



Council of the Cherokee Nation

Meeting Minutes Community Services Committee

Tuesday, August 12, 2008

9:00 AM

Legislative Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Buzzard called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

INVOCATION

Councilor Soap gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present 10 - David Thornton Sr. ; Don Garvin; Meredith Frailey; Cara Cowan Watts; Buel Anglen; Jack D. Baker; Tina Glory Jordan; Jodie Fishinghawk; Harley Buzzard and Chris Soap

Absent 2 - Bill John Baker and Curtis Snell

Late Arrival 4 - S. Joe Crittenden; Janelle Fullbright; Bradley Cobb and Julia Coates

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Jack Baker made a motion to approve the July 15th regular session and the July 15th sub committee minutes. Councilor Cowan Watts seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

1. Human Services Department - Norman Merriman

Ms. Norma Merriman announced the Healing to Wellness Program is now under the Human Services Department effective the 1st of August. Councilor Glory-Jordan requested a brief explanation of how the program works. Ms. Merriman stated it is primarily for youth who have become a part of the court system due to drugs and alcohol. This program is an option of sentencing. The program provides counseling, random drug testing, and meetings every two weeks with the participants. The program will be re-aligned to be more like a Human Service program. The grant for this program ceased therefore it is now completely tribally funded. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired about the funding level. Ms. Merriman stated it is just over \$200,000. The grant that was in place was just over \$300,000. Ms. Merriman announced they are filling an advocate position in Tahlequah and Stilwell. They have just completed the panel for the Bartlesville. Councilor Buzzard requested an update on the school voucher program. Ms. Merriman stated the vouchers are valid until September 15th therefore they will not be able to reconcile until October. She estimated 3611 vouchers were given which is approximately 900 more than last year. She was very pleased with Stage and didn't experience the problems as they did last year. Councilor Glory-Jordan requested a wider variety of stores next year. Ms. Merriman suggested this question be posed to Callie Catcher who would have to cut the checks to the vendors for payment. Ms. Merriman stated teaming with

Registration this year made a big difference. Chair Buzzard inquired if the income guidelines could be posted so that people wouldn't wait in line for hours to find they are over income. Ms. Merriman stated when the guidelines are posted the people will try to fudge their income to meet the guidelines which makes it difficult on the staff and allows fraudulent people to receive the benefits of the program. Councilor Fishinghawk inquired as to what was acceptable for proof of income. Ms. Merriman stated a recent check stub is the best source. If self employed a tax return is needed. She stated the staff is trained to look for things that aren't quite right. Councilor Thornton inquired who is eligible for the elder program trips. Ms. Merriman stated there are two trips scheduled for Branson in September. Councilor Thornton requested notification of when the trips are scheduled, who is eligible to go, and a contact number to sign up for the trip. Ms. Merriman stated elders who attend the nutrition sites and at the senior housing are the ones eligible. These are the only eligible participants due to money and staffing issues. She stated there is a minimum participant requirement for the trip and if there are enough signed up it is then opened up for other elders. The trips are advertised at the nutrition sites and senior housing only. Councilor Thornton requested all information plus any fees be provided in writing.

2. Community Services - Charlie Soap

Mr. Charlie Soap offered to answer questions about his report. Chair Buzzard stated last month a request was made for a break down of funds spent on the Briggs waterline over the last three years. Mr. Soap stated he would get the information. Mr. Soap reported that Dick DeGeorge is working with Steve Woodall to contract with a professional leak locator to access the system in an attempt to locate the major leaks. They continue to assist by providing equipment to allow replacement of sections of the system. These line replacements have been successful in reducing the water loss although it is still far from the acceptable rate of 15% or less. Mr. DeGeorge provided them with a document that detailed the Indian population based on the census and school enrollment. This information was sent to IHS to determine if it is sufficient to verify the number of Indian meter to be able to enter the project with IHS. IHS responded the information is not sufficient and requested a survey be completed of each household to verify eligibility and need. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired about District 3 not having enough funds to complete the water line project in the Lowery area. Mr. Soap stated he would look into the situation. Mr. Soap provided copies of the revised Self-Help Program policies. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired about the 25 year lease requirement. Mr. Soap stated the lease requirement is a requirement of Indian Health Services. Councilor Glory-Jordan suggested speaking to IHS to see if there is some flexibility with the requirement. Councilor Fishinghawk inquired about the status of the Cherokee Children's Mission on Highway 100. Mr. Soap stated they are in the process of trying to assist them however they will more than likely wait until the Roads Department has completed the road through the area before repairing the water line. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired when the homes will begin since the self-help policy is now complete. Mr. Soap stated the equipment went out today.

3. Housing Services - David Southerland

Mr. David Southerland gave appreciation to Councilor Fishinghawk for her work in the Smith addition in Adair County. During the board meeting the Board members directed them to contact the terminated employees to inquire if they have gotten insurance and if so the board want to compare cost with the COBRA option. The board is considering paying the difference between the amounts. So far they have received two responses. One is on their spouse's insurance and the other has a new job with no insurance. Councilor Glory-Jordan inquired if there is a way to pave the

the roads within the housing additions. She stated the county commissioners will not grade due to not being up to standard when put in. She requested a listing of housing additions showing which ones have paved roads and which ones do not.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. WATER NEEDS FOR RURAL WATER DISTRICTS (STATUS UPDATE)

Chair Buzzard announced this item was addressed in the Community Service report.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Buzzard read into the record the following statement. "I would like to announce to the committee that my grandson has applied for housing assistance. I have not helped or assisted his applicaiton and have not spoke to anyone on his behalf. I make this announcement for informational purposes only."

- 1. A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR TRANSITIONAL LIVING SERVICES FOR YOUTH TO THE U.S. FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU, RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAM

Sponsors: Councilor Buzzard

Ms. Linda Vann announced this resolution is regarding the transitional living program. It is to renew a five year grant program to continue providing transitional living services to older homeless young adults. This includes the young adults who have aged out of the State system and the ICW system. The program is to assist them with the necessary skills and resources to live independently. The grant is for \$150,000 yearly with a 10% inkind match.

Councilor Cobb made a motion for approval. Councilor Garvin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Anglen made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Cowan Watts seconded the motion. Motion carried at 9:55 a.m.

STAFF PRESENT:

<i>Norma Merriman</i>	<i>David Southerland</i>	<i>Jerry Snell</i>
<i>Shay Smith</i>	<i>Linda Vann</i>	<i>Charlie Soap</i>
<i>Doug Evans</i>		

VISITORS PRESENT:

Jim Ketcher

APPROVAL / DISTRIBUTION

Minutes submitted by: Shelli Brittain, Legal & Legislative Coordinator

Motion to approve minutes made by: _____

Minutes attested and concurred by: _____

Date: _____