

**NORTH CAROLINA
GRANVILLE COUNTY
CITY OF OXFORD**

**MASONIC HOME FOR CHILDREN, COBB CENTER
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2008 AT 10:00 A.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Oxford met for a Board Retreat in the Cobb Center Conference Room located on the Masonic Home for Children's Campus at City Hall, 600 College Street at the above-mentioned time and place.

Present: Mayor Alvin Woodlief, Jr.
Mayor Pro Tem Howard G. Herring, Sr.
Commissioner Robert Shope
Commissioner Stephen C. Powell
Commissioner Paul F. Kiesow
Commissioner A. Chance Wilkinson
Commissioner Robert B. Williford, Sr.
Commissioner Walter Cantley

Present also was 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 Al Woodlief, Jr. called the meeting to order.

LEADERSHIP PRESENTATION

Human Resources Director gave a presentation to the Board of Commissioners on Leadership. The Board of Commissioners suggested presenting this presentation to the Department Heads and performing quarterly employee evaluations.

CITY MANAGER POSITION UPDATE

Commissioner Shope, Chairman of the Personnel Committee, reported 75 applications were received for the vacant city manager position. Applications are still being received; and asked when should the City stop receiving applications. He distributed a folder containing a list

of 5 names, along with 4 names that are on the backburner. Three additional telephone interviews will be done tomorrow and encouraged the commissioners to sit in. The packet also included suggested questions for the Council to ask the candidate during the interview. He informed the interviews would take several weeks to schedule.

Mayor Woodlief asked the media in attendance (Charlie Richards of the Oxford Public Ledger and Bill West of The Herald Sun) to refrain from publishing names of selected candidates. Mr. West noted he would have to consult with his editor. Human Resources Director Jenkins noted the City had pledged confidentiality and respect to all the candidates.

CLOSED SESSION – PERSONNEL -CITY MANAGER POSITION

On a motion by Commissioner Herring, seconded by Commissioner Cantley, the Board voted to go into Executive Session according to G.S. 143-318.11 to discuss candidates for the city manager position. The motion passed unanimously.

At the end of the closed session and on motion by Commissioner Wilkinson, seconded by Commissioner Williford, the Board voted unanimously to return to open session (1:16 PM).

COMMISSIONER CODE

The Mayor and each Commissioner signed and reaffirmed the Commissioner Code.

BUDGET UPDATE

Commissioner Wilkinson, Finance Committee Chairman, noted the cart is usually before the horse as it pertains to the budget. He suggested seeing what the nuts and bolts illustrate first. The numbers come in differently each year.

Mr. Jenkins explained he should receive final numbers for the health insurance rate by April 15 and noted RFPs had been sent to other insurance companies.

Commissioner Wilkinson noted it could be harmful to people to raise the tax rate during the recession. He asked to keep this in mind. Commissioner Wilkinson questioned why the Board had not received a copy of the pay and classification plan to which Mr. Jenkins explained the City has a contract with the MAPS group that states the final plan and explanation will be available at the meeting on April 2. Commissioner Wilkinson stressed this report is not binding on the commission and it needs to be looked at and discussed seriously. He recognized looking at ways to fund Oxford Park, such as the Tourism Board. He stressed the need to see how the nuts and bolts work out with the budget before the Board starts talking about a tax increase. He stressed caution in adding additional employees. He views management as getting good employees and pay them well; instead of having a lot of people sitting around doing nothing. Each additional person hired gives the City less available funds, requires health insurance, moreover the position is a budget liability.

Commissioner Cantley asked at one point is the city manager asked to request that each department optimize their department; tell us how you can cut your budget. He stressed the difficulty of a tax increase due to the economy. Commissioner Wilkinson commented in the past the Committee had gone line by line through the budget to cut cost and stated the departments have done a good job in doing this. The city manager will be responsible in monitoring departmental spending. He recognized it is easier to limit growth instead of cutting employees' jobs.

Commissioner Powell asked if the City is getting optimal use out of employees? Mayor Woodlief noted this would be discussed later. He recognized maintenance; such as cutting grass at Oxford Park is an expense and suggested making an arrangement where the students in the agricultural department at Webb could perform this type of work. Commissioner Wilkinson

noted several different departments are mowing and stated this has been kicked around in the past.

Commissioner Williford made the point that Oxford had dropped \$527,000 in sales from July 2005 to June 2007. Commissioner Powell noted the need to think about what can be done to energize retail sales. Commissioner Herring recognized the costs the Board is facing; increase in salary for a city manager; pay rate study; monies needed for Oxford Park and stated the money needed could be gotten from taxes. He noted the monies paid on taxes are tax deductible. He does not foresee a great conflict and referred to the following tax rates and compared them to Oxford's \$0.55:

Creedmoor	\$0.72
Henderson	\$0.67
Warrenton	\$0.67
Norlina	\$0.64
Roxboro	\$0.61
Coax (outside of Dunn)	\$0.62

He recognized Oxford's tax rate is \$0.06 to \$0.08 less than cities around Oxford. He stated the Board wants to do something for inner city recreation, but Oxford does not have the money. He noted he would support a tax increase and set aside a certain percentage specifically for recreation. A mechanism needs to be set up to have this revenue in place.

Commissioner Kiesow noted he wanted to see the budget first. He added the water fund was down and stated the cost of mandatory requirements should be looked at and charge higher levels for higher users. Commissioner Wilkinson reported the Finance Director stated the water fund should not do any projects over \$300,000. Mayor Woodlief noted \$677,000 debt service for the wastewater plant has to be paid in May and gave the following where money is owed: water fund digester - \$200,000, Foundry Branch - \$200,000 and a few vehicles.

Mayor Woodlief noted fees for privilege licenses and price for city car tags should be addressed, as well as addressing repeat offenders who do not pay their water bill. He suggested that if the bill is not paid before 3 PM on Friday; then the water should be turned on Monday morning. Maybe this will be a deterrent. Commissioner Powell noted the policy should be publicized and sent out with the water bill; the new policy will benefit the city.

Commissioner Shope noted Oxford is a poor town and now is not the time to raise taxes and asked the Board to think about seniors on a fixed income.

DOWNTOWN PARKING UPDATE

Commissioner Herring placed this item on the agenda.

Commissioner Herring noted it is up to the Commissioners to decide to continue having the current policy and procedure in place for issuing parking tickets. The biggest violators are storeowners. Commissioner Cantley recognized the current policy is not consistent to which Commissioner Herring added the currently policy is not being enforced. Mayor Woodlief commented Chief Wolford suggests changing the ordinance in order to make it easier to collect the tickets and have persons to pay the tickets in the Finance Department. He added the employee that writes the tickets makes three rounds in downtown and directs traffic at Mary Potter in the morning and afternoon. He added in the past this position was done away with and it did not work. Commissioner Wilkinson recognized 300 people are in downtown when district court is in session and added these persons will take every spot in downtown if there is no one to monitor parking. Commissioner Wilkinson suggested raising the fee to \$10.00.

It was recommended for the Public Safety Committee to get with Chief Wolford on this matter.

Mayor Woodlief noted the Oxford Parking Authority discontinued the rental of the parking lot behind the Oxford Credit Union due to the fact the lot was being used by the County for jury parking.

Commissioner Shope commented merchants have concern about raising parking tickets because it may deter customers.

CDBG DEVELOPMENT GRANT – AUTUMN RIDGE APARTMENTS

Mayor Woodlief reported the CDBG Development Grant for Autumn Ridge Apartments has been turned down.

OXFORD PARK IRREVOCABLE LETTER OF CREDIT

Mayor Woodlief noted he had spoken with Roger Perry of East West Partners and Mr. Perry informed the creditor had been changed to Farm Credit and the letter of credit was not sent for 2007. The last one on file is dated 2006. The amount owed to the City of Oxford is \$541,000.00. Mr. Perry is to send the new letter of credit to City Clerk Weary. Commissioner Herring noted he was asked by a citizen who is paying the interest on this money and added there is no monthly payment due to the fact the water line was paid in full by the City. The total was \$1.9 million in 2002. Commissioner Wilkinson recognized Oxford Park had done well to reduce this figure to \$541,000. Mayor Woodlief noted the letter of credit is for 10 years.

INDUSTRIAL FIRE PROTECTION DISCUSSED

Mayor Woodlief explained a few of the firemen from the fire department went to Dill Air and told them that for a \$2,000 donation to Antioch; Antioch would provide fire protection and Oxford Fire Department would have to come because of the mutual aid agreement. A letter was sent from the City stating in the event of an emergency no dispatch of any fire or emergency vehicles to that location nor will any mutual aid be offered from the City of Oxford. \$323,294 is

collected from outside fire protection and added the mutual aid agreement with the county needs to be renegotiated. The situation with Dill and the Antioch Fire Department has been discussed with the County Manager and he assured that this is not going to happen. Dill Air will purchase outside fire protection when they buy the building; it is currently being rented.

Mayor Woodlief requested Mayor Pro Tem Howard Herring, Public Safety Chairman to go before the firemen to discuss the mutual aid issue and provide clarification on belonging to volunteer fire departments.

ANNEXATION REPORT

Commissioner Herring placed this discussion on the agenda.

Commissioner Herring asked if the property between the Oxford Loop and Oxford Park could be annexed to which Mayor Woodlief stated a gentlemen's agreement was made years ago not to annex this property. Commissioner Herring noted the City would not have a contiguous connection from Williamsboro Street to Salem Road to Oxford Park. He asked how to annex this property to which Mayor Woodlief stated it would have to be done down the loop from Revlon and not up from Salem Road.

Planning Director Cheryl Hart made the following report on annexation as it relates to Edgewood Subdivision:

EDGEWOOD DRIVE ANNEXATION **34 Houses and 10 Vacant Lots**

Real Property

31,965
<u>- 3,365</u> loss – outside fire protection
28,600

Population will increase 78.2%

Local sales option	153/capita x 78.2	= 11,965
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Franchise tax	33/capita x 78.2	= 2,581
Beer and wine	4.2/capita x 78.2	= 328
ABC funds	5.23/capita x 78.2	= 40.9
Powell Bill funds	23.70/capita x 78.2	= 1,853
Auto license	78.2 x 10	= 782
Personal property		= 3,000
Total Revenue		49,518

Cost to General Fund

Fire protection		= 5,983
Police protection	148/capita x 78.2	= 11,573
Loss – outside fire protection		= 3,365
Total Revenue		31,965

She added the above figures do not include the cost of infrastructure. Mayor Woodlief noted when the Easton Farms property is developed residents of Edgewood could buy water from Oxford, as well as sewer. The area is very rocky. Commissioner Wilkinson recognized this is the answer to annexing Edgewood.

Ms. Hart noted the structures located at 212 Broad Street, 217 College Street and 107 Railroad Avenue have been served certified letters and published in the newspaper. She asked that a demolition ordinance for 212 Broad Street be adopted at the April Regular Session with schedule of the house to be removed by Memorial weekend. Structures at 217 College Street and 107 Railroad Avenue are requested for the HPC to be given a couple of months to try and work with the owner because they have people interested in buying these properties.

Commissioner Kiesow asked if Shadow Lane was eligible for annexation to which Ms. Hart replied one more house is needed. Commissioner Herring asked about Carolina Avenue to which Ms. Hart noted she had not checked.

Commissioner Powell noted he had spoken with Wills Hancock about zoning issues on Martin Luther King Blvd from Granville Corners to Third Street and noted businesses want to come where there is traffic, but it is not zoned correctly. Ms. Hart explained this would upset the residential area and they have been upfront about keeping the area the way it is now because anticipation of additional traffic to the area would cause problems to the residential neighborhood.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL MATTERS

At 3:07 PM, on a motion by Commissioner Shope, seconded by Commissioner Cantley, the Board voted to go into Executive Session according to G.S. 143-318.11 to discuss personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously.

At the end of the closed session and on motion by Commissioner Wilkinson, seconded by Commissioner Kiesow, the Board voted unanimously to return to open session (3:57 PM).

ADJOURNMENT

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