



NORTH CAROLINA
GRANVILLE COUNTY
CITY OF OXFORD

Oxford City Hall – Commissioners Board Room
MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2010 – 5:30 P.M.
**OXFORD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AGENDA SESSION
and PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners for the City of Oxford met at the above-mentioned time and place to set the agenda for the regular meeting to be held January 12, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, 300 Williamsboro Street. All members of the Board and local news media were notified of the same as well as the purpose of the meeting.

Present were: Mayor Al Woodlief, Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Howard Herring, Sr., Commissioners Robert B. Williford, Sr., Walter Cantley, Jackie Sergent, Danny Currin, Ron Bullock, and Calvin Harris, Jr. Present also were City Manager Mark Donham, City Clerk Donna B. Hosch, and City Attorney Thomas Burnette.

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

ANNEXATION OF MEADOW HEIGHTS LOTS #1-6

Mayor Woodlief declared the meeting open. No one from the audience wished to speak. There were no questions or discussion from the Board. The Mayor declared the meeting closed.

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

ANNEXATION OF SHADOW LANE LOTS #1-13

Mayor Woodlief declared the meeting open.

Dorwin Howard of 106 Shadow Lane addressed the Board. Mr. Howard wished to know how services from the City would affect lots 1-13 and what other City services they could expect. Cheryl Hart, Planning Director, explained that the City will provide the amenities such as fire and police service, recreational opportunities, inside rates on water and sewer, and excellent service from City departments such as Planning. She explained that the benefit of annexation to the City is that adding people draws in businesses such as supermarkets, restaurants, etc.; 10,000 is the magic number for businesses to contemplate coming to the City. Since annexation

is the only tool available to raise the population count, the City will attempt annexation whenever an area meets the criteria.

There were no questions or discussion from the Board. The Mayor declared the meeting closed.

AGENDA SET

The Board set the agenda for the January 12, 2010 regular session.

Mayor Woodlief led the discussion on sweepstakes establishments, asking the Finance Committee to look into these. Hendersonville charges \$500 per machine in privilege license fees for sweepstakes establishments, and the Mayor suggested the same for Oxford. These machines, teetering on a fine line of illegal, are taking away from the State Educational Lottery. Some establishments take in \$1,200 to \$3,000 per day. The State is currently involved in a class action suit to ban the establishments.

The Mayor stated that Oxford currently charges a flat fee of \$50 for the privilege license. Regulating the number of machines would need to be done by someone actually counting them.

City Attorney Burnette stated that the establishments are legal to operate but that many cities are trying to have them closed down. Gaming operators have won most of the legal battles, and warned that the City might face a law suit if it tried to enforce any legal action against the establishments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Commissioner Cantley, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session according to G.S. 143-318.11 to discuss a contract.

On a motion by MPT Herring, the Board voted unanimously return to Open Session.

CREATION OF OFFICE

Mayor Woodlief asked the Board to consider closing in the current reception office space in the executive office for use by Ms. Hosch, the City Clerk. He stated it could be done by glassing in the openings and building a wall with a door. The Mayor asked that the Finance and Property Committees review this request.

INDUSTRY ANNEXATION

Mayor Woodlief stated he'd received an email from Mark Averette at Bandag regarding industry annexation and that this would be discussed during the next Board Retreat following the Retreat scheduled on January 14, 2010. The Mayor stated four of the County Commissioners were supportive of annexation after being further informed about why the City is considering this. The County Commissioners have requested to be in attendance at the second Retreat, and, of course, they are welcome. Marshall Tanner will head the annexation discussion on behalf of the industries.

The Mayor stated he felt industries would not leave the City because of their being annexed. These industries and the City have made major investments to each other's advantage. The City's tax base will increase by \$1.4 million due to the annexation of several industries that are located next to the City and are using City services. The annexations could reduce the need for the City to raise taxes. In previous years, industries were receptive to annexation if the City gave them a year to prepare. The City Manager has proposed incentives that will recognize the industries' investments. This will be explained at the Retreat.

The Mayor emphasized that this is the year for this to happen. If it does not, he felt the issue would not go away and the citizens would have to bear the brunt by the raising of their taxes. The Mayor encouraged the Board to hear all the information that will be presented on annexation before making a decision.

As an example, Ideal Fastener could save money if they were annexed. Outside the City limits, they are paying more for fire, police, water, and sewer, than they would be if they were located in the City and paying property taxes. Going up on water and sewer to the industries does not solve the problem; it doesn't help the General Fund. While water and sewer could be priced high enough to make the industries want to come into the City, it would be better for them to be annexed.

CM Donham stated that it's a policy decision that communities make whether or not to annex industries. In Roxboro, for example, 19 of the 26 industries are in the City limits and the larger tax base has resulted in 26% more revenues being provide for public safety. There seems to be a concern that by annexing industries they will not locate in Oxford. This has never been tested to see if it would hold true. Many municipalities have many industries in their city limits. CM Donham stated that annexation would benefit the City in that Planning, for example, would be able to fund an additional person. Ms. Hart is the only person in her department. A merit

program, which would motivate employees, could be put in place. CM Donham pointed out that all of the industries in Butner were annexed and he has heard no negative feedback.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Commissioner Williford made a motion to adjourn. All votes were in the affirmative. The motion carried.