

**NORTH CAROLINA
GRANVILLE COUNTY
CITY OF OXFORD**

**OXFORD CITY HALL, BOARD MEETING ROOM,
MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2006 AT 5:45 PM**

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners of the City of Oxford met for a Special Session in conjunction with the Agenda Session at City Hall, 300 Williamsboro Street at the above-mentioned time and place.

Present: Mayor Alvin Woodlief, Jr.
Commissioner S. Quon Bridges
Commissioner Paul Kiesow
Commissioner Howard G. Herring, Sr.
Commissioner Chance Wilkinson
Commissioner Stephen C. Powell
Commissioner Robert Shope
Commissioner Robert B. Williford, Sr.

Present also were City Manager Thomas S. Marrow and City Clerk Tanya S. Weary.

All members of the board and local news media were notified of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.

Mayor Woodlief called the meeting to order.

AGENDA SET – APRIL 11, 2006

The Board of Commissioners set the agenda for the April 11, 2006 meeting.

VIPER RADIO SYSTEM

City Manager Marrow noted Fire Chief Lanny Dillehay explained the County is going to apply for federal funds for the VIPER radio system. He added the intent is to increase the number of VIPER radios for the Fire Department (8 hand held and 5 mobiles). He explained the City must match \$5,000.00 for a \$60,000.00 grant. City Manager Marrow noted if the grant were received a budget amendment would be needed.

A consensus of the Board of Commissioners was taken and it was agreed unanimously to approve the request to apply for federal funds to be used for VIPER radios as presented by City Manager Marrow.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING – PROPOSED ANNEXATION OF
ROLLINGWOOD SUBDIVISION**

Mayor Woodlief declared the public information meeting open. The purpose of this meeting was to provide information on the proposed annexation of Rollingwood Subdivision.

Allen Johnson of 106 Spruce Drive and President of Rollingwood Subdivision Homeowners Association noted there are a number of concerns from the residents of Rollingwood. He asked about the cost of \$10,000 to repair the lift station or replacement if needed? He asked if this would be a special assessment placed on the homeowners? Mayor Woodlief commented this would be the City's responsibility. City Manager Marrow noted the City would take the lift station over on September 1, the effective date of annexation. Mayor Woodlief explained if something happened before September 1, Mr. Bergen would have to fix it. Mr. Johnson questioned about the number of lights currently in Rollingwood? Mayor Woodlief noted Progress Energy is still looking into this matter and to keep the current lighting (which is half of what the City requires) the residents would be notified of the cost to keep it. Mayor Woodlief noted the City's ordinance currently states lighting every 500 feet and at each intersection. Mr. Johnson asked about the increase in property tax? Mayor Woodlief noted it would be \$0.55/per \$100 valuation. City Manager Marrow explained currently the residents are only paying county taxes. Mayor Woodlief noted once annexed the residents would pay city and county taxes and receive fire and police protection. Commissioner Kiesow noted there would be a reduction in the water rate; from the outside rate to the inside rate.

No one else from the audience wished to speak. Mayor Woodlief declared the public information meeting closed.

Commissioner Wilkinson commented the City should not take existing lights down and asked to work something out. He noted he had spoken with City Manager Marrow about modifying something with the ETJ or subdivision regulations. He stressed the City should pick up the cost if Progress Energy cannot work out anything.

Mayor Woodlief recognized City Manager Marrow and Planning Director Cheryl Hart are available for any additional questions the residents of Rollingwood may have.

STOVALL INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT APPROVAL Tabled
TO REGULAR SESSION MEETING ON APRIL 11, 2006

Commissioner Kiesow, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, noted the Committee met with Stovall and reached agreement between the City and Stovall. He reported Stovall's Attorney Tom Currin agreed to have an agreement on Friday, but it was received today. He added the agreement covers the items, but there needs to be a few changes. Commissioner Kiesow noted it is missing water quality. He noted the City had promised to supply water quality at State standards, but added as it goes through the pipeline 9-10 miles the water quality could deteriorate. He added it should be added that this would be Stovall's responsibility. He noted clarification is needed regarding the ownership of the meter. He noted Oxford owns it and not Stovall. He asked who fixes the water line if the breaks? He added if hydrants are put in and then the fire department hooked up to the hydrants and sucked the water out, the line could pop out of the ground. He asked who would fix this? He noted this is not covered in the agreement. He commented it should not be any hydrants without pressure. He asked for clarification of who maintains meter reading equipment. Commissioner Kiesow recognized that the County has agreed to only \$150,000 and the City has agreed to \$160,000; he added he had some concern

about this. He reported the idea was for the County to match it. He informed the \$3.00 should be paid monthly and list the number of residents; he added this is not included in the agreement. He read the following from the proposed agreement *to pay a connection fee to connect to the Town's water system with the water system of the City which shall be equal to and cover all costs incurred for said necessary improvements to extend the City system at the metering station site;* he asked who is paying for what and noted it needed clarification. Commissioner Kiesow recognized the City sets the rate and this should be done at the same time the rates are set for the City of Oxford. He noted this is not very clear. Commissioner Kiesow reported the agreement does not mention who maintains the line. He noted he understood the City would maintain up to the meter; Stovall would maintain the meter and from this point to Stovall. He added these issues would try to be resolved for the Board meeting next week. He reported Stovall was going to vote on this tonight.

Mayor Woodlief noted it would be in the best interest for Stovall to vote on it first. Commissioner Kiesow explained Stovall wants a water increase from 50,000 to 75,000 and added this is not a problem.

Commissioner Bridges commented he is happy the City is close to an agreement with Stovall. He asked about the issue of the water quality and noted it should be something in the agreement that Stovall has to address the water quality if it is not good. He asked what would this mean to Stovall? Commissioner Kiesow explained if the water fails going from Oxford to Stovall; Stovall would be responsible. He added Stovall would need to do extra flushing to acquire good water quality.

Commissioner Shope noted he had spoken with Doug Logan and commented Mr. Logan is still researching the hydrant and he feels that the public water supply should not allow this. He

commented this is not a solved problem. Commissioner Kiesow commented it is not very clear. He added when they left the meeting it was clear the three parties have to agree and it is not mentioned in the agreement.

Commissioner Wilkinson commented the agreement needs to include that Stovall will not install hydrants unless it is safe for the line. Commissioner Kiesow recognized the agreement states Stovall would not put items in unless they have the pumps for it.

BASKETBALL COURT LOCATION DISCUSSED

Mayor Woodlief announced that anyone wishing to speak on the location of the basketball court should sign in.

Commissioner Bridges, Chairman of the Recreation Committee, noted the Committee is trying to provide basketball for youth in the community. He added the Committee wants to put the basketball court in an area that would be cost effective and in an open area. The committee took into consideration of residential areas, parking and recognized concerns about law enforcement presence (not at all times). He noted he made the motion for the location of the basketball court beside the Fire Department because the City owns the land, which is a cost savings and it is an open location. He stressed safety of children was taken into consideration and the location was a good idea due to the close proximity of the Police and Sheriff's departments. Commissioner Bridges noted the Committee took into consideration if the location would be successful and concerns brought forth concerning illegal activity. He noted you have to be careful about stereotyping. Commissioner Bridges stated the City has to respond to all youth of the City. He explained the Board of Commissioners and Recreation Committee are interested in hearing from people about the decisions they make and recognized their comments

are taken seriously. He noted once everyone has spoken, he plans to motion to approve a budget amendment to construct a basketball court.

Mayor Woodlief noted the first public meeting was conducted by the Recreation Committee to direct questions concerning the location of the basketball court on Granville Street. He added that since location has been selected it is only fair that those who have questions should have the opportunity to come forward and address the Board of Commissioners. He added each person wishing to speak would be given 3 minutes.

Patrick Noel of 5128 Lucy Averette Road noted he owns property at 103 New College Street which adjoins the proposed site for the basketball court. He added this area is part of the downtown economic development district, which has been developed for business growth in Oxford. He noted a development like this would send a message to future business owners and investors for downtown growth. Mr. Noel stressed his concerns about noise and thought it would make it undesirable for potential businesses. He recognized the area already has limited parking and he understands there are no plans for parking. He indicated other concerns are crime, traffic issues, lack of restrooms and future property values. He asked if the City has a site plot plan and referred to 501.6 in the City codes requires along with 501.1 (accessory parking); 502.7.8 (required parking spaces) and 740.1 (parking overflow required for public parking). He reported there are 2 public courts and a private court used by the City close to this site. He asked if a fourth court is needed on this side of town? He stated each commissioner he had spoken with asked him to name a better location. Mr. Noel suggested Hix Field because it has a nice flat area and is already managed by Parks & Recreation. He explained that this location is centrally located. Mr. Noel commented you could almost not hear a bomb go off inside the Police and Sheriff's Departments. He reported the police are patrolling the neighborhoods and not the

backyards. He asked for the location of the basketball court be reconsidered and look at the Hix Field site.

Dorothy Armento of 203 College Street noted she and her son had put a lot of money into this property. She commented she is distressed about a basketball court adjoined to an ABC Store. She asked why would you bring young people close to an ABC Store? She added she is not a big purchaser of spirits, but uses on occasion for baking. She stressed she would not go to the ABC Store again because she will not allow herself to be put in a situation. Ms. Armento noted a lot of people come up to the stoplight on West McClanahan and College Streets and sit through cycle after cycle of a red light. She noted the trunk of a car is a boom box and she hears this pulsating noise. She believes it would be unbelievable to put a basketball court beside the Fire Department. Ms. Armento reported she already picks up debris. She is concerned that the basketball court does not have designated parking and restrooms. She reported the City has a good facility at Hix.

Ben Hughes of 1228 Satterwhite Road noted he owns two businesses (Ben's Barber Shop and the tax service) across the street that would be affected by the proposed basketball court. He noted he depends on the street parking, as well as the 4 ladies that work with him. He commented the property owners were not considered when the proposed location was decided. He added he had never seen a project have a blank check. Mr. Hughes stressed the Hix Complex is more suitable for the basketball court. He noted he could not understand why a basketball court would be placed on a \$150,000 lot in the business district of Oxford. Mr. Hughes added Hix has parking and a flat area. He commented the lot beside the Fire Department could be sold. He stated he pays for parking spaces for downtown. He stressed the business district has been

violated and added this is a slam to the fire department. Mr. Hughes reported he is fighting for his well-being and the people who work with him.

Paul Shelton of 109 Royal Road who owns a business at 109 New College Street asked why the Board was not looking at the area beside the Fire Department as a parking area? He stressed parking is a problem in downtown Oxford when court is in session. He commented he did not know if it would make sense economically, but thought it would.

Alice Currin of 325 Kingsbury Street noted after weeks of debating and a public hearing the Board determined basketball would not be appropriate at Granville Street Park. She added the residents in the area made it loud and clear to the Board several years ago when the City at the request of the residents took down the goals. She recalled reading in the paper the Board did not make an informed decision about costs and with no public input the Board determined by a 4-3 vote the proposed lot would be appropriate. She recognized public outcry, including firemen and taxpaying citizens think it is not an appropriate place to put a basketball goal. Ms. Currin added the Board would have a hard time making the argument to put basketball beside the Fire Department, one block of two churches, a lot the City paid \$100,000 in November 1998, which is 155 feet on McClanahan Street with a depth of 272. She stressed there would not be a place for parking and no mention of bathrooms. She hoped the City would not put porta johns on the lot. She commented the Board owes the citizens of Oxford an explanation as to why the decision was made to put a basketball court next to the Fire Department. She noted the decision was a political one; hasty promises to the black community. She added to score on this single issue the Board has ignored much of what is wrong. She commented the Board would not be given an award of achievement and the citizens of Oxford do not deserve the circumstances of the present

affairs of City government. Ms. Currin added further divide between the black and white communities is not needed.

Michael Muhammad of 619 Raleigh Street noted basketball and crime are not synonymous. He added the problem is mismanagement of the park creates the problems. He added they do not want the basketball goals placed by the police and fire departments. He commented it is implied that the Mayor and others must watch them. He is concerned when white children were destroying property in downtown Oxford, Chief Wolford stated that it was not a law enforcement issue, but a safety issue and a recreation problem. Mr. Muhammad noted that there is concern now since there are black children playing basketball on the side streets. He added that the decision to move the basketball goals from Granville Street Park because the community wanted it, was a political decision, based on votes. He commented they wanted management and supervision. He recognized that there were allegations made by Recreation Director Mary Caudle supported by City Manager Marrow of drugs, gambling, and alcohol consumption taking place at the basketball games at the gym. He stressed these are not facts. He noted that when this happened, goals were not taken down at Hix, but security was beefed up. He added that they want to support this issue and arrange supervision. He echoed they did not want it at the Fire Department. He noted it belongs in their community. He suggested the idea similar to Chestnut Street in Henderson as a concept for a City park.

Mort Bergen of 120 Pine Cone Drive reported he owns property across the street from the proposed location. He noted in his judgment along with employees at his store that the basketball court would have a negative impact on the business. He noted he was concerned about putting a basketball court adjacent to the ABC store and added it was unacceptable. He noted children would be waiting in the ABC store parking lot. Mr. Bergen recognized that

basketball is a major sport and does not require police surveillance if properly managed. He commented it is important to give youngsters proper supervision, coaching and teaching. Mr. Bergen noted that this is an opportunity to development basketball to the level of other sports in the community.

No one else wished to speak.

Commissioner Williford commented he had attended the public meeting held by the Recreation Committee concerning basketball at Granville Street Park. He added the Board believed it picked a central location, but was shocked about the cost, up from \$12,000 to \$50,000.

Commissioner Wilkinson recognized the City needs basketball courts, but did not feel that the proposed location is the right one. He added the Fire Department might need to expand in the future. He told the lot beside Public Works, lot across from the Police Department or somewhere near City Hall would be more suitable. Commissioner Wilkinson commented the City could have basketball without crime. He recognized that there was several people playing basketball at Mary Potter one day and it did not seem to be any crime or problems. He noted he was against the budget amendment because he felt the location was wrong.

Commissioner Kiesow noted he supported the idea to have basketball, but it is important to do it right. He noted it should be referred to the Recreation Committee and should consider the following items:

- Mission statement - purpose of the project
- Meet with property owners in the area to receive their input. He realized there is probably no location in the City that will make everyone happy.

- How to answer people that spoke tonight if the proposed location is the best place to put a basketball court.
- Two major problems in the past: Hix Gym and Granville Street Park – should have a plan to overcome objections
- Location and cost needed. Cost presented tonight.
- How does basketball courts fit into the overall recreation plan?
- Can we finance this? Should the City finance or not? Commissioner Kiesow noted the City does not have the money for this and the City would have to take the money out of reserve.
- How will the facility be managed?
- Hours of operation
- Age bracket of users
- How will the basketballs be provided? He noted he was told today each person would bring his or her own basketball. If City provides, how are the basketballs collected?
- Know size and layout of court.
- Input of plan by the users and the Recreation Department – this was done with the skateboard park.

Commissioner Kiesow noted that these points are not nickel and diming or micromanaging; it is relative to doing it right.

Commissioner Herring noted it was great to have a democracy; citizens have spoken to the Board of Commissioners by phone, email and have caused some of the Board of Commissioners to look at a decision that has already been made. He added the City of Oxford does not have a city owned basketball court. He echoed that no one wants anything next to his or

her home or business. Commissioner Herring commented that he is 100% in favor of basketball on City owned property. He noted he would not vote or support buying property to put a basketball court on it. He added a basketball court is needed now; a place where youth can play. Commissioner Herring advised the real item on the agenda is to approve a budget amendment to construct a basketball court and recognized the price has gone up. He added the location does not need to be decided at this meeting. Commissioner Herring noted a budget amendment needed to be approved in order to construct a basketball court consistent with the time frame set at the last Board meeting.

Commissioner Powell noted he had spoken with a concerned citizen and found the statement profound, which was the perception of basketball. He added it is not the perception of basketball; it is the perception of black children playing basketball that people are concerned about. He added no one wants black children playing basketball in their locale. Commissioner Powell noted the issue is not black children playing basketball as far as it being successful or unsuccessful; it is the supervision of any children in any activity. He stressed that the concerns about damage that will occur to businesses if the basketball court is located beside the fire department is a minute item; supervision is critical. Commissioner Powell added that since it is City recreation, why not put the basketball court at Hix Field. He noted this space is perfect. He noted the City needs to look at upgrading how it addresses the needs of all our children, especially the African American population. He added if it is not addressed, it would affect all of us. Commissioner Powell mentioned the cost of the court at the proposed location bothers him.

Commissioner Shope stressed the Board's minds were not made up about the proposed location. He stated they went to several suggested spots with an open mind. He addressed the

parking issue. He noted he took a drawing from College Street to New College Street and sketched every building and counted every parking space on McClanahan, College, City lot (32 spaces). He told there are 26 spaces on McClanahan, 9 on New College, 32 in City parking lot and 123 spots in the Lowes Foods parking lot, which is private, and 14 spaces at the ABC Store. He recognized some are private, but 211 spaces total. He commented parking is not a problem. Commissioner Shope stated he did not feel the ABC Store has anything to do with the basketball court. He stated the firemen leave the building open on emergency call. He stressed this was not intended to discredit the children, because someone off the street could walk in the department. He supported the Hix field proposal.

Commissioner Bridges noted he did not like being held captive by the negative influences of the community. He stressed the majority of our youth are good people who want something to do. He stated that most places when a public meeting is held are asking where are the police? He noted there should be some law enforcement visibility because it acts as a deterrent. Commissioner Bridges noted he wanted the proposed location because he envisioned a fireman, policeman or businessperson might want to shoot a few hoops and talk to the young people. He stated if the basketball court is put in a location where it can be seen and people are concerned about the location, it is ideal for making it a better chance to succeed. He stressed that he was not going to put the basketball court in the corner of the community. Commissioner Bridges stated the Board is committed to making sure there is better management of the courts. He added the court should be placed in a central location for all children to come.

BUDGET AMENDMENT APPROVED – BASKETBALL COURT

Commissioner Bridges motioned to approve a budget amendment made payable from the General Fund in the amount of \$30,000.00 of the construction of a basketball court (with the location to be discussed at the Board Retreat). Commissioner Shope seconded the motion.

Mayor Woodlief commented a basketball court is needed and should be placed in an area that can be used by all citizens. He stated it should be a place that can be supervised and can serve the most people. He stressed the comments this evening have been heard.

Commissioner Kiesow noted he had a little problem with the idea of allocating money and not knowing where the basketball court will be located. He added location is a major factor. He referred back to the list of items he suggested and commented it is wrong to approve money without knowing where the court will be located. He stated the public should be told these are the items considered and this is our position on the items.

Commissioner Wilkinson recognized that generally the location is found, a public meeting is held about the location; acquire costs and then vote on it. He stated that he was for the basketball court but did not feel like the proposed location is not the right location. He noted he would support the budget amendment.

Commissioners Bridges, Shope, Powell, Herring, Wilkinson and Williford voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Kiesow voted against. The motion passed 6-1.

BUDGET AMENDMENT

ACCT. NO.	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
010620551	Fixed Assets (bb court)	\$30,000.00	
010399000	App Fund Balance	\$30,000.00	

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Woodlief adjourned the meeting.