

DATE: 4/7/2020 FILE NO: DATE473
TO: Cherokee County Council
SUBJECT: Minutes of Regular Meeting, Monday, 4/6/2020

There was a Regular Meeting of County Council Monday, 4/6/2020, 5 PM in Council Chambers and live stream on You-Tube. Vice-Chair Quay Little presided with Lyman Dawkins leading in prayer. Present: Quay Little, Administrator Bratton, Attorney Joe Mathis, IT Director Dustin Phillips and Master Clerk Doris Pearson. Charles Mathis was present by speaker phone and Councilmembers Tracy McDaniel, Mike Fowlkes, David Smith & Lyman Dawkins were on Zoom. Absent: Tim Spencer, who is a patient in the hospital. In accordance with the SCFOIA, the news media was informed by agenda and the agenda was posted and available stream line at www.cherokeecountysc.gov.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to adopt the agenda of the Regular Meeting of Monday, 4/6/2020, as received and posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.

Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of 3/16/2020 and Emergency Call Meeting of 3/23/2020 as received. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to pay the claims for Cherokee County Council in the amount of \$753,176.11. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-03 – Fair Housing Month as presented. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(2) to discuss a contractual matter. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor by roll call and went into Executive Session at 5:08 PM.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion for council to come out of Executive Session and enter back into their Regular Meeting at 5:30 PM. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor by roll call. Attorney Joe Mathis stated that no action was taken during Executive Session.

Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion pursuant to the feasibility contract between the County and the Cherokee Co. School District to terminate the contract between Cherokee County and the School District that pertains to the Granard School property and further authorize Administrator Steve Bratton to notify the school district in writing that Cherokee County Council is exercising their rights to terminate the contract for Granard School property effective immediately. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.

Attorney Joe Mathis had no report.

Administrator Steve Bratton updated council on the budget process. This COVID-19 outbreak has taken a lot of time from county staff, especially me dealing with changes daily. We are getting along with the budget but moving a little slower than I hoped for. I have no projection as to when I will be presenting it to you. I hope we will have it passed by 6/30/2020; however, I want to keep all options on the table in case things go south with this virus that we could potentially operate on a continuing resolution.

Councilman Charles Mathis asked Administrator Bratton where do we stand with this year's budget? Administrator Bratton replied I hope to have financials very soon.

Councilman Mike Fowlkes asked Administrator Bratton if he intends on sitting down with Dept. Heads in reference to what you can & can't do on their wish list for the budget? Administrator Bratton replied what I recommended on their budget request was made the day I met with them. Some will come back expressing things that they really need that we may or may not be able to do based on our revenue situation. The economy is taking a beating which offsets our local option sales tax, which is a huge portion of the revenues coming into county government that we use to give credit on property taxes and also that we do utilize as part of our general fund budget. If there are major things that I have led them to believe they may get; then there may be some conversations between me & those department heads to let them know that we just want to be able to do so. We operate on a balanced budget and don't deficit spend and therefore we will not be able to give everything wanted. Mike replied just make sure you communicate to them properly. Councilman Charles Mathis stated that no way under the circumstances that we are in now will I vote for any tax increase. Administrator Bratton replied that is noted.

Administrator Steve Bratton updated council on COVID-19 effects on county operations. I've been trying to keep you informed on changes that I have been making here in our building and implementing at the Magistrate Office & Court House and in all our facilities. Today, we started alternating schedules rotating people in & out of the office throughout the week to try to reduce our employee's exposure. Even though they will be working from home, they are still on the clock and if we call, they need to be available. We have several employees working out of the building that will not be coming in such as our building inspectors; lot of construction going on. Our Tax Assessors are still out and about measuring property, etc. All county services are still being offered at this point. We are not taking owner surrender animals at our shelter right now. We are still doing stray pickup and still working with the Humane Society. We are still doing door-to-door trash pickup and we changed that somewhat that we are no longer picking up trash that is not in the can. If it is leaning beside it, we will not pick it up. David replied he has gotten calls regarding that. Steve replied if they need to purchase another rollout cart, we sell them for what we pay for them. This was something we needed to implement anyway because of other situations but we took this opportunity with COVID to do so. We also offered those employees mask to wear as well as their gloves. We will do this going forward even after COVID-19 simply because of the risk it imposes. This is something pretty standard in the refuge pickup industry. I spoke with Republic and they said this is their practice as well.

Administrator Steve Bratton announced that just today the Governor issued a stay at home or work order so we will be taking a look at that. We are trying our best to continue to offer county services and while we may have to limit some of those, we are trying to keep the doors open. This building is not closed; people just have to make an appointment to come in; drive thru window is open; same at courthouse; Magistrate Office; our landfill is still operational; SWC, R&B and DPW is still operating. We have had 2 more confirmed cases in Cherokee County today by DHEC bringing our total up to 4. I did a press release today encouraging our citizens to adhere to the CDC's recommendations and Governor's directives. There have been a lot of people out and about over the weekends and people need to realize this is a very serious situation and we need to practice social distancing, stay away from one another and stay home. As we make changes, I try to release it to the news media as soon as possible and I will keep you informed. We have not laid anyone off at this point. We will be putting an ad in the paper trying to get the information out there as to how to apply for high mileage, pay taxes and various other things.

Vice-Chairman Quay Little stated I just want to say again to those people who are at home and cleaning up around the house and doing spring cleaning that if that trash does not fit in your roll-out cart, it will not be picked up. Please don't put it at the road, if it is not in the can...it will not be picked up. Steve replied we have a flair that will go out tomorrow letting the public know this. Landfill is still open 7:00 to 4:30 daily with convenience dumpsters outside the gate. Steve replied but again I want to encourage people that if they don't have essential business to address then they need to stay at home.

Administrator Steve Bratton reported that 3 bids were received for the Bid Opening 2020-18 for (4) 30 yd. roll-off Recycling Containers funded by state grant: **1) Wastequip, Charlotte, NC - \$30,024; 2) Nu-Life Environmental, Easley, SC - \$26,784; 3) Bakers Waste Equipment, Lenoir, NC - \$31,842.72. [Lyman Dawkins made the motion to place these bids in the Public Works Committee for review. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor by roll call.]**

There were no appointments at this time.

As there was no other business to come before council at this time, Vice-Chairman Quay Little adjourned the meeting at 5:45 PM.

APPROVED: 4/20/2020

Respectfully submitted,

BY ITS VICE CHAIR: Quay Little

Doris F. Pearson, Master Clerk to Council