

Cherokee Council House
Cherokee, North Carolina

(Date)

RESOLUTION NO. ____ (2018)

WHEREAS, our Tribal elders are a precious and vital piece of our Cherokee Community, and without their wisdom and perseverance our Tribe would not be in existence today; and

WHEREAS, our elders have endured many difficult and trying situations throughout the years, yet they have managed to protect and encourage our community to grow and strive for the best, all the while retaining our remarkable culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, there is not a more deserving group of Tribal members that warrant assistance from our Tribal government whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, many elders struggle to pay their monthly electricity bills and are faced with the difficult choice of paying certain bills, while leaving other bills to fall behind; and

~~WHEREAS, it has also become known that many of our elders have difficulty with their water and sewer bills and therefore those elders who are serviced by the Cherokee Water and Sewer Department should receive this service without charge; and~~

WHEREAS, our Tribe has grown and established many services and programs to help enrolled members, and any program that will benefit and assist our Tribal elders should be given consideration and implementation whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 1,150 enrolled senior citizens in the five-county service area of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians that are eligible for services provided by the Tribe; and

WHEREAS, a program entitled "Power to the People, Putting our Elders in the Comfort Zone" should be established which will allow the Tribe to pay for elders' power/electrical bill on a monthly basis for those elders living in our five-county service area; and

WHEREAS, for the purposes of this program, an elder shall be an enrolled member who has reached the age of 59-and-a-half, and the five-county service area shall be Swain County, Jackson County, Graham County, Cherokee County, and Haywood County; and

WHEREAS, Duke Energy is equipped to set up the processes on their end to specifically credit the exact accounts as directed by the Tribe and on our end the process and plan is as simple as putting in the proper procedures to collect the account numbers of our elders and verify those accounts as accurate and then send these accounts to Duke for a monthly credit up to \$125 per verified account, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Health and Human Services should be in charge of this program and set procedures to coordinate and verify all accounts with the Energy companies to confirm the proper accounts are active, added and removed as elders are added and removed; and

WHEREAS, this will be a voluntary program and all elders should be eligible to participate; And it is projected the eligibility and participation rate would be 50-60% of the total eligible elder population with a electric account in the five county area which provides a number of approximately 630 per month ($630 \times \$125 = \$78,750 \times 12\text{months} = \945K per year) so the cost to initiate the project is projected to be less than \$1 million dollars annually, which shall be appropriated from the General Fund and created with a new line item in the budget.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Council assembled, at which a quorum is present, a program entitled "Power to the People - Putting our Elders in the Comfort Zone" is hereby established by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the guidelines and details of this program shall be developed and implemented by the Department of Health and Human Services and presented to Tribal Council within 90 days from ratification of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the amount of \$1 million dollars shall be appropriated from the General Fund and a line item shall be established entitled "Power to the People" to assist our Tribal elders with up to \$125 monthly toward their monthly electricity payments; this assistance shall be sent directly to the energy company as a credit toward the electricity bill of the elder.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Public Health and Human Services is hereby authorized to coordinate and distribute these monies for this program and shall be tasked with the duty to keep the list of accounts with the energy company up dated regularly with all additions and deletions from the active list.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all elders who are customers of Cherokee Water and Sewer shall receive the service of free water and sewer service without charge and the

Utilities Commission is directed to adopt this policy for free water and sewer service to our elders within their guidelines.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED this resolution shall become effective upon ratification by the Principal Chief, or in his absence the signature and ratification by the Vice-Chief.

Submitted by: **Patrick H. Lambert, Lisa Taylor - Painttown Council Member and Walt French along with the following 324 Co-Sponsors:**

- Louise Reed
- Anona "Sugie" Lambert
- Onita Bush
- Alfred Welch
- Maybelle Welch
- Agnes Adams
- Yvonne Teesateskie
- DeWalt Hyde
- Laura Saunooke
- Carolyn B. West
- Jacqueline Lane
- Joe Palmer
- Frieda Brown
- Roberta Rice
- Edith Crowe
- Virginia Johnson
- Sarah Rochester
- Alyne Tooni
- Bessie Welch
- Matilda Calhoun
- Reva Wachacha
- Tony Johnson
- Juanita Curtis
- Marie Q. Smith
- Judy Smith
- Janice Jones
- Emma Sneed
- Frank Taylor
- Valorie Welch
- Bobby Owle
- Amanda Swimmer
- Virgil Swimmer
- Patsy Lambert
- Robert Taylor