



# Council of the Cherokee Nation

## Meeting Minutes

### Community Services

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Friday, August 17, 2007

1:00 PM

Legislative Conference Room

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#### CALL TO ORDER

**Chair Buzzard called the meeting to order.**

#### INVOCATION

*Chair Buzzard requested introductions from the audience.*

**Councilman Garvin gave the invocation.**

#### ROLL CALL

**Present** 9 - Don Garvin; Cara Cowan Watts; Buel Anglen; Jack D. Baker; Janelle Fullbright; Harley Buzzard; Chris Soap; Bradley Cobb and Julia Coates

**Late Arrival** 8 - Bill John Baker; S. Joe Crittenden; David Thornton Sr. ; Meredith Frailey; Tina Glory Jordan; Jodie Fishinghawk; Curtis Snell and Chuck Hoskin, Jr.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Councilman Anglen made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 17th regular session. Council member Cowan Watts seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

#### REPORTS:

1. Human Services Department  
Norma Merriman

*Ms. Norma Merriman gave a brief overview of the Human Services program and introduced child care and development director Lori Hand, veteran's representative Rogan Noble, family assistance director Jerry Snell, and tribal child support enforcement director Jerry Sweet. She provided a handout of directors with contact information.*

*Councilor Thornton inquired about the \$75.00 clothing for kids. Ms. Merriman stated they ran out of vouchers but went ahead and took applications for everyone there and then went to administration requesting funds for those outstanding applications. They are now in the process of going back to the locations to distribute the gift cards to the approved applicants. Councilman Hoskin inquired if this was a 14 county wide event with multiple locations. Ms. Merriman stated it was area wide and in the north they were in Vinita, Bartlesville, and Nowata. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired about advertising. Ms. Merriman stated they began in June with advertising in area newspapers, the Cherokee Phoenix, and JOM. She stated every child who applied and was approved was assisted. She stated last year they gave \$100.00 to 1000 kids this year they reduced the amount to \$75.00 and were able to serve an additional 600 kids. There were numerous applicants who were over income, out of jurisdiction, and/or couldn't produce a blue card. Ms. Merriman stated they will be studying for a better way to do the program next year. They hope to do the program through the school system. Councilor Glory-Jordan stated she would like to be a*

part of the discussion for the process of the program next year. Ms. Merriman stated the guidelines were the child must be a tribal member, family must meet income guidelines of poverty plus 10%, live inside the 14 county jurisdiction, be in school K through 12, and not be home schooled. Councilor Cobb inquired what the poverty level is for Oklahoma. Mr. Jerry Snell stated the guideline changes yearly. An idea would be a household of 2 would be around \$11,000.00 to \$11,500.00 a year. Ms. Merriman stated 10% would be added to this guideline. Councilor Cobb inquired if the gift card had a restriction for clothes only. Ms. Merriman stated this is one of the first questions they asked Wal-Mart and were told no. She stated they were hard to work with and wished there was a different vendor to use. She stated they discussed requiring receipts and if they did they would have to double the staff to police the program. Councilor Hoskin stated it is disturbing Wal-Mart was difficult to work with and wondered if they would provide additional cards. Ms. Merriman stated they asked both years and were told no that they were unable to. Councilor Hoskin expressed concern for a different vendor next year.

## 2. Community Services

Charlie Soap

Ms. Darlene Foreman the acting group leader of Community Services provided an update on the issue regarding the Belfonte community building. She stated they contacted the community group about the air conditioning and proposed them installing if the Cherokee Nation purchased the air conditioner. She stated they have funds available to repair the air conditioner at the Marble City community building estimated at a cost of \$3000.00. They currently have 26 self help homes approved. There are 16 under construction at this time, 7 of these are 50% complete, with 1 total complete. She announced they are in the process of constructing a model home next to purchasing for applicants to view as well as a video. The Drycreek waterline is approximately 20% complete. The Ballou waterline is being link check testing and repairs.

Councilor Snell inquired about the Oaks waste water treatment. Ms. Foreman stated they are waiting on the final environmental to proceed. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired if the self help homes had a pay back. Ms. Foreman stated they do have a payback of approximately \$35,000.00 to \$40,000.00 over 30 years at 0% interest.

## 3. Housing Authority

David Southerland

Mr. David Southerland apologized for not attending the orientation yesterday. He stated he was in Oklahoma City attending a HUD meeting sponsored by Federal Home Loan Bank. The topics covered the mortgage improvement process on trust property in Indian country. He announced the higher education program which provides dorm assistance for those financially eligible has changed to not require living in a dorm. The assistance is comparable to the average dorm rate for the state. The child must live within the 14 county jurisdiction but the assistance can be for any school. Mr. Southerland announced they have area offices in Tahlequah, Claremore, Jay and Sallisaw.

## 4. Emergency Housing/Rehab

Sharon Lay

Ms. Sharon Lay provided a handout of the housing rehab applications per county and a copy of the application. She announced they are in need of TERO vendors in the Northern areas. They are currently working on rehabbing the old OPC building just past the Tahlequah casino for administrative offices.

Chair Buzzard inquired if the applicants had to come to Tahlequah to complete applications. Ms. Lay stated they have housing counselors in Claremore, Jay, and Sallisaw at the Housing Authority offices. Councilor Cobb inquired about the difference in

level 1 and 2 incomes. Ms. Lay stated a level 1 is just in need of a ramp or grab bars and level 2 is someone who needs everything. Councilor Cobb asked if there is a time limit on reapplying for rehab. Ms. Lay stated if they have been served in the last 10 years by the housing authority or a program through the Cherokee Nation they cannot receive services. Councilor Hoskin inquired about possible public outreach for TERO vendors in the Northern areas. Ms. Lay stated they have in the past but can and will do additional public outreach in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHEROKEE NATION CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STATEWIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD PILOT PROJECT

Ms. Lori Hand provided background on the resolution request.

Councilor Bill John Baker made a motion for approval. Councilor Cowan Watts seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Council member Cowan Watts to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Bill John Baker seconded the motion. Motion carried at 1:50p.m.

STAFF PRESENT:

<i>Darlene Foreman</i>	<i>Sharon Lay</i>	<i>David Pruitt</i>
<i>Lori Hand</i>	<i>Norman Merriman</i>	<i>Jerry Snell</i>
<i>Ginger Brown</i>	<i>Doug Evans</i>	

VISITORS PRESENT:

<i>David Southerland</i>	<i>Jim Ketcher</i>
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APPROVAL / DISTRIBUTION

Minutes submitted by: Shelli Brittain, Recording Secretary

Motion to approve minutes made by: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes attested and concurred by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_