

DATE: 7/14/26 FILE NO: DATE680
TO: Cherokee County Council
SUBJECT: Minutes of Regular Meeting, 7/13/26

There was a Regular Meeting of County Council Monday, 7/13/26, 5PM in Council Chambers. Chairman Spencer presided with Merv Bishop leading in prayer. All council members were present along with Administrator Bishop, Asst. Admin. Bradley, Attorney Mathis and Master Clerk Doris Pearson. The news media was informed by agenda and it was posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. There was one news media present along with 26+ visitors.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to adopt the agenda for the Regular Meeting of Monday, 7/13/26 as received and posted in accordance with the SCFOIA. Peter Wilkins seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Donnie Hardin made the motion to approve the minutes of the Budget Workshop of 6/18/26 and PH & Regular Meeting of 6/29/26 as received. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to approve payment of the claims for Cherokee County in the amount of \$570,481.06. Billy Blanton seconded and council voted in favor.

Administrator Merv Bishop presented a proclamation to Jennifer Wu and Jayden Sterling of Able SC proclaiming July 26, 2026, the 36th ADA Anniversary with Disability Act.

Petitioner Craig Sobol, Grassy Pond resident regarding zoning & advances by Gaffney related to Cherokee County. I moved here in 2019 to escape the growth in the area we lived in at Myrtle Beach. I have become concerned about similar circumstances regarding the proposed annexation of 556 acres across the street from Sterling Lakes. The county needs to seriously consider passing regulations that restrict high density development and try to maintain our open space for farming, cattle and country living. I encourage you to take some action to preserve all of Cherokee County asap. (a copy of his report is attached).

Councilman Donnie Hardin made the motion to adopt 2nd Reading of Ordinance No. 2026-24 authorizing the Execution & Delivery of a Fee in Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement by & among Cherokee County, SC and a company known to the County and identified for the time being as "Project Foxtrot", including any related or affiliated entities and any sponsor affiliates, to provide for payment of a Fee in Lieu of Taxes and Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; and other matters related thereto. David Smith seconded. David Smith asked Ken Moon why do these developments always be presented to us as Project Names? People in our community think we are trying to slip something by them by calling these Project Names instead of the actual business. Ken replied because sometimes we don't want other counties to hear about them or they can come in and try and get them to choose their county. The company also wants to be private until they make the final decision to come

here. David also asks when we give them a FILOT break, does that mean they don't pay taxes? Ken replied no, they do pay taxes. **Council voted in favor.**

Administrator Merv Bishop reported that since Council decided to implement the Cherokee Co. Solid Waste Collection & Disposal Fee, we have progressed rapidly to move forward. We began the new fiscal year operating with 8 collection trucks to service 9 daily routes. Employees work diligently throughout the week to complete all the scheduled routes. Updated staffing expectations, daily operational policies have already been implemented to improve accountability, communications and long-term improvements have been development. A dedicated public works coordinator now serves as the primary contact for residents. This centralized program will improve responsibility, create better accountability and allow requests to be tracked. We also updated our county website, residential collection policies, solid waste collection & disposal fee with information, feasible accountability guidance, online service along with frequent asked questions. Equipment – the FYB 26/27 includes equipment improvement. Seven new automated solid waste collection trucks are on order and expected to arrive by the end of this calendar year. New residents will notify us to replace damaged carts, field & service request with deliveries to be anticipated within the next couple of scheduled weeks. Administration is actively pursuing a short-term rental agreement to carry us until our damaged trucks can be repaired. We are installing new communication equipment in our fleets to keep in touch. Technology – we are getting a new route system. We also are going to change the 9 routes in 4 days to 7 routes in 5 days. I've been meeting with Cody Sossamon of the Gaffney Ledger and the Palladium Group on how we can get the information out to the public regarding the new SW Collection & Disposal Fee. I also plan to talk on WZZQ & WFGN, put it on our Facebook and website. (A copy of his report is attached.)

Councilman David Smith asked when will you know our options for next year regarding convenient centers and how many? Merv replied right now we are trying to implement what we have. We are going to set up a budget and bank account for the SW Collection & Disposal Fee. David asked what will be the options if you come under \$1,000; \$5000 or \$50,00; what if you go over? What are the rules there? Kristy replied council can decide on the rules we have in place now. If we go under or over, we will approach council at that time with our recommendation regarding the matter. David asked when will you know that? Merv replied when the tax bills go out that will play a big factor. Kristy replied we are assessing everything now. We are doing a short-term lease in case our solid waste trucks go out. We have placed an order for 7 new solid waste trucks but they won't be delivered until Dec. Equipment has been our biggest hurdle.

Chairman Tim Spencer asked the question what if you want to opt out? If we build convenient centers, will people be able to opt out? Merv replied if you go the route of convenient centers, we will be getting out of the trash business. There is no opt out option. The solid waste collection fee will always be there because you also use the landfill for recycling, limb & brush, household trash, etc. Tim asked, "what about people on Homestead Exemption?" Are they going to pay the fee? Merv replied yes. David replied the fee is assessed per residence. What if that person decides not to pay? Merv replied

that the SC Code 12-45-430 states the Treasurer cannot collect a partial payment on their tax bill. It has to be paid in full if it is on the tax bill. There is no opting out. Chair Spencer asked if a house is on your residence and it caught on fire and is now vacant, do I still have to pay that fee? Kristy replied if the house is deemed uninhabitable by our building codes then the Assessor Office will have to code it. If the home is vacant on your lot, then it is eligible for the fee. Merv also reported that there will be cameras on the truck to record trash pickup because we often get calls where people say their trash can did not get picked up on their scheduled day. When that happens, we can look at the cameras software and see why it did not get picked up. Kristy stated we need to make people more accountable of what they put in their trashcans. All trash is supposed to be sealed in trash bags but you would not believe some of the stuff that is in a can which can be hazardous to our employees or even the trucks.

Councilman David Smith made the motion to go into Executive Session at 5:45 PM pursuant to Section 3-4-70(a)(5) discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of service encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by Cherokee County specifically Project Foxtrot. Peter Wilkins seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman David Smith made the motion for council to come out of Executive Session at 6:20 PM. Donnie Hardin seconded and council voted in favor. Attorney Mathis reported no vote or action was taken during Executive Session.

Councilman Elliott Hughes made the motion to appoint Billy Sanders to the Corinth Fire District Board. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

Councilman Peter Wilkins made the motion to reappoint Jim Cook to serve another term on the Cherokee County Development Board. David Smith seconded and council voted in favor.

As there was no other business to come before council at this time, Chairman Tim Spencer adjourned the meeting at 6:27 PM.

APPROVED: **07/20/26**

BY ITS VICE-CHAIR: **David Smith**

Respectfully submitted,

Doris F. Pearson, Master Clerk to Council