



Cherokee County Board of Commissioners WORK SESSION MINUTES

April 1, 2014

3:00 p.m. | Cherokee Hall

The Chairman began at 3:07 p.m. with all Commissioners present. The Chairman read several excerpts from "Secrets of the World Class."

1. Cherokee E-911 employee earns State of Georgia Supervisor of the Year Award.

Chief Collett began by stating the Georgia Emergency Communications Conference is held annually for all 911 centers. People from all over the State of Georgia are nominated for various awards at the conference. He said Ms. Alice Fennel has dedicated herself to not only better Cherokee 911, but she is just a few weeks away from completing her undergraduate degree. She's working hard and wants to make a difference in the County and she is making a difference. Chief Collett added that while everyone slept comfortably in their own homes during the storms, Ms. Fennel was at 911 making sure things were getting done. He said that because of her efforts every day and during the ice storms, she was selected for the 2014 Supervisor of the Year in the State of Georgia for 911 Operations. Chief Collett congratulated Ms. Fennel and presented her with the award from the State.

The Chairman mentioned that as Chairman of the Commissioners, he serves on the Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority Board and said they have received notice that the Etowah Water Treatment Plant was voted "Plant of the Year" in the large system category.

2. Cherokee County Transportation Update by Geoff Morton.

The Chairman stated Mr. Morton presented this update at one of the recent Chamber of Commerce Regional Issues meetings and the summary was communicated very well and gives a good scope of what is happening transportation-wise in the County.

Mr. Morton began the presentation by addressing County/SPLOST Projects. He stated that all transportation construction projects within the County are funded by SPLOST only. Recently finished projects are Towne Lake Parkway resurfacing and are currently in process of re-stripping. Mr. Morton added the total project cost including Rose Creek Drive was just under \$2 Million which is less than half of what was originally budgeted. Northside Cherokee Boulevard was a joint project between Cherokee County, the City of Canton, GDOT and Northside Hospital which opened last October. Mr. Morton said this was an example of several groups working together without the federal process involved. The project was designed, permitted, and put to bid within a year of meeting with the DOT and getting financial commitment from them. The project was \$8.1 Million and came in right at budget.

Mr. Morton moved on to annual resurfacing. He stated Cherokee County has 1,200 miles of roadway. They resurface between 20-25 miles each year. He stated that in 2013 they resurfaced 16.5 miles. He provided a list of those roads resurfaced. Mr. Morton commented that they do more than just resurfacing on these roads. They look for any base failures and take care of any they may find; take care of any drainage issues; resurface the road; rebuild the shoulders; and re-stripe the roadway. For 2014, Mr. Morton stated they have 25 miles of road resurfacing scheduled and provided a list of those roads. He mentioned that the Roads and Bridges Department rates the roads on a five-tier rating system ranging from "very good" to "very poor". They concentrate on the poorer roads first.

Mr. Morton went over some design and construction projects they are working on in the next year. One project they are currently working on is the intersection of East Cherokee Drive and Old Highway 5 as traffic patterns have shifted there as a result of the completion of Ridgewalk Parkway and Sixes Road interchanges. Mr. Morton described the improvements to be made at the intersection. Another intersection project coming up is the intersection of East Cherokee Drive at SR 140. The designs were completed in 2008, however, due to the economy slowing down they pushed it off for a few years. Mr. Morton described the improvements for that intersection as well. He added that a question they are frequently asked is why it takes so long for the intersections to be completed. His response is that because they have to work with utilities to keep them working while the project is going on. Mr. Morton stated another project they are working on is at East Cherokee Drive and SR 20. This will complete the passing lane project for SR 20. He reiterated the utilities issue. Commissioner Johnston commented that they would probably move them first. Mr. Morton said they would do everything pretty much simultaneously but coordinating with the utilities is one of the first things the contractor does. He added the coordination actually begins during the plan

development process and when they hold their pre-construction meeting. Further discussion of the project ensued.

Mr. Morton indicated another project will be for Bells Ferry Road. He stated it has been an on-again off-again project between the County and GDOT. He added it is kind of an odd project where the County will purchase the right-of-way and GDOT will design and construct the project. GDOT is using federal funds for it. They are using 80% federal funds and 20% State funds. The County uses SPLOST funds for the purchase of the right-of-way. Mr. Morton stated they have experienced some issues over where to end the four-lane. It was agreed to end it at Victoria Road. This project is back on the GDOT radar since the County has been pushing for it. The anticipated construction bid date is August 2018. GDOT's estimated construction cost is \$18 Million. The Bells Ferry Road widening project will be happening about the same time. GDOT has updated the design. The anticipated construction bid date is September 2018. Estimated construction cost for GDOT is \$7 Million. The County will purchase a right-of-way for this also and will obtain an easement from the Corps of Engineers at no cost. There will be costs incurred for the marina and restaurant. The Chairman asked about the bridge location. Mr. Morton said it will be west of the existing bridge. While the new bridge is being built, the existing bridge will still be used for traffic. Commissioner Johnston asked about how the restaurant and repair shop would be impacted. Mr. Morton replied that the restaurant would be the most impacted.

Mr. Morton went over upcoming GDOT projects. On SR 20 from I-575 to Scott Road, GDOT will be widening from two to four lanes. Construction is anticipated for April 2016. Estimated construction cost is \$23 Million. On SR 20 from I-575 in Canton to GA 400 in Cumming, this is another four-lane widening project. Construction funding is proposed for FY 2022. State Route 140 projects are on hold indefinitely due to logical termini issues in the City of Roswell. Other GDOT projects in the County include SR 20 at SR 108 intersection; SR 372 at SR 369 roundabout; and SR 372 bridge.

Mr. Morton moved on to the Northwest Corridor Project which includes adding HOT lanes to I-75 from Akers Mill Road to I-575; from I-575 to Sixes Road; and on I-75 to Hickory Grove Road. Construction could begin in late 2014 and be completed by 2018. He added he has not heard any recent updates to that project.

Mr. Morton went over plans for future projects. He recalled the Commissioners awarding Parsons Brinkerhoff, Inc. the Professional Service Consulting Contract for the update to the Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). He stated the original was adopted in 2008. Several changes have occurred since the adoption such as the economy, locally and nationally, as well as new census

changes. Traffic patterns have changed as well as less federal and State funds are available for road projects. Mr. Morton said that with the CTP, they will be setting a baseline for system performance and monitoring. He said there will be also a chance for public and stakeholder involvement. The project should be kicking off mid-April. It will take 16 months to complete the project. Mr. Morton went over the various tasks involved in the CTP update. He also shared some facts about the County roadway system.

The Chairman commented about the amount of large trucks and heavy equipment going through the downtown Ball Ground area. Mr. Morton agreed that would be one of Ball Ground's concerns. Discussion regarding Little River Bridge ensued. Mr. Morton stated that if TSPLOST had passed, they could have done whatever they wanted with the bridge. Commissioner Johnston expressed concerned that making the bridge only two lanes now and two lanes later, as stated in the plans, could cost nearly double. Mr. Morton agreed but added that the location of the other bridge would already be there and any preliminary things will be done. The Chairman thanked Mr. Morton for the presentation.

The Chairman announced there is one amendment to the agenda for the Regular Meeting and that would be the approval of minutes by the BOC from the Joint RRDA/BOC meeting held on March 4, 2014.

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	: 2
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP	: Transitional, Suburban Growth and Country Estates
PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION	: Denial

Mr. Watkins recalled that the Commissioners voted to postpone the case from March 18, 2014 to this meeting. Commissioner Gunnin stated that this case is in his District. He said they received a revised plan for R-15 to start then a revised plan last week and haven't had much time to review it. He recommended that they have a little more time to look through it. He said that he and Mr. Watkins met to try to come up with a better plan. He asked the Board to allow a little more time to review it, work on it, and get some things resolved that were brought up in a meeting that are legitimate concerns. Mr. Watkins stated that Mr. Parks Huff, the attorney representing Chatham, asked that the postponement be for 30 days instead of two weeks.

The Chairman asked for a summary of the key issues keeping in mind this is a different dynamic than what they see most of the time. He said they need to look for a win-win that can satisfy the buyer and seller and community. Commissioner Gunnin stated that items that were brought up in the meeting were buffer issues and the conservation design needs a different layout. Commissioner Johnston asked if there was any hope of bringing the number of units down. Commissioner Gunnin replied that is one of the other issues. He added that Mr. Watkins had some good ideas which is why he wanted to come back to this and discuss with the other Commissioners. The Chairman asked Mr. Watkins to explain the 90 day time period. Mr. Watkins stated that Article 18 outlines zoning procedures that states after receiving recommendation of the Planning Commission, you have 90 days to move on that particular case; or after the 90 days, it can be denied without prejudice. Commissioner Johnston commented that the transition zone is intentionally vague. He said the entire parcel makes a certain amount of sense. He shared what he believes to be a scenario most appropriate for the land use. The Chairman asked about parcels that can go a character area higher or lower. Mr. Watkins stated it's in the description of the transition corridor under "Development Strategies". Further discussion of the land use description and desired use ensued. Commissioner Johnston commented that these discussions come up during the negotiations between the buyer and sellers. He stated that he would like for the buyer and seller to come back with a less flawed plan that they could vote favorably for it. If the majority of the Board felt that way, it would carry more weight. The Chairman stated he could support that as a message. Commissioner Nelms confirmed that if they approve and move forward based on the plan they are working on now, to deny would put them a year out from applying again and the withdraw without prejudice as the other option. The Chairman added that another option could be, but not one they would likely consider, is that they recommend and approve the holding at R-40. Commissioner Nelms stated he was on board with Commissioner Gunnin's recommendation. The Chairman asked Commissioner Poole his thoughts on it. Commissioner Poole stated he agrees with Commissioner Nelms to table the decision for 30 days to review the plans.

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

- 1.1 Consider approval to apply for DUI/Drug Treatment Court from the State of Georgia for Accountability Court FY2015 in the amount of \$73,077.00. Grant requires 10% match which will be met with DATE Funds.
- 1.2 Consider approval for Cherokee County to serve as fiscal agent for Cherokee FOCUS for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.
- 1.3 Consider adoption of Agreement #4 to the Defined Benefit Plan to allow for a retiree to receive recognition for compensation earned but not received in 2013.

Commissioner Johnston clarified that accrued vacation paid at retirement is recognized as additional days or weeks worked. Mr. Cooper stated that it is and that it is earnings for a prior year that wasn't paid until the following year. He said it is a technicality but they would like for GebCorp to recognize it as part of the employee's salary for the prior year.

- 1.4 Consider authorizing the County Manager to sign and issue an Addendum to the current Ricoh Professional Services Agreement (approved in November 2013) for a multi-functional copier for Parks and Recreation. This is a follow-on order for \$1,439.52 over 48 months.
- 1.5 Consider Intergovernmental Agreement between City of Woodstock and Cherokee County for maintenance of Rope Mill Road.

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

- 2.1 Consider awarding Professional Services Agreement (PSA) to highest ranked proposer and lowest bidder, Hutcheson Horticulture Company, in the amount of \$28,260.00 for annual mowing of selected portions of roadway right-of-way.
- 2.2 Consider awarding Professional Services Agreement for facility landscape maintenance services to the highest evaluated proposer, TriScapes, Inc., in the amount of \$98,760.00.

- 2.3 Consider awarding Professional Services Agreement (PSA) to low bidder, Meer Electric, in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.00 per year for Outdoor Warning Siren Maintenance.
- 2.4 Consider approval of Amendment #2 to State FY 2014 Department of Human Services (DHS) annual contract for funding which supports the County's Rural Transportation Program (CATS 5311). Approve a Budget Amendment to the County's adopted FY14 Budget in the total INCREASED amount of \$75,000.00.
- 2.5 Consider to award contract to Sysco Food Service of Atlanta for the purchase and delivery of wholesale food items to be sold in CRPA concession stands including CCAC, Hobgood Park Softball Complex, Twin Creeks Softball Complex, and Riverside Athletic Complex.
- 2.6 Consider awarding contract to Latimer Construction in an amount of \$175,000.00 for the renovations to the CRPA South Annex; construction contract value of \$165,000.00 with a \$10,000.00 contingency controlled by the County.
- 2.7 Consider approval of a Development Agreement between Cherokee County and Riverstone Homes, Inc., for completion of public improvements at the Old Avery Parc subdivision.
- 2.8 Consider approval of 2014 Budget Amendment to increase SPLOST 2012-Economic Development Budget to fund the development of Cherokee 75 Corporate Park.
- 2.9 Approve the budget amendment to discontinue the transfer of funds from the General Fund to the Unincorporated County Services (UnCS) Fund. The Tax Commissioner will use these funds to hire a security firm and for other security and operating costs.

Commissioner Johnston said he agrees it makes more sense to hire a security firm rather than use the Marshal's Office as that is not their highest and best use. Mr. Cooper said he will be working with the cities regarding litter on I-575. Discussion ensued on who handles picking up the litter. Mr. Cooper stated they will be aggressively working on enforcement efforts. Commissioner Johnston stated he received a suggestion of a high-mounted camera at the dump to see if trucks are covering their loads as they should. Mr. Cooper stated that Waste Management is working closely with the

County in that effort, but over time it may slack off a bit, but they will work to improve those efforts.

- 2.10 Consider approval for the use of reserves (which were generated by the 1% Administration Fees related to TAVT) in the amount of \$18,926.00 and allocate to the Tax Commissioner for enhanced security and customer service.
- 2.11 Consider approval of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2013 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation report (CAPER) for submission to HUD.

Mr. Cooper provided a list of projects that have been completed with the 2013 funds. The list included the Senior Center, MUST Ministries, North Georgia Angel House, Mimms Boys & Girls Club, Cherokee Violence Center, Anna Crawford Children's House, and Bathesda Community Health Clinic. The Chairman asked who provides transportation for the Boys & Girls Club. Mr. Cooper replied that they do.

Ms. Davis went over the one item under the **County Attorney** portion:

- 3.1 City of Woodstock annexation notice, Main Street, East Side, North of GA Hwy 92 along Noonday Creek.

Ms. Davis stated the property is 2.78 acres. It is proposed to be rezoned to DT which is Downtown District for medium density residential, but the intended continued use is the Greenprints trail as part of the greenspace program for the City of Woodstock. Ms. Davis added that based on staff review, nothing was reported that would suggest a land dispute statute objection.

Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Commissioner Johnston made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 4:39 p.m. to discuss personnel, land acquisition or disposal, and/or threatened or pending litigation; Commissioner Nelms seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.