

DATE: 6/23/26 FILE: DATE679
TO: Cherokee County Council
SUBJECT: Minutes of Budget Workshop Thursday, 6/18/26

There was a Budget Workshop of County Council Thursday, 6/18/26, 6 PM in Council Chambers. Chairman Spencer presided with David Smith leading in prayer. Councilmembers present: Donnie Hardin, Billy Blanton, Tim Spencer, David Smith, Peter Wilkins, and Teresa Bonner. Absent: Elliott Hughes. Administrator Bishop, Asst. Admin. Bradley, Finance Director Kristy Howell, Attorney Joe Mathis and HR Director Renee Crocker (filling in for Master Clerk Pearson) were present. The news media was informed by agenda and it was posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. No news media was present. There were 8+ visitors.

Councilman Donnie Hardin made the motion to adopt the agenda of the Budget Workshop of Thursday, 6/18/26 as received and posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Donnie Hardin made the motion to go into Executive Session at 6:05 PM pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(2) discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to come out of Executive Session at 6:57 PM. Peter Wilkin seconded and council voted in favor. Attorney Mathis stated no vote or action was taken during Executive Session.

Councilman Donnie Hardin made the motion to sell the Cherokee County Transfer Station located at 192 Lemuels Rd., Gaffney, SC to Allied Services, LLC, a Delaware Limited liability company and subsidiary of Republic Services, Inc. for the purchase price of \$8,550,000. David Smith seconded. Favor: Donnie Hardin, Billy Blanton, David Smith, Peter Wilkins, Tim Spencer & Teresa Bonner. Elliott Hughes was absent from the meeting. Motion carried.

Budget Workshop for the Cherokee County Proposed FYB 2026/27. Discussion went on for about 3 hours regarding the proposed budget. Councilman Blanton stated it looks like we have two options: 1) use the proceeds from the sale of the transfer station to offset the budget; or 2) get out of the free trash pickup business, get rid of the convenient centers and charge \$80/month to continue to pick up trash. Merv stated there are 15,150 homes in Cherokee County that are valued at under \$100,000. There are 10,149 homes valued over \$100,000. Of the 15,150 homes 3,000 of them have homestead exemption. If you put fees on, the fees do not apply to the homestead exemption but if you add a milage increase it does. Employees benefits were discussed. Peter Wilkins discussed the proposed employee raises. I feel there is stuff in this proposed budget so that we can get that figure down. Tim Spencer asked Merv if he came up with a figure with a \$1.00/person across the board raise? Kristy Howell reminded council that you added a \$4.2 million EMS department to our budget this year

and you have to now pay for it. We keep increasing our departments but we cannot pay for them; you can't keep adding things that you don't have a budget to pay for them. Merv Bishop stated that when the state cuts some of our revenue, it affects us tremendously. They cut boat taxes that will affect us, not as bad as other counties but it does affect us. If you turn your paperwork into the Dept. of Revenue saying you are exempt, that means we don't get tax money. We have apartments here in Cherokee County that are exempt from property taxes yet they use our services.

Administrator Bishop reminded council that he is not asking for a vote tonight. He needs the council to give him direction as to how to balance the budget that he has proposed. We've given you everything that you need, how do you want to do it? Do you want to charge a fee or not? Do you want deficient spending or not? Nothing is going to change but you need to be able to make a decision at your meeting on 6/29/26. Kristy Howell stated as a Finance Director, I do not agree with deficit budgeting. I don't know how we will end up, but I hope we will do good and have money left over. But according to state law, it is our duty to present to you a balanced budget. Just look at the proposed budget and see what all has been added service wise.

As there was no other business to come before council at this time, Chairman Spencer adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

APPROVED: 7/13/26

BY: CHEROKEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Respectfully submitted,

Doris F. Pearson, Master Clerk to Council