



# Council of the Cherokee Nation

## Meeting Minutes

### Community Services

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Tuesday, December 18, 2007

9:00 AM SEQUOYAH HIGH SCHOOL MULTI PURPOSE CENTER

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**RESCHEDULED FROM 12-11-08**

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Buzzard called the meeting to order.

#### INVOCATION

Councilman Soap gave the invocation.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present** 12 - Bill John Baker; Don Garvin; Cara Cowan Watts; Buel Anglen; Jack D. Baker; Jodie Fishinghawk; Janelle Fullbright; Harley Buzzard; Curtis Snell; Chris Soap; Bradley Cobb and Julia Coates

**Late Arrival** 4 - S. Joe Crittenden; David Thornton Sr. ; Meredith Frailey and Tina Glory Jordan

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Cowan Watts made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 14th regular session. Councilor Garvin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### REPORTS:

1. Human Services Department  
Norma Merriman

*Ms. Norma Merriman provided handouts of their written report. Councilor Bill John Baker inquired the Angel Tree kids. Ms. Merriman stated they have revised about \$40 per child. They had sponsors for the others. She stated they are meeting with CNE and the staff to determine how to do better next year. Councilor Bill John Baker stated to wait closer to the end. He stated they are putting \$100.00 per angel. He hates to do \$40 per kid. He stated since the lack of time, he request to give \$12,000 to Councilor Frailey out of the council budget to take care of the angels. Councilor Bill John Baker stated there is a 10-20% variance. Councilor Soap inquired about the open positions in the department and would appreciate an update. Ms. Merriman stated they continue to have difficulty with the panels due to not a lot of people on the panels. Councilor Bill John Baker inquired about the people unable to wait on LIHEAP that they have helped in the past. Ms. Merriman stated they have bought 20 -30 woodstoves. They have finally found a Non-TERO vendor. The average payment for is propane/electric is \$322.00, Natural gas \$236.00, Wood \$180.00, and Pellets \$225.00. They have extended LIHEAP applications to the 31st of this month. The crisis applications start the 1st of the month.*

*Councilor Bill John Baker stated we could buy pellets and propane in the summer when it is cheaper. He suggested hiring wood cutters during the spring and summer. He inquired about the total LIHEAP funding. He suggested funding in the summertime and*

replenish with LIHEAP to stay ahead. Ms. Merriman stated the strategy is good but the funding is a problem. The crisis budget is \$505,000.00. Councilor Thornton inquired what percent does propane have to be before they can get help. Ms. Merriman stated 5%. At 20%, they need to come in to talk to the staff so they are able to help when they reach 5%. Councilor Cobb echoed Councilor Bill John Baker. He stated it seemed logistically to see it feasible. Councilor Jordan suggested meeting in the Executive and Finance Meeting this Thursday at 11:00 a.m. to further discuss the issue in LIHEAP.

**This matter was Approved and Referred to the Executive and Finance Committee, due back on 12/20/2007**

2. Community Services

Charlie Soap

Mr. Charlie Soap handed out his written reports. Councilor Fishinghawk requested a follow up at Sally Bull Hollow. Mr. Soap stated there is some legal issues that he wouldn't able to discuss. Councilor Buzzard inquired about the project in Sequoyah County for the waterline. Mr. Soap stated they are in the process of getting easements.

3. Housing Authority

David Southerland

Mr. David Southerland handed out his written reports. He reported on the wildfires in California. There is a board meeting tonight. They continue to work on the transition. He hopes to have a transition plan in place by January 15 for the Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation Board Meeting. Councilor Soap had a letter from a constituent that lives at Cherokee Heights. He will distribute to the other Tribal Council Members, Housing Authority, and Norma. He just wants to ensure her voice is heard. Mr. Southerland stated Cherokee Heights is somewhat unique. With the problems there they are considering converting to an elder facility. He would love to sit down with Councilor Soap and discuss. Councilor Thornton thanked David for meeting at the Council House and dealing with the person at the office.

Councilor Jordan wanted David to check and bring back next month for the bankrupt/foreclosure on the MAP Program. Mr. Southerland stated the numbers were up first, but down now.

4. Emergency Housing/Rehab

Sharon Lay

Ms. Sharon Lay handed out her written reports. She stated they are in the process of changing the policy determining who is eligible to qualify. The people they help serve are the elder, disabled, and handicapped. The Sub-Committee Emergency Housing helps with roof leaks and floor repair. They need to legislate the income guidelines. Councilor Bill John Baker suggested to finance a separate fund for the poor people. He asks help from the council to come to a solution for these situations. Ms. Lay stated they are adjusting the policy the council approved in 2004. Councilor Bill John Baker stated motion under no circumstances we do not cut out people for not being elder, handicapped, or disabled; just base on income guidelines. Councilor Thornton echoed Councilor Bill John Baker. Sequoyah, Adair, Cherokee, and Delaware have more low income people. He questioned if they have one crew working. Ms. Lay stated they work areas. They have been taking care of emergency and contract. She stated they have several crews working different counties.

Councilor Frailey requested clarification regarding the policy. Ms. Lay stated it is in the IHP and was passed by Tribal Council Members. She couldn't recall the date. Councilor Frailey stated the date was not important, just need substance. She tried to understand the funding was coming from NAHASDA. She wanted Ms. Lay to explain the reason and the lack of funding. Ms. Lay stated it was the way the policy was written.

*Councilor Frailey questioned does the policy state to eliminate low income. Ms. Lay stated it referred to other programs. Councilor Soap questioned the definition of an elderly. Ms. Lay stated it was 62 years and older. Councilor Crittenden stated the priority should include these people, but there are a lot of other people that need help. The people meet income but not elder, disable or handicapped and need help. Councilor Buzzard questioned what Councilor Bill John Baker motioned. Councilor Bill John Baker stated to use income guidelines and not just for the elder, disabled, and handicap. Councilor Cowan Watts stated what she recalled that these programs should be priority for low income, elderly, and disabled. Then later, help the others so they are not eliminated. Ms. Lay stated the policy changing for both. Ms. Lay stated she will re look and discuss with her supervisor. Councilor Cowan Watts stated to bring forward for next month. Councilor Bill John Baker asked for the policy to be changed. Councilor Cobb questioned how they determine disabled or handicapped. Ms. Lay stated they have a doctor statement or receive disability check. Councilor Cobb stated he don't disagree, just confused on the income guidelines. Ms. Lay stated on the Emergency Program is 50% of National Medium Income and Rehab is 8% of National Medium Income. She is going to send out the guidelines again.*

**Councilor Cowan Watts stated we need to be serving all groups. She is comfortable making a decision next month. She would like to table this motion to next month. Councilor Bill John Baker did a friendly amendment to discuss this Thursday at recess amended. Motion to table carried with Councilor Thornton, Frailey, Jordan with Councilor Snell opposing.**

*Councilor Watts questioned how much money in the Gen Fund. Doug Evans stated there is several million to come forward when the audit is completed. Councilor Frailey stated there are 2 sets of guidelines. Can we set up our own guidelines and policies? Councilor Bill John Baker stated it was already been done. He stated Sharon already knows the guidelines that were used last year. Councilor Buzzard stated when the budget was passed, council approved \$200,000. The \$500,000 in NAHASDA, which requires an environmental.*

**Councilor Bill John Baker request to motion to take out of Executive and Finance to take \$1ml for Emergency Program from the General Fund. Councilor Crittenden seconded the motion. Motion carries, Councilor Soap opposed.**

## OLD BUSINESS

*None.*

## NEW BUSINESS

1. A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENT NUMBER FIVE TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 INDIAN HOUSING PLAN TO THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

**Sponsors:** Councilor Buzzard

*Ms. Denise Honowa stated these amendments go hand in hand and have nothing to do with the housing transitions taking place. These amendments are a reallocation of funds within the plans. She stated the primary reason to revise the 2006 plan is to reallocate the money not used previously and to recognize some additional investment income. The money was originally put in a new activity titled land purchasing in the amount of \$1.4ml. They are increasing the mortgage assistance program \$2.4ml. The mortgage assistance program will decrease by \$2.4ml in the 2007 plan.*

**Councilor Cowan Watts moved for the approval. Councilor Anglen seconded the motion.**

Councilor Glory-Jordan questioned the plan only calling for 17 new homes on the 2006 IHP. Ms. Honowa stated this is correct and the 2007 plan calls for 23 new home building packages. Councilor Glory-Jordan questioned the purchase of 300 home sites before knowing if it is what the people want. She requested more information regarding the home sites. Ms. Honowa stated she doesn't believe those have been purchased. She stated Todd Enlow would be the person to contact for more information on the 300 home sites. Mr. Charlie Soap stated they are working jointly with Natural Resources, and Todd Enlow to determine the best sites. Councilor Glory-Jordan reminded everyone of the land bought in the past and people don't want to live there. Mr. Soap stated there is a lot of research being done before purchases are made. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired how long we have to use the 2006 funds. Ms. Honowa stated May of 2008 is the 90% obligated deadline. Mr. Southerland stated an obligation means you have a contract or something in place that would lead HUD to believe the funds would be used for a particular purpose. Councilor Glory-Jordan stated there are a lot of weaknesses in the IHP's she suggested a sub committee to review the IHP and determine the future. She stated it is in our hands through this IHP to control what happens the housing for our Cherokee people for a number of years to come. The purchase of 300 home sites will pretty much determine what will be done for the future in housing. Councilor Glory-Jordan made a motion to form a sub committee to look the IHP's more closely. Chair Buzzard suggested tabling the issue instead of forming a sub committee considering these are amendments to already approved IHP's.

Councilor Glory-Jordan made a motion to table. Councilor Thornton seconded the motion. Councilor Cowan Watts inquired if there is a time line? Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired if she could have additional information regarding the 300 sites by this Thursday. She stated with 17 building home packages in the 2006 plan and 23 in the 2007 plan it will take many many years to use 300 home sites. She requested a more defined plan for the 300 sites. A vote to table until this Thursday was taken by a show of hands. The motion to table passed by a vote of seven (7) to six (6).

2. A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENT #2 TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2007 INDIAN HOUSING PLAN TO THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Sponsors: Councilor Buzzard

Ms. Honowa stated the 2007 goes hand in hand with the 2006. They need to include the Delaware information that was excluded as well as reducing the mortgage assistance in the amount of \$2.4ml. Councilor Glory-Jordan stated since the 2006 and 2007 plan amendments go hand in hand she suggested considering this 2007 plan on Thursday as well. Chair Buzzard stated both resolutions will be tabled till 10:30 a.m. this Thursday.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

## ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilor Glory-Jordan to recess this meeting to 10:30 a.m. the Thursday the 20th of December. Councilor Bill John Baker seconded the motion. Motion carried at 10:55 a.m.

## STAFF PRESENT:

Charlie Soap  
David Pruitt

Norma Merriman  
Denise Honowa

Sharon Lay  
Ginger Brown

VISITORS PRESENT:

*David Southerland*

*Brian Cooper*

APPROVAL / DISTRIBUTION

**Minutes submitted by: Shelli Brittain, Recording Secretary**

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

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

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