure before adjourning. The Commissioners skimmed over the Forsyth County Rules of Procedure as distributed earlier by Angie Davis, briefly touching on various items for discussion.

The Chairman asked if there was anything else, hearing none, moved to adjourn the Work Session 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Gunnin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session followed.