

DATE: 8/24/21 FILE NO: DATE519

TO: Cherokee County Council

SUBJECT: Minutes of Regular Meeting, 8/23/21

There was a Regular Meeting of County Council Monday, 8/23/21, 5:06 PM in Council Chambers. Chairman Spencer presided with David Smith leading in prayer. All council members were present along with Administrator Bratton, Asst. Admin. Bishop, Attorney Joe Mathis & Master Clerk to Council Doris Pearson. The news media was informed by agenda and it was posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. One news media was present along with 15 visitors.

Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion to adopt the agenda for the Regular Meeting of 8/23/21 as received and posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Quay Little made the motion to adopt the minutes of the PH & Regular Meeting of 8/9/21 as received. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion to approve the claims for Cherokee County in the amount of \$321,603.39. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion to adopt the Proclamation for ReGenesis Health Care Week proclaiming the week of August 8-14, 2021, as National Health Center Week. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor. HR Director Eric Rogers was present to accept the proclamation and thanked council for their support.

Cherokee County Recreation District Director Marcus Bradley, Asst. Director Johnny Humphries, Office Manager Erin McAbee and Director of Sports Tourism Development, One Spartanburg Inc. Kristyn Hawkins presented their plans for the scope of work for the Midway Complex and the proposal to provide a Feasibility Analysis for the Outdoor Sports Complex. (A copy of each proposal is attached.) The Rec. District is currently serving 1700 to 1800 participants; renovations needed is new fencing, larger backstops, bigger dugouts, new bullpens, ADA bleachers, additional ADA parking, sun shades, extending one field to 50 feet and extending another field 100 feet; also to move & relocate the two maintenance buildings to a less visible area allowing the Hyleman's Humble Playground to be seen and opening up an area for a splash pad; add a splash pad in Blacksburg as well; provide maintenance for the splash pads if they are built. We need more fields as our county is growing; our number one need is a gym and your decision to partner with BRE has opened the door for that. We need more adult & sports programs as well. Sports tourism is an open door for economic development. Kristyn Hawkins stated that she works in Spartanburg and is willing to work with Cherokee County in getting this project completed. Kristyn replied we hosted the USA Softball Junior Olympic Cup at Tyger River Park and injected more than \$7.5 million in economic impact. We have more new exciting championships and tournaments in stored for us and this could be spilled over into Cherokee County. You need to look into artificial turf for your fields and you definitely need indoor space. Chairman Spencer asked when Tyger River host tournaments, do

they run it or does the Recreation District? Kristyn replied the people putting on the events run it and the Dist. gets money from it as well as it boosts the tourism resulting in the hospitality tax dollars. David Smith asked is the Midway Complex in a good location? Kristyn replied it's perfect and will be even better once I-85 construction is completed. Quay Little asked why do we need to convert to turf fields; pro football went to turf but now they are converting back to grass? Kristyn replied you can accomplish more with turf; the fields are easier to maintain. She stated Limestone University is a huge asset for your county; your youth leagues right now generate more interest than the university. Administrator Bratton replied he reached out to AECOM to give him a proposal to provide a feasibility analysis for an outdoor sports complex for Cherokee County at a cost around \$50,000. Quay Little asked Kristyn in your opinion is this proposal our first more important need? Kristyn replied it will be your best move going forward. If you put down artificial turf, build longer and better fields, have a multi-facility, then you will be able to host more events that will bring in more revenue. Lyman Dawkins asked where would we get the funding for this? Admin. Bratton replied it can come directly out of the general fund; or another option is using the money that the Recreation District is paying us back for their loan which is around \$30,000/year which we could set aside as a recreational capital needs fund; about 3 years ago the recreation milage was rolled back during the reassessment and you could put the 1.4 mills back in place and designate it to the recreational capital fund that would generate around \$20,000/year. You could utilize that for this year along and have \$50,000 to fund the study and in the future for main. of the facility. Chair Spencer asked about a swimming pool? I heard Limestone University is closing the pool that Gaffney High uses for their swim team. I talked with Mayor Moss and he told me he would be willing to partner with us in building & financing a community pool; now we need to get the City Board in favor of it. Quay Little asked about Ford Road Complex? Johnny replied to upgrade the Ford Complex, you need a new sports tower. You would need to tear it down as it stands now and put up 3 new fields that would include batting cages, turf fields, new bathroom facilities, etc. Johnny replied we don't have enough fields to accommodate the sports we have going now and if we had more fields, we could host more tournaments. After more discussion, Councilman **[Lyman Dawkins made the motion to have the study and pay for it from the Recreational needs fund. David Smith seconded.]** Quay Little asked how much money does the Recreation Dept. have, can you pay for this study? Quay replied council is studying to put on a hospitality tax and we are doing all we can; therefore, I want to see how you are going to contribute to this. Do you believe you need this study and are you willing to pay for it yourself? Marcus replied, we are; but we will need help if we move forward with this project. \$200,000 is all we have to spare toward this project and that will put us in a bind. Administrator Bratton replied he has talked with Marcus & Johnny about how much they would be able to put some skin in this project and they replied \$200,000. Quay replied I don't want to do a study that we say they need. I want them to say they need the study and they will pay for it. Going off of that, we can justify making adjustments to help them in funding this project. Kristyn replied the Clemson University Study and stated it was not adequate and did not justify or identify what that facility would look like. You need to build something that is substantiable and in order for that, you will need this study. Mike Fowlkes asked why do we need another study? We have had the study from the Clemson University; then the public group that brought their study. Why would we spend more money to do another study when we know we need more ballfields and need to upgrade the ones we

have? Lyman replied this study would give us figures on our economic input, etc. Kristyn replied in order to build this facility you need to know what revenues will be coming in so that you can determine the cost in keeping the facility maintained & upgraded. Steve replied this study will tell you: 1) can it sustain itself; 2) what impact does it have on our community; 3) what needs are there for what we build and how can it be used across the upstate; 4) what pitch can we get into that nobody else has done. Quay I feel if the Recreation Dist. wants a study; then they pay for it. Once you get this study, come back to us and give us the plans to move forward. Steve asked Kristyn to look at the RFP's that the Recreation Dist. will send out for this project to make sure they are asking for all they need? She replied yes. Johnny asked do you want to include Midway renovations in this study? Council agreed no, you already have that study and know what you want. Administrator Bratton replied the study will be on additional fields, splash pads, auditorium, etc. **[Lyman Dawkins & David Smith withdrew their motion made earlier.]** David Smith asked Steve, what source of funds do we have available to take on this project? Steve replied you could amend your general fund budget to pay for this at a high figure of \$1.9 million. Marcus & Johnny stated they could put toward \$200,000 toward that project but now since they have to fund this study, that would leave \$150,000 toward the project. We have a little over \$1.4 million sitting in the local accommodations tax fund that has been sitting there. Chairman Spencer & I have discussed a beautification project coming off I-85 into the county but that might be 2 to 3 more years before they finish with the I-85 project. I've talked with another agency that might help us fund that project. Quay Little stated we need to go to the City and show them how much we are putting money toward this project and ask them to help fund it as well. Admin. Bratton stated that we will not need an architect to do this work, this is stuff our local contractors can do. Accommodation tax monies has to be spent on items that will increase tourism. We generate around \$100,000/year in that fund; and if you go through with this project and add more fields, then the accommodation monies will grow. Mike asked David if he was willing to err-mark some of that accommodation tax monies to fund this project? David replied yes, I am willing to go forward and get this done. Quay stated if we fix these 4 fields now, we will have a better chance of passing a referendum. **[Quay Little made the motion to fund up to \$1.4 million out of the Accommodation Tax fund to renovate the Midway Complex. Lyman Dawkins seconded.** Chair Spencer replied he talked with Mayor Moss this morning and he said they would partner on this project 50% but it's up to us to get 3 more votes from the City Commissioners to make this happen. Tracy McDaniel asked where is the splash pad money & the operation of the splash pad coming from? What is the cost of a splash pad? Steve replied somewhere between \$300,000 - \$400,000/each for a total cost of around \$800,000. Council has the Hospitality Tax Ordinance before them and that money has to be spent similar to the Accommodation Tax monies and the splash pads would be a good option to identify & apply for these monies. I spoke with our Attorney Flynn regarding this and he said if the county wanted to go ahead and fund this project; then we could reimburse ourselves from these monies once they start coming in. I feel it will generate around \$300,000 to \$450,000/year. Johnny asked does this renovation at the Midway Complex include the moving of the two buildings? Tim Spencer asked where are you going to move them to? Johnny replied we are looking at once you move R&B Depts. out to the BRE, to occupy that building & space. **Council voted in favor of the motion.]**

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion to adopt the 2nd Reading of Ordinance No. 2021-23 authorizing (1) the execution & delivery of a Fee in Lieu of Tax & Incentive Agreement by & between Cherokee County, SC (The “County”), and Broad River Electric Cooperative, Inc., acting for itself, one or more affiliates, and/or other project sponsors (collectively, The “Company”), pursuant to which the County shall covenant to accept certain negotiated Fees in Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes with respect to the establishment and/or expansion of certain facilities in the County (The “Project”); and (2) other matters relating thereto. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins made the motion to adopt the 1st Reading of Ordinance No. 2021-24 authorizing the execution & delivery of a Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement by & between Cherokee Co., SC and (Project Peach) with respect to certain economic development property in the county, whereby such property will be subject to certain payments in Lieu of Taxes, including the provision of Certain Special Source Credits; The creation of Joint County Industrial & Business Park (Project Peach) in conjunction with Spartanburg County; and other matters related thereto. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to adopt the 1st Reading of Ordinance No. 2021-25 establishing a Local Hospitality Fee on the Sales of Prepared Meals & Beverages sold in the Unincorporated Area of Cherokee County, SC; and other matters relating thereto. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Quay Little made the motion to hire a part-time School Crossing Guard for Town of Blacksburg. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor. Administrator Bratton stated that the School District will reimburse the county for this position.

Councilman Mike Fowlkes made the motion to allow for a new investigator in the Solicitor’s Office to be added to our payroll and the Solicitor Office will reimburse us for this position; to do a small renovation area at the Courthouse in the Solicitor area to house this person at a cost of \$5,850; and to purchase a new vehicle paid for by the Solicitor Office; and the county will add the vehicle to our insurance policy at our cost. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Administrator Bratton updated council on COVID. We have had a sharp increase of our county employees being out either with COVID or exposed to it. I’ve asked each Dept. to again practice social distancing. I have not required wearing mask or taking the vaccine at this time; but I do strongly encourage everyone to wear their mask.

Administrator Bratton reported he received two bids for Bid No. 2022-01 – Cherokee Co. Road Paving Project: 1) Cherokee Landscaping & Grading - \$570,299.50; and 2) Rodgers Group, Greer, SC - \$706,369.75. **[David Smith made the motion to allow Administrator Bratton & Asst. Admin. Bishop to**

review the bids and if everything is in order to award the bid to Cherokee Landscaping & Grading for their low bid price of \$570,299.50. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor.]

Councilman David Smith made the motion to re-appoint Brad Howington to serve another term on the Buffalo Fire District. Lyman Dawkins seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith appointed Jason Panther to serve a term on the Buffalo Fire District in place of Tommy Wilson who stepped down. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Lyman Dawkins re-appointed Jeremy Smith to serve another term on the Cherokee Co. Recreation District Board. Mike Fowlkes seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Mike Fowlkes re-appointed Reggie Petty to serve another term on the Cherokee Creek Fire District Board. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Mike Fowlkes re-appointed Marsha Ellis to serve another term on the Cherokee Co. Alcohol & Drug Abuse Board. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Mike Fowlkes appointed Delissa Coggins to serve a term on the Cherokee Creek Fire District Board in place of Richard Miles who stepped down. Tracy McDaniel seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Elliott Hughes re-appointed Brice Cook to serve another term on the Goucher/White Plains Fire District Board. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Elliott Hughes re-appointed Josh Roger to serve another term on the Goucher/White Plains Fire District Board. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Elliott Hughes re-appointed Byron Cheek to serve another term on the DMW Fire District Board. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith made the motion for council to go into Executive Session at 6:34 PM pursuant to: Section 30-4-70(a)(1) – discussion of a personnel matter resulting in the 911 Department. Quay Little seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Tracy McDaniel made the motion for council to come out of Executive Session at 7:10 PM and enter back into the Regular Meeting. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor. Attorney Joe Mathis reported that no action was taken during Executive Session.

As there was no other business to come before council at this time, Chairman Spencer adjourned the meeting at 7:11 PM.

APPROVED: 9/7/21

Respectfully submitted,

BY ITS CHAIR: Tim Spencer

Doris F. Pearson, Master Clerk to Council