

DATE: 8/16/16 FILE NO: DATE209  
TO: Cherokee County Council  
SUBJECT: Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Monday, 8/15/16

There was a Regular Meeting of County Council Monday, 8/15/16, 5:10 PM in Council Chambers. Chairman Tim Spencer presided with Mike Fowlkes leading in prayer. All council members were present along with Holland Belue, Attorneys Jim Thompson & Joe Mathis and Clerk Doris Pearson. The news media was informed by agenda & in accordance with the SCFOIA and 1 was present. There were 15 visitors.

**Councilman Steven Blanton made the motion to adopt the amended agenda for the Regular Meeting of 8/15/16 as received and in compliance with the SC FOIA. Councilman Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.**

**Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing & Regular Meeting of 8/8/16 as received. Councilman Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.**

**Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion to adopt the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance No. 2016-21 to amend the agreement for Development for Joint County Industrial Park by & between Spartanburg & Cherokee Co. so as to include additional property in Spartanburg Co. as part of the Joint County Industrial Park and other matters relating thereto. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.**

**Councilman Steven Blanton made the motion to adopt the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance No. 2016-22 to amend the Ordinance No. 2016-04 which adopted the FYB 2016/17 for the County of Cherokee operating budget and provided for the levying of taxes & fees for county purposes. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.**

**Councilman Steven Blanton made the motion to adopt the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance No. 2016-23 authorizing the execution & delivery of one or more Incentive Agreements by & among Cherokee Co., SC and a company known to the county as Project Clean and one or more existing or to-be-formed or acquired subsidiaries, or affiliated or related entities, to provide for Special Source Revenue Credits (for the project); authorizing the expansion of the Joint County Industrial Business Park formed with Spartanburg County to include the Project; to provide for the addition of one or more project affiliates; and other matters related thereto. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor.**

**PWC Chair Tracy McDaniel made the motion coming from the committee to allow Admin. to purchase for the SWC Dept. 1,224 roll-out carts from Amick @ \$73.17/each for a total cost of \$8,956.08 and to pay it from the 2016/17 FYB. Hoke Parris seconded and council voted in favor.**

**HSC Chair Rufus Foster made the motion coming from the committee to allow Admin. to allocate \$5,000 to the Cherokee Co. Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse for them to purchase & repair light fixtures in the ADA Office Bldg. Charles Mathis seconded and council voted in favor.**

HSC Chair Foster also reported that ADA Board will be meeting with Dr. Moore to discuss the school programs for this school year with assistance for our teens. I appreciate the ADA Committee and staff for all their hard work and I ask council to remember them in your prayers.

Acting Admin. Holland Belue reported on the Local Tax Accommodations Committee. The 2016 allocations of funds after all deductions have been taken out is \$61,646.38 estimate. This does not include any reimbursements that will have to be made to replenish the funds for any projects that have not been completed according to the project time lines set for by state law. The board will meet on 8/23/16; they will have package presentations to them by 9/13/16 and will make their recommendation to County Council on 9/19/16. It is time to make the 2016/17 Local Tax Accommodations Committee appointees. **[Steven Blanton re-appointed Gary Blanton, Janet Tsiknias, Jim Cook, Cline Gore, Brooks Allison & Suzanne Turner to serve another term on the Local Tax Accommodations Committee and to newly appoint David 'Shag' Stepp to serve on this committee as well. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.]**

Acting Admin. Holland Belue requested permission to fill the position of the Real Estate Licensed Appraiser in the TAO. Ben Coleman is retiring effective 9/1/16. **[Charles Mathis made the motion to allow Admin. to fill this position in the TAO. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.]**

**Councilman Hoke Parris made the motion to pay the claims for Cherokee County as presented. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.**

Councilman Steven Blanton stated that there has been discussion among us involving personnel in the 911 and PW Depts. I asked Holland to give us a report & recommendation regarding this. DPW has projects that aren't getting done because of lack of employees; bridges aren't being built. 911 is having a lot of trouble with their staff leaving them; etc.

Acting Admin. Holland Belue reported he has tried to formulate some level of recommendation to help to address this. We need to talk about vacancies; where are our issues? **911 Dept.** – as of this morning they started working with 4 vacant positions; we have not been able to fill the 3 vacant positions beginning 7/1/16 and we also have a vacant fulltime position that was already budgeted. So that is 4 budget positions that are currently unfilled. I spoke with Reggie Petty this afternoon and he informed me that 2 more notices were turned in today so now we have 6 vacancies in that dept. We are getting to the point that we are having to run the Lieutenants., Director & overtime situations to work everyone and they are getting a tremendous amount of overtime. OT is eating up a substantial amount of the budget. We had OT issues last year and the year before due to absences, sicknesses & illnesses and we were able to sustain that with a larger staff but we are continuing to decrease in numbers even though we are trying to increase. **R&B Dept.** – we have 8 people; I have 5 vacancies as of

today. **SWC Dept.** – I have 3 vacancies that require CDL drivers; **Recycling Dept.** – 2 vacancies, one of which is a CDL driver. These positions have been advertised; we had a Job Fair with 1<sup>st</sup> Staffing a few weeks ago to try and attract CDL drivers; operators; dispatchers. Pay is our contributing factor; we are losing people to jobs for \$4 & \$5 on the hour. I don't have a recommendation for you that would encompass this fat gap; I can't cover that because we simply don't have the funds for us to do that. I went back through the pay and compensation that was approved about 6 months ago and tried to analyze where I thought were short falls. Jim Cook, Ken Moon & myself meet on a regular basis with Economic Development prospects in the county and talk about the difficulty they may have to try and attract employees at less than \$12/hr. There is no way to address every issue we have in pay & comp but at some point in time we need to make an effort to try and stop them from leaving. We are back down to 2 tractors cutting grass when the motion was made 2 yrs. ago to have 3 tractors cutting grass. The long arm runs in fall and we only have one that is running now, the other is broke down and the new one we ordered hasn't gotten here yet. This is where I see issues and it is signaling departments:

**911 Communications** – 1<sup>st</sup> component is to give the Deputy Director Position to Mr. Petty. This is eligible with pay under the 911 Tariff Fund at no cost to the county associated with his job. This should be created under pay scale #14. You have 3 Lieutenants who could actually pass as 911 Co-ordinators and I suggest there pay ban be raised from 13 to 14. You have (6)-911 Sergeants that are at pay ban 12, I recommend they be raised to 13. You have multi-positions in the 911 Tele-communications Dept. that are certified (currently 10) and I recommend they go to 11. Un-certified positions are currently 9 and I recommend they go to 10. **R&B Dept.** – Equip Operator III is currently a 10; I recommend to raise it to 12. Operator II's currently are 9, I recommend they go to 11 which is a CDL requirement. Equip. Operator I's are not CDL required but general are laborers, bobcat operators, someone who can operate machine once he gets on site but cannot drive to get there other than a pickup. They are currently 8 and I recommend they go to 9. **SWC Dept.** – SWC Drivers are currently 10; I recommend they go to 11. **C&D Landfill** – Equip. Operators III are 10, I recommend they go to 11; Equipment Operator II are 9, I recommend they go to 10; Scale House Operator is a 9; I recommend he goes to a 10. **Recycling Dept.** – Asst. Recycling Manager is currently an 11, I recommend he go to 12; Recycling Drivers (CDL) currently 10, I recommend they go to 11; Recycling Equip. Operators (2) are currently 9, I recommend they go to 10; Recycling Collector Drive/II is currently 8; I recommend he go to 9. Every position is budgeted; some are at fulltime position but in many cases are held by a temp before they get there. Your CDL & Skilled Operators positions are \$9.50/hr. through temporary services. You currently allocate roughly \$10.71/hr. to fill those positions. I recommend to pay \$12.26/hr. **Auditor Office** – those clerks are listed as 8 and they should be a 10. A 10 will put them in the same category as Magistrate Office, COC & Treasurer Office. They still are not as high as some of those positions but will at least get them adjusted up. This is not a result of pay raise in all those individuals but simply shifts the pay ban; some will benefit, some won't. I set this up the same way we did the compensation pay ban back in March. It is the base rate for that pay ban + 4%. If they are already in excess of the 4% pay ban, they don't get anything. **We can offset that revenue stream with 3 things:** outside of the tariff money that will pay for anything in 911 Communications, not 911 Dispatcher but 911 Communications Dept. You have 2 current vacant budget positions that are currently unfilled and have not been advertised: **1)** the Asst. County Admin. position

valued at \$91,841.50 and **2)** Public Works Director position. **3)** you have \$400,000 contingency line item in your operating budget. I do not recommend that you dissolve the Public Works Director position. I think at some point and time you need to seriously consider addressing this. To make these changes I recommended to you will result in pay changes for employees from nothing to just over \$1/hr. in some cases. We cannot compete with 911 Dispatchers with other counties that offer \$14.50/hr. when they walk in the door; etc. When we are spending \$5000 to \$8000 on training for them to be certified, then we lose them, we are not helping ourselves if we can't pay to maintain them. **Total estimated cost to make these changes is \$201,180.21;** \$52,905.64 of that recommendation will be funded by the Tariff Fund; if you utilize the \$91,841.50 for the Asst. County Administrator position will throw a balance forward that you will need to cover \$56,433.01. This is under the pay ban side. Under the temporary employee side I recommend to raise the \$9.50/hr. to attract CDL operators for a 6 month window to \$10.50/hr. for the temporary CDL drivers. Councilman Mike Fowlkes asked Holland what does this essentially do for a 911 uncertified dispatcher? Holland replied 911 dispatcher uncertified entry level now is \$10.13/hr. Mike asked what is the difference between uncertified (\$10.13/hr.) & certified (\$10.57)? Holland replied the \$10.57 are folks that are actually those who have been here and got the 4% raise before you did the pay & comp. Mike asked what does your recommendation do for that position making \$11.14/hr? Holland replied it will raise them to \$12.26/hr. Mike asked what does a Duty Officer at the Sheriff Office make? Holland replied their pay ban is an 11 but they are pushing \$13.50/hr. They were already over the pay ban when you implemented it. Mike said he was concerned with competing with ourselves. We have employees in one office transferring to another making \$2 to \$3/hr. doing similar duties. We are bound by law to provide 911 services & and keep up the roads for this county and if we don't have the people and can't even attract the people then we have a serious problem that we need to address. What level is a duty officer at the Sheriff Office? Holland replied they are 11 but they are paid higher than the pay ban which is closer to 13. Tim asked how did this happen? Holland replied when Sheriff Muller came to you for a salary adjustment about 5 years ago changed this. Magistrate Office is the same way which is historically higher than some other departments that do similar functions. That was just the way their office was established. Mike stated that the pay ban should not have even been part of the pay & comp. In regards to 911, there has to be some other step there; something that addresses their certification, like if they are certified and have been there 1 year, then they can be raised to the pay ban that a duty officer is at the Sheriff Office. It is a different duty but same job. You have to be certified to be a 911 Dispatcher and you have to be certified to be a Duty Officer; give them that step. Can we add a step if they have been here a year as a certified 911 operator they be moved up to the 13 pay ban like the Duty Officer? Holland replied we can but here is the trouble with that issue; your Sergeants are 13 and if you move the certified operators to 13; then you need to move your Sergeants above that. You can implement whatever standard you want to there but the key component to remember is anytime you move a tele-communicator up, then you need to be prepared to shift your Sergeants & Lieutenants accordingly. Mike replied I understand that but I don't want to keep paying the leadership more money to lead when everybody is leaving and they don't have anybody to lead. I want to address those base level people to try and keep them here. We need Indians and not so many Chiefs. You are telling me you are shifting leaders in those positions just to answer 911

Calls. Holland replied I agree with what you are saying and that is what this performance modification does with the pay & comp. Every person in 911 makes overtime pay; there are no salaried employees under the new federal labor law. Tim asked Holland “you mentioned you would like to keep the Public Works Administrator’s position in the budget but you didn’t tell us how much that would be”? Holland replied total package is \$71,553.11. Holland replied this would not call for amending the budget, you are just shifting funds. **[Mike Fowlkes made the motion to accept the recommendation presented by Acting Admin. Holland Belue regarding the salary adjustment for the Auditor Office, 911 Office, R&B Dept., SWC Dept., Recycling Dept. & Landfill Dept.; and for Administration to come back to council with a recommendation to include for the 911 Dept. that if an employee has been with the county 1 year as a Certified 911 Operator, they can be raised to #13 pay ban rate of pay; and to recommend how to address the Sergeants & Lieutenants pay ban. Steven Blanton seconded and council voted in favor.]**

**Councilman Steven Blanton made the motion to officially name J. Holland Belue as Administrator of Cherokee County. Tracy McDaniel seconded. Charles Mathis stated I’m not opposed to this but don’t you think we might need a contract with him to not only protect him but ourselves. Voting in favor: Steven Blanton, Mike Fowlkes, Tracy McDaniel, Rufus Foster. Not voting: Charles Mathis, Hoke Parris & Tim Spencer. Motion carried.**

As there was no other business to come before council at this time, Chairman Spencer adjourned the meeting at 6:02 PM.

APPROVED: 9/6/16

Respectfully submitted,

ITS: Chairman Tim Spencer

Doris F. Pearson, Clerk to Council