



Cherokee County Board of Commissioners WORK SESSION MINUTES

March 18, 2014

3:00 p.m. | Cherokee Hall

The Chairman began at 3:03 p.m. with all Commissioners present. He read several quotes from the book "776 Stupidest Things Ever Said" by Ross Petras.

1. Library Update by Anita Summers, Director.

Ms. Summers gave an overview of the 2013 Fiscal Year Statistics for the Cherokee County Libraries. She began by stating there were over 600,000 visits to the libraries. They registered 8,325 new borrowers totaling 88,102 borrowers. The number of items circulated in the libraries totaled 796,374. Ms. Summers presented a chart showing attendance and circulation tallies since 2007. She also showed a breakdown of the different types of items circulated. Ms. Summers shared a sample of the electronics check-out page where people can download e-books for free. She also showed the statistics of the e-book service and its increased usage during 2013. Commissioner Johnston asked if individuals can check out only one e-book at a time. Ms. Summers replied they can check out up to three at a time. Commissioner Johnston asked about single copies of a title. Ms. Summers said that only one person at a time could check it out. She said the benefit to the e-books is that you don't have to remember to take it back, but the person needs to be careful of the expiration so they can finish reading before the book disappears from their e-reader. There is also a mechanism for early return if the individual doesn't like the book. Commissioner Johnston asked if mostly best sellers are in their collection. Ms. Summers responded that there are all kinds, but not all publishers will sell to libraries. Fiction is the most popular but they have non-fiction and children's books as well.

Ms. Summers shared that one thing they have started doing at the R.T. Jones branch is circulating puzzles. An individual donated a bunch of them and asked if they would circulate them. She said they have been quite popular. She said they are trying to step outside the box to appeal to their patrons.

Ms. Summer shared totals from the various services they offer that they are able to track. Total usage is over 1.5 Million. She gave a brief overview of the Reference & Adult Services page on their website and the tools offered. She also went over programs offered to the public. Attendance for those programs

continues to grow. A new program at the Woodstock library is the Lego Club. Another popular program is the Toddler Lapsit program. Reading to dogs program helps children with reading problems. They have youth staff that put on puppet shows and receive a great response from the kids. She shared many other programs offered to all age groups.

Ms. Summers explained how the value of library services may be calculated. She showed a screen shot of a services calculator on the Georgia Public Services website. The calculator came from the Massachusetts Library Association. Ms. Summers stated that on the Georgia website, they also breakdown the Return on Investment using three services. Books and materials borrowed, they averaged to be \$25.00 a book. They likened attendance to equal the cost of a movie ticket. They also compared internet and computer usage to a \$7.00 session at a cyber café. Using the three services, Georgia Public Services came up with a total Return on Investment of \$6.52 for every \$1.00. Ms. Summers said she used the same formula for Cherokee County and came up with \$11.01 for every \$1.00. She showed local government funding for 2013 as well. Ms. Summers showed a chart of several Georgia counties and pointed out where Sequoyah Regional stands in the State for funding per capita. Sequoyah is \$9.19 per capita in local funding for 2013. Ms. Summers showed a chart comparing Cherokee's per capita to neighboring counties.

In conclusion, Ms. Summers shared their short-term goals. The first is to restore staff and lost hours due to funding cuts. The second is to obtain additional staff for youth programming. She also shared programs coming soon to the libraries such as the Kids' E-book web page, summer programs, long-range planning, and renovations.

The Chairman asked if there was a limit on computer usage. Ms. Summers stated that she believes the time limit is about two hours. She further explained that there is an automated system that will sign off when time is up and the individual can renew their time if no one is waiting. The Chairman also asked if there was a possibility of having a tag-team of volunteers to help with youth programming. Ms. Summers replied that they use volunteers for a lot of their special programs. Commissioner Johnston referred to a recent news story of someone jailed for overdue fees and asked if they resort to those measures. Ms. Summers said they do not. They use a collection agency that just works with libraries to help collect fees. Commissioner Nelms referred to the library system's goal of restoring staff and asked if there was a dollar amount associated with that. Ms. Summers stated that they are working on their budget for the coming year and they are waiting for word from the State as far as what they are going to do. Once they get their budget, they are going to try to get their figure to the Board for what it would take

to get back to where they were as far as staff and hours. She said they appreciate the Board's support and she will contact them to get on the agenda for an update after summer numbers are in.

2. Grant Presentation by Jessica Moss, Solicitor General.

Ms. Moss began by introducing herself to those who may not know her. She gave a brief explanation of the functions of the office of the Solicitor General. She stated that they are the prosecuting attorneys for State Court. They do the misdemeanor cases. They are located in the Historic Courthouse. Ten of their employees are lawyers. Their investigators are post certified which means they have law enforcement backgrounds. Each is specialized in certain areas which helps prosecutors be more effective in their cases. Ms. Moss stated since she has taken office they have improved relationships with all the law enforcement agencies in the County. Everyone is working together more.

Ms. Moss explained the 72-hour hearings. She said they are held at the jail every day involving those who have not been able to post bond and they are able to ask for special conditions bond. The misdemeanors they handle are DUI's, domestic violence cases, theft, misdemeanor marijuana cases, and check forgeries. Ms. Moss stated that most domestic homicides will have begun as misdemeanors. They are in court four out of five days per week. They have two trial weeks each month. Ms. Moss said last year her office processed 756 DUI's in just the unincorporated portions of the County. The numbers do not include those in city limits. They have processed over 400 domestic violence cases, about 300 property crimes, almost 400 marijuana cases, and over 10,000 traffic cases.

Ms. Moss stated the grant she has been given through the Prosecuting Attorneys Council for a Victim Advocate. The office had one in the past and that position is no longer there. Ms. Moss referred to a bill that was passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 1995 commonly called the Victim's Bill of Rights. This allows victims the right to know certain things and the ability to be heard on certain issues. They receive help obtaining restitution and victim's compensation under the law. These are things a Victim Advocate does. Ms. Moss stated that virtually all of their cases have victims and they don't have the necessary staff to help all of them. She said compared to the rest of the State, every other prosecution office has their advocate in place already. Ms. Moss said she applied and received the grant. She stated the reason she is before the Board now is because it seemed premature to ask for something she didn't know she had and did not know what the cost would be at that time. It's a Federal grant and the actual match for the County is \$4,583.00 and is what Ms. Moss asks the Board to consider approving.

Ms. Moss explained that most prosecuting offices are funded by five percent funds. These are funds generated from fines that are paid by criminal fines in criminal courts. Ms. Moss stated her office does not receive five percent funds which is why she asked for the grant. She went on to explain how she came up with the amount and that it may potentially be less. She referred to the packet of documents prepared for the Board's signatures. Ms. Moss asked that the Board consider approving the position so they can get someone hired to start on April 1, 2014 to begin taking better care of victims.

Ms. Moss opened the floor for questions. Commissioner Johnston commented that the amount seems to be for eight months. Ms. Moss stated it is for six. Commissioner Johnston stated he assumes, if approved, that when it is brought before them again it would be for about twice the amount for a full year. Ms. Moss said she was told that for FY2015 the match amount for the County would be \$9,164.00. Commissioner Johnston asked what happens when the grant goes away. Ms. Moss said the applicant would have to understand that the position could possibly go away if grant money runs out.

Commissioner Johnston asked if they handle misdemeanors within city limits outside of DUI's and traffic offenses. Ms. Moss said not all of them. They handle the domestic violence cases. Shoplifting cases are held in their respective municipalities. However, if they request a jury trial, they have to go through her office. Other theft cases go through them as well. Ms. Moss listed several other offenses that might occur within city limits that they handle.

The Chairman stated they would amend the agenda to include consideration of the grant.

3. Discussion of Regular Agenda Items.

ZONING CASES

CASE NUMBER	: 14-03-002
APPLICANT	: Chatham Neighborhoods, LLC
ZONING CHANGE	: OI, R-40 and AG to R-15
LOCATION	: Batesville Road and Hickory Flat Highway
MAP & PARCEL NUMBER	: 02N02 - 101, 75
ACRES	: 67.51
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	: Conservation Subdivision

**COMMISSION DISTRICT
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP**

: 2
: Transitional, Suburban Growth
and Country Estates

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

: Denial

The Chairman began by stating, as an observation, he did not get as much from the Planning Commission hearing as he had hoped. He added there was equal representation from both sides. There have been discussions about looking into alternatives and other considerations. Commissioner Gunnin stated the requested R-15 wasn't conducive to the area. He said Mr. Huff and his group came back with an alternate plan but they have not yet had a chance to review it and see if it would fall within the parameters they want it to. Mr. Huff said they have been trying to work with the sellers and their engineers in looking at different alternatives. They just haven't had time to do it. Mr. Huff stated some of the residents wanted to meet with them as soon as the new plans were drawn. Mr. Huff stated he would like to table it for a few weeks so they can be sure to be as organized as they can on different proposals. Commissioner Gunnin stated that once they come up with something more conducive for the area and meet with the community members, they can work from there.

The Chairman asked Mr. Watkins about the transitional corridor. Mr. Watkins stated the transitional corridor doesn't have a specific distance and that is on purpose. He said the reason for that is they can't always determine the nature of the topography and a host of other reasons. The purpose of a transitional corridor is for an area to go through a transition, for example, from a residential to a commercial area. Mr. Watkins said another thing to keep in mind is the Comprehensive Plan policy document which serves as a guideline.

The Chairman brought up another large development that was considering a rezoning and asked if they just decided to build out according to the current zoning. Mr. Watkins stated they were running numbers and looking to see if they can stay within the existing zoning and they have opportunity of some other land but they are trying to make it work. He said they are not scheduled for a Public Hearing until May. Commissioner Nelms commented on the number of zoning cases coming up. Mr. Watkins stated they are seeing more of the vacant lots being consumed. Commissioner Nelms asked if they were seeing more bookended zoning. Mr. Watkins said a lot of them are in the Woodstock and Holly Springs area. He added Ms. Lee's calendar has been full with meetings with people to discuss possible projects.

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

- 1.1 Consider approval to transfer \$19,077.00 from Building Inspections to the Development Services Center for transfer of position for additional Customer Service.

Commissioner Johnston expressed concern that with activity at the Development Services Center increasing, building inspections will also increase. Mr. Cooper stated the individual moving would be able to continue with the same service. Commissioner Johnston stated they will probably have to add back inspectors and other building-related positions. Mr. Cooper said they are monitoring it closely and seeing a significant increase. Commissioner Gunnin mentioned the Fire Marshals will also have to start reviewing plans again. Mr. Cooper commented one of the Fire Marshals would be retiring and they are cross-training someone to fill that spot and they will determine what their needs are.

- 1.2 Consider approval to release one loaned tanker fire apparatus and one loaned tanker (tender) body back to Georgia Forestry. Also, approval to surplus and donate one truck chassis to Georgia Forestry. The chassis would cost more in work and man hours to disassemble than the value of the chassis.

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

- 2.1 Consider approval to accept Homeland Security Grant Program/State Homeland Security Grant Program and Budget Amendment in the amount of \$12,000.00 for grant period August 26, 2013 to May 30, 2014. This is a no match grant.
- 2.2 Consider approval of Professional Services Agreement with Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc., for completing an intersection analysis for the intersection of Woodstock Road and Victory Drive in the amount of \$10,900.00.

Commissioner Nelms briefly shared a timeline of events leading up to the current activity for the intersection. He stated the tragic accident leading up to current events surrounding the intersection attracted a lot of media attention. Commissioner Johnston commented he has learned not to over-promise on road projects because they take time. He asked Mr. Morton what

the timeframe of construction would be if the design is acceptable to him. Mr. Morton replied that it could be the end of April when they will have an idea of the best route to take and if it will be a simple fix or a more involved situation. Commissioner Nelms stated he would want this to be a well thought out solution rather than a knee-jerk reaction.

- 2.3 Consider approval of annual guardrail installation and repair services contract with Martin-Robbins Fence Company, Inc., to perform guardrail installation and repairs county-wide as needed.
- 2.4 Consider Sidewalk Trip Hazard Removal Services Contract with MRC Group, LLC, to perform sidewalk repairs county-wide as needed.
- 2.5 Consider Professional Services Consulting Contract for update to the Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) to Parsons Brinkerhoff, Inc., in the amount of \$378,674.00.

The Chairman asked if the County has done much business with this group. Mr. Morton stated some of the individuals on the team have done work for the County. Commissioner Johnston asked how far out in the plan did they attempt to look. Mr. Morton said 25 years. The Chairman said they update it every five years.

The Chairman briefly mentioned Mr. Morton's update presentation on the County. He suggested posting the presentation on the County website. Mr. Morton asked if he should present at the next Work Session. The Chairman said yes.

- 2.6 Consider approval of Change Order to Maintenance Services Agreement with Shumate Mechanical for the installation of variable fan device controls at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.00 for the Aquatic Center. Also requesting approval of landscape plan and authorization to be competitively bid for the installation of approximately 90 to 95 trees at a budget of approximately \$40,000. Upon receipt of bids, BOC approval will be requested.

Mr. Cooper stated he hopes to have a bid on the trees by the next Work Session. He gave an update that the County is working with the Department of Environmental Health regarding the sensors on the outside lighting to hopefully allow some of the lights to turn off at night. He added they hope to reach a solution soon. The Chairman asked if they were able to get the deflectors turned down. Mr. Echols responded that they did try that but it took it down below the required level under the current regulations.

- 2.7 Consider approval to submit a grant application to Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) for funds to establish/continue operation of a Mental Health Court in Cherokee County in the amount of \$113,625.00 with a match of \$12,625.00.

Judge Woods of Probate stated this is a continuation from last year. They began planning last summer through the fall and ran into treatment issues. The State mandates certain treatment services which we don't have in the County. He said he is now in the process of determining how we can get the services that clients need through the Probate Court and working with local providers. Judge Woods stated this is the same grant through CJCC and this is the first year they have required a matching of ten percent which can be obtained in other ways rather than asking the County for funds. He said he will continue to try and find other resources once this grant money runs out. Judge Woods added that one change he did make is that when it was proposed last year, the only paid position was a coordinator. He has changed that to a contract position instead of an employee position.

The Chairman asked for an example of the services the County does not have. Judge Woods mentioned Moral Resonation Therapy (MRT) and Motivation for Change. He said he wants it to be a success once they get it going.

Commissioner Johnston referred to the statement Judge Woods made about matching using existing funds. He confirmed they were not asking for budget funds from the County. Judge Woods said they would tap into user fees and the like. Mr. Cooper added that if it is awarded they will submit a budget amendment.

- 2.8 Amendment: Consider approval of request by Solicitor General for VOCA Grant and budget amendment.

Mr. Ramsey went over the one item under the **County Attorney** portion:

- 3.1 Notice of Annexation, City of Woodstock regarding property located at the East Side of Main Street North of Highway 92.

Mr. Ramsey, sitting in for Ms. Davis, corrected the location as being West Side of Main Street. He stated the majority of the property is in City limits but about five to six acres is still unincorporated. The County zoning is R-40 with the Future Land Use Map calling for Urban Village. The proposed use and zoning for Woodstock is under the Downtown Medium Residential classification. According to the site plan, the portion that is currently unincorporated will be primarily used for greenspace and trails adjoining the creek. It is determined there is not any material burden or increase in intensity of use. Mr. Ramsey stated it is recommended that the Board not issue a land use objection on this annexation. The Chairman confirmed the location. A brief discussion ensued about the property. Commissioner Johnston stated he didn't believe they would have any grounds to object to the annexation. All agreed.

Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Commissioner Johnston made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 4:35 p.m. to discuss personnel, land acquisition or disposal, and/or pending or threatened litigation; Commissioner Gunnin seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.