



CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSION

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CENTRE, ALABAMA 35960
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J. Kirk Day, Chairman
Tim Burgess, Administrator
Randy L. Jones, Dist. 1

REGULAR MEETING 2ND & 4TH MONDAY
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Kimball Parker, Dist 2
Marcie L. Foster, Dist. 3
Carlton "Bubba" Teague, Dist. 4



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNTY COMMISSION APPROVES BUDGET AND RELATED ITEMS DURING SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

Centre, AL, October 1, 2014 – The Cherokee County Commission met for a special called meeting yesterday, September 30, 2014, in order to approve the budget for the Fiscal Year October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015.

During last week's regular scheduled meeting, County Administrator Tim Burgess presented the Fiscal Year 2015 budget. Mr. Burgess stated that the latest budget includes a 3% reduction in total budget size. This decrease is the result of a combination of debt maturity and the restructuring of debt obligations. "We hope to build a reserve out of the restructured debt services," Burgess said. He continued, "the budget includes a 50 cent (\$0.50) cost of living adjustment for our employees and, at this time, we are able to maintain all of our services and departments while reducing the budget." The Fiscal Year 2015 budget totals \$14.7 million. The budget was approved unanimously by the Commission.

The Commissioners agreed that the lingering \$1.5 million funding shortfall of the Cherokee County Detention Center remains an area of great concern. During the planning session of the September 22, 2014 Commission meeting, Commission Chairman Kirk Day expressed his concerns to the Commissioners that the State will try to alleviate the prison overcrowding problem by having more convicts serve their sentence in a county jail rather than in a state facility. Day urged the Commissioners to take steps now to address the jail's funding shortfall in case the Legislature decides to pursue this option. Currently, Cherokee County is in no position to bear the burden of such costs. Additionally, this deficit prevents the Commission from being able to explore capital improvement projects for the County.

In an effort to make more revenue available to the jail from the General Fund, the Commission adopted a binding resolution which restructures the way the commission allocates royalties from the Three Corners Landfill as well as revenues received from the tobacco tax. The resolution, written with input from each of the four Commissioners, redirects monies from the tobacco tax directly to the General Fund and distributes landfill royalties to the eight county schools, volunteer fire departments which were without any other adequate funding source, and the highway department.

The Cherokee County Commission will continue to support other local organizations, but at a reduced level. Organizations will now be required to submit requests for funding to be considered by July 1st of each fiscal year. The County Commission will review the submitted requests and award funding during the month of September for each fiscal year as line items in the upcoming fiscal year's budget as funds are available.

"Although this binding resolution does not solve our deficit problem entirely, it is a step in the right

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direction,” Day said. He added, “I want to applaud our Commissioners for taking action in this matter. Each of them provided valuable input in crafting this resolution. I feel it shows a genuine commitment on the part of the Commission to address our biggest financial problem.” The County Commission will evaluate the effectiveness of this restructured funding each year and amend the resolution with improvements as needed.

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