



Council of the Cherokee Nation

Meeting Minutes Community Services Committee

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

9:00 AM

Legislative Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Buzzard called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

INVOCATION

Councilor Bill John Baker gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present 14 - Bill John Baker; S. Joe Crittenden; David Thornton Sr. ; Don Garvin; Cara Cowan Watts; Buel Anglen; Jack D. Baker; Tina Glory Jordan; Jodie Fishinghawk; Harley Buzzard; Curtis Snell; Chris Soap; Bradley Cobb and Julia Coates

Late Arrival 2 - Meredith Frailey and Janelle Fullbright

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Anglen made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13th regular session. Councilor Cowan Watts seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

1. Human Services Department - Norman Merriman

Ms. Linda Woodward reported in the absence of Norma. She offered to take any questions back to Norma. Councilor Fishinghawk requested information pertaining to background checks. Ms. Woodward gave a brief history regarding fingerprinting for background checks that are required for both foster and adoptive homes. She stated the payments for foster and adoptive homes come from federal dollars therefore they set the guidelines to follow. She stated until September of last year they did OSBI checks as well as other reference checks and fingerprinting. Fingerprinting wasn't a requirement for payment at that time it was a requirement from the State of Oklahoma to provide payment to foster care children who are in care. Last September the Adam Walsh law passed which required federal fingerprinting for every family to be approved for foster care and adoption. Once this law came into effect they began to scramble for agencies to contract the fingerprinting with. She stated the FBI wasn't prepared for the case load of fingerprint checks therefore a huge back log was created. The consulting firm they are using for the fingerprinting has a 4 to 12 week turn around. She stated it is just a lengthy process. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired if a family member is wanting to keep a child from going to foster care and doesn't want payment. Ms. Woodward stated they can place the child without the fingerprints but not without the home study, OSBI check, references and so forth. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired about the time line for this process. She stated if everything goes smoothly placement can take place in approximately 10

days but normally 3 weeks. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired if the policy for temporary placement requires fingerprinting. Ms. Woodward stated their internal policy stated they must be fingerprinted if they have not lived in Oklahoma for the last 10 years.

2. Community Services - Charlie Soap

Ms. Beverly Barr reported for Charley Soap. She offered to take questions back to Mr. Soap if she was unable to answer. Councilor Bill John Baker inquired as to the status of the policy for self-help housing. Ms. Barr stated the policies are still being reviewed at this time and as soon as they are approved copies will be provided. Councilor Snell inquired about ambulance service in Little Kansas. Ms. Barr stated she isn't aware of any discussion regarding this issue she would speak to Mr. Soap. Councilor Fishinghawk inquired about the deadlines for the Community Youth grant. Ms. Barr stated the deadline was July 1st. She stated there are approximately 70 incomplete applications at this time. She stated they will be contacting each of them to try to complete the applications. Councilor Fishinghawk inquired as to how long they have been working on the self-help housing policies. Ms. Barr stated Mr. Soap would be able to answer. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired as to why it is taking so long to get the policies approved. Ms. Barr stated Mr. Soap would have to address the question.

3. Housing Services - David Southerland

Mr. Southerland stated the report is in the packet. He announced HUD is in the middle of an assessment at this time. He stated one of the items pointed out by HUD is the relatives of employees or employees receiving assistance from NAHASDA should be publicly disclosed. He stated they have been doing this at the Housing Authority for years by reading aloud the names each month at the board meetings. He stated HUD has agreed to accept written documentation which will be attached to his monthly report given to this committee. Councilor Soap inquired as to how they know if someone has a relative working for the Nation. Mr. Southerland stated they are in the process of adding this question to the application. Councilor Fishinghawk inquired as to why the mortgage assistance number of 230 remains the same as last month. Mr. Southerland stated the 230 is through April 30th and it is the same. The Commerce Department took over the mortgage assistance program on the 1st of May. Truthfully it is on the report as a reminder to him to include it in his annual report due in September. Councilor Fishinghawk stated she received the opinion regarding Cobra for the employees. She voiced strong concerns for the 12 employees this affects. She inquired if there is anyway there could be a buy out or something. Mr. Southerland stated Cobra is an opportunity for an employee that separates employment to continue to participate in health coverage. The cost of Cobra has always been paid by the employee. He stated they can calculate the cost for 18 months but is unsure if the board would entertain the idea. He stated if this body wanted to make that recommendation to the board it can be placed on the agenda. Councilor Fishinghawk made a motion for the Housing Authority board to review some type of payment or insurance for the 12 former employees. Councilor Bill John Baker seconded the motion. Motion carried with Councilor Glory-Jordan abstaining. Councilor Cobb inquired if the 12 former employees are currently employed. Councilor Snell requested information regarding the assumable mortgage program. Mr. Southerland stated when someone is seeking mortgage assistance their situation is evaluated and if it is determined they are unable to obtain a mortgage on their own now. The family is referred to the assumable mortgage program where the Housing Authority finds the financing and an agreement is signed with the family that they must assume the mortgage in 3 years. He stated there are approximately 12 on the program at this time. Chair Buzzard requested the income

guidelines for the MAP program.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING TO THE OKLAHOMA OFFICE OF JUVENILE AFFAIRS, FOR EMERGENCY YOUTH SHELTER SERVICES, AND PREVENTION AND DIVERSION SERVICES

Sponsors: Councilor Buzzard

Attachments: [R-58-08](#)

Councilor Bill John Baker made a motion to approve. Councilor Thornton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. WATER NEEDS FOR RURAL WATER DISTRICTS (STATUS UPDATE)

Chair Buzzard requested an update on the rural water systems as well as a briefing on the engineers report provided for RWD#8. He further requested recommendations be given. Mr. Billy Hix announced there are 2 engineering reports for RWD#8 one from EDM Consultants in February of 2008 and a second from Kelly Engineering done in May of 2008. The reports provide two very different opinions. The EDM consulting report gives recommendations of installing some valves, replacement of some of the service lines and repairs on valves going into the tank. He stated they have acted on this engineers report and signed a MOA with Briggs to purchase the materials to carry out the recommendations of the report. Briggs was also provided the use of a backhoe to perform the installation. The second engineers report states the best plan of action is to replace the entire system with a cost estimate of \$2ml. Mr. Hix stated he has spoke to Mr. Dick DeGeorge and the following are his recommendations: 1) Briggs contact the Oklahoma Rural Water Association to send their circuit writer out to look at the system and provide a third opinion. 2) Briggs install master meters and valves to prioritize where the worst areas of the system are. 3) obtain a copy of the reports from the professional leak detectors referred to by Kelly Engineering stating they failed to locate the leaks. 4) obtain copy of Mr. Vance Mooney's findings referred to in EDM's report. Mr. Hix stated with this information they may be able to replace the worst areas and get the water loss at an acceptable level. Chair Buzzard requested Mr. Dick DeGeorge work with Billy Hix and the Water and Sanitation Department. He suggested Mr. DeGeorge assist in obtaining the reports mentioned. Councilor Garvin inquired if the Ft. Gibson project is still in the works. Mr. Hix stated the project would still be entertained however they haven't received any additional feedback from the community. Councilor Thornton inquired about the Bird Flats problems. Mr. Hix stated they are needing an easement from one landowner who lives out of state. Councilor Jack Baker inquired if they are reviewing the water needs across the Cherokee Nation. Mr. Hix stated they are happy to assist when contacted.

Chair Buzzard requested Mr. Hix obtain the reports needed from Mr. Dick DeGeorge and provide a status update at next months meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. David Southerland provided the income guidelines for the NAHASDA programs and stated they abide by the 80% of the National medium and below.

Chair Buzzard inquired about exceptions for income guidelines in regard to food distribution when an elder is taking care of grandchildren. Ms. Linda Woodward stated there is an income guideline however she is unsure of what the amounts or requirements are. She stated she would pass along the question to the program director.

Chair Buzzard announced a couple of months ago a housing sub committee was suggested. He inquired if there is still a need for this committee. Councilor Glory-Jordan made a motion to develop a sub committee to begin the process of working toward next years Indian Housing Plan. Councilor Fishinghawk seconded the motion. Motion carried. Committee members are as follows: Harley Buzzard, Tina Glory-Jordan, Jodie Fishinghawk, Curtis Snell, Chris Soap, Joe Crittenden, Janelle Fullbright and Bill John Baker. Councilor Glory-Jordan made a motion for the sub committee to meet at 11:15 following the Health Committee meeting. Councilor Fullbright seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chair Buzzard announced the next meeting is tentatively set for July 15th at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Coates made a motion to adjourn at 10:05 a.m. Councilor Snell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

STAFF PRESENT:

<i>Linda Woodward</i>	<i>Billy Hix</i>	<i>David Southerland</i>
<i>Brian Cooper</i>	<i>Lita Maupin</i>	<i>Shay Smith</i>
<i>Beverly Barr</i>		

VISITORS PRESENT:

<i>Dick DeGeorge</i>	<i>Jim Ketcher</i>	<i>Raymond Vann</i>
<i>Todd Hembree</i>		

APPROVAL / DISTRIBUTION

Minutes submitted by: Shelli Brittain, Legal & Legislative Coordinator

Motion to approve minutes made by: _____

Minutes attested and concurred by: _____

Date: _____