

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

**Work Session**

**September 3, 2013**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Cherokee Hall**

**MINUTES**

The Chairman began at 3:02 p.m. with all Commissioners present. Due to the full Work Session Agenda as well as the 4:30 Joint Meeting of the RRDA/BOC, he went straight into the meeting.

1. FY2014 Budget Overview by Janelle Funk.

Janelle Funk went over the FY2014 budget, attached as part of these minutes. She said that there would be a public hearing on September 17 on the FY2014 budget as well. The Board will consider adopting the FY2014 Budget on October 1st.

Commissioner Johnston asked if we always had a certain amount of vacant positions just waiting to be replaced. Janelle replied yes and most are part-time.

Commissioner Johnston asked if the Day Trucks were already in effect. Chief Dan West replied that they were in effect and in the test phase.

Chairman Ahrens asked why the admin costs in Workers Comp had doubled. Ms. Funk replied that it was due to timing to true up to the new fiscal year, so it was not really an increase.

2. Proposed Precinct Changes for 2014 by Janet Munda.

Janet Munda thanked the Board for allowing her to present the proposed precinct changes. She said that she had met with the Elections Board and her office has also teamed up with GIS Director, Joe Woycke, who was extremely helpful in implementing new precinct lines that will be best for the County. Ms. Munda advised that the proposed precinct changes did not affect who you vote for, it only affects the location of where a person votes.

Ms. Munda went over statistics that led to where we are now and a timeline on when changes will be implemented. She said that the Elections Board is hoping to adopt the changes by the end of the year.

Chairman Ahrens commented that the big challenge will be to get citizens informed of the precinct changes.

The Chairman asked for a ballpark figure of how much of a cost savings could be involved. Ms. Munda replied that in some elections it could be about a 25% savings, but maybe not as much in others like presidential elections.

The Chairman advised that the Board would do whatever they could to help get the word out. Ms. Munda thanked the Board for their support.

Chairman Ahrens asked about the May 20 primary election. Ms. Munda replied that the Federal Date will be May 20 and State and Local will be in March.

Commissioner Johnston asked if it would automatically be updated as properties are annexed. Ms. Munda replied that it would.

### 3. Discussion of Etowah Community Standards.

The Chairman stated that a Public Hearing is set to discuss the Etowah Community standards on September 17. He added that he had indicated that at least seven days prior to the Public Hearing Jeff Watkins and his staff would have documents to present to the public posted online, which should be by Friday of this week. He then recalled past meetings where various plans and metrics were discussed. He said that tonight he would like to get to a meeting of the minds on the plans so that they might have something prepared to adopt at the Public Hearing.

Jeff Watkins gave the Board and Parks Huff a handout of zoning conditions and presented an overview of the events on the project that goes back to the 1990's. Included in the handout is a new category of residential – Easy Living Homes.

Chairman Ahrens asked about certification under the program. Margaret Stallings said that it was indicated on the top of the Easy Living Standards section that all homes will be certified.

Patrick Clark asked to speak and said that he and Parks Huff were here to get some governance and clarity to the site plans that were approved in 2006. He added that they were open to discussion to clarify or define but not reduce the type of lots discussed in 2006. Mr. Clark and Mr. Huff presented a large drawing of the site plan that they said was replicated from the plan presented in 2006.

Commissioner Poole asked what the actual numbers were on that plan. Chairman Ahrens said that there were no numbers. Commissioner Johnston interjected that you have to count all the colored squares. Parks Huff stated that the site plan as replicated tonight was approved according to the minutes in 2006. Chairman Ahrens said that the topic was actually discussed more in depth during the Work Session of that particular meeting and that it could be found on the video at the 1:08 mark. He read from the Work Session Minutes that certain pieces moved around but that the 1,800 units had the same quantities of each category.

Mr. Huff stated there were 710 units and that they were concerned with quality so they split the 710 so that half of the units were Easy Living Standards. Commissioner Johnston said that that was not the Board's interpretation, nor was it the interpretation of the other four Board members. He added that it is clear now that there had never been a meeting of the minds on this project.

Commissioner Nelms asked what the middle ground was. Mr. Clark replied the movement has been to further define what that is and to show the flexibility of the market. Commissioner Poole asked for the target number of 18,000 sq. ft. estate lots and what number they would like to see. Mr. Clark replied 348. Commissioner Poole asked if they were asking for the 12,000 estate lots at 742 and Easy Living homes at 710. Commissioner Nelms said that he had heard different numbers ranging from 345 to 350. Mr. Huff stated that what is drawn on their plan is 348 and 742.

Mr. Huff said they had talked about placing a cap on cluster homes. Commissioner Nelms asked what the current number of the cluster homes is now. Mr. Huff replied 710. Commissioner Johnston stated that it is all under high density categories and that it is still under conditions of zoning and the current cap is 350. Commissioner Nelms referenced the meeting that took place recently and asked why they were uncomfortable with the reduction of half in the Easy Living. Mr. Huff clarified they are comfortable with it.

Mr. Clark spoke about the exterior lots, stating that they had addressed those concerns.

Chairman Ahrens asked Mr. Watkins if he had any suggestions on what degree of specificity of options to provide in the documents. He also asked if he would prefer to offer alternatives or one set of plans. Mr. Watkins replied that one set inclusive enough to cover everything would be preferable.

Commissioner Johnston asked the question of why they were even having this discussion on zoning. He asked who the applicant was. He added that the applicant could ask for whatever they wanted and it would be up to the Board to approve it or not. Commissioner Nelms stated that this is where he was at also. He said that he hoped to find some middle ground and that he didn't feel they were too far from that.

Chairman Ahrens stated that the Public Hearing would be held at 6:00 on the regular agenda and that documents would be available by the end of the week. Mr. Watkins stated for clarity that the Etowah Community owners were the applicants, not the County.

#### 4. Discussion of Regular Agenda Items.

The Chairman said that he had looked over the agenda and did not see anything in particular that needed to be discussed and asked if anyone else had questions about the agenda.

Hearing none, Commissioner Nelms moved to adjourn the Work Session at 4:48 p.m. to go into the Special Joint BOC/RRDA Meeting; Commissioner Gunnin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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Executive Session followed the Special Joint Meeting.