

Cherokee Scout

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Feb. 20, 2013

577 Regal St.
Murphy, NC 28906

To Sheriff Keith Lovin:

Under the N.C. Public Records Law, G.S. 132-1, I am once again requesting a list of all Cherokee County residents who have applied for and/or have received a concealed carry permit.

I have spoken with N.C. Press Association legal attorney Amanda Martin, and she has assured me that these records are public. The statute you cited – G.S. 14-403 – only gives the sheriff's office the authority to issue permits. I remind you that it is *your* responsibility to cite specific state exemptions as to why these are not public records. GS 14-403 does not indicate those records are confidential.

If, as you claim, these records are confidential, why was it necessary to get the Cherokee County Commission to pass a resolution asking the N.C. Legislature to remove concealed carry permits from the public record? The Legislature was discussing removing these from public records before the county took up the issue. Until the Legislature makes its decision and the governor signs off on it, these records are still open.

If there are any fees for searching or copying these records, please inform me. However, as a member of the news media, I also would like to request a waiver of all fees in that the disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest. This information is not being sought for commercial purposes.

We respectfully urge you to follow the state's open records law and release this information, as neither of us wish to cost the taxpayers of Cherokee County money in a lawsuit.

Thank you for reconsidering my request.

Sincerely,

Robert Home
Editor
Cherokee Scout