

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING OF THE OXFORD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OXFORD CITY HALL – COMMISSIONERS’ BOARD ROOM

The Board of Commissioners for the City of Oxford met at the above-mentioned time and place. 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 Pro Tem Howard Herring, Sr., Commissioners James (Danny) Currin, Robert B. Williford, Sr., Calvin (C.J.) Harris, Jr., Frank Strickland, S. Quon Bridges and Patricia T. Fields. Present also were City Attorney J. Thomas Burnette, City Manager Randy Hemann, and Administrative Assistant Cynthia Bowen.

Absent: City Clerk Barbara J. Rote

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sergent called the meeting to order. Andrew Lyda from Boy Scout Troop 629 gave the prayer; the Pledge to the flag followed led by MPT Herring.

AGENDA APPROVAL

COMMISSIONER BRIDGES MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE CHANGES IN THE ATTACHMENT FOR THE FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM FOR THE WORKOUT ROOM AT HIX GYM. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

OPENING REMARKS BY MAYOR SERGENT

Mayor Sergent read the opening remarks statement as stated on the agenda with no conflicts of interest noted.

PROCLAMATION OF LIFE IN MEMORY OF WALTER CANTLEY

Mayor Sergent presented a Proclamation of Life in memory of previous City Commissioner Walter Cantley to his daughter Carrie. Mr. Cantley served as City Commissioner from 2007-2011. During his tenure, he served as Chairman of the Public Relations, Industrial & EDC Committee; and Chairman of the Public Works, Planning, Development & Ordinance Committee. A guest book was placed in the lobby of City Hall for the community to write a short note. The book will be given to Mr. Cantley’s family.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Larry Thomas of 207 East Front Street - spoke to the Board about tree trimming in the downtown and suggested a workshop with Duke Progress Energy similar to one they scheduled in Morehead City. He also gave a page of written suggestions for the revitalization of Downtown Oxford that was distributed to the Board by email following the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED TO AMEND ZONING ORDINANCE FOR HISTORIC SIGNS
MARCH 10, 2015

Mayor Sergent presented a request to call for a public hearing in conjunction with the March 10, 2015 Regular Session to amend the Oxford Zoning Ordinance for signs under section 408 (obsolete/abandoned signs) to include an option to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) if a sign is over 40 years old.

The Planning Dept. was asked to address the issue of abandoned/obsolete signs throughout the City. Owners of such signs were notified of section 408 (obsolete/abandoned sign), that states signs should be removed within 90 days of closing a business. The owners of 2 of the properties identified (Orpheum Theatre sign & Yancey Chevrolet) asked if they could keep the sign due to historical significance. Planning Board and HPC recommend that signs 40 years or older be allowed to request a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC Committee.

The Board was interested in the actual language of the ordinance amendment, it was suggested that the term, "on or about 40 years of age" and that the sign must be properly maintained be added to the ordinance. Planning Director Hart and Randy Hemann clarified the involvement of the HPC for historical signs. The Board asked to have the amended language for the Public Hearing.

ORIGINAL MOTION STATED

COMMISSIONER CURRIN MADE A MOTION TO CALL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MARCH 10, 2015 REGULAR SESSION TO AMEND THE OXFORD ZONING ORDINANCE FOR SIGNS UNDER SECTION 408 (OBSOLETE/ABANDONED SIGNS), TO INCLUDE AN OPTION TO RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) IF A SIGN IS OVER 40 YEARS OLD.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION INTRODUCED AND FAILED

MPT HERRING MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION NOT TO HOLD A PUBLIC HERRING AS THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HAS NO SAY SO IN THE FINAL DECISION. THE SUBSTITUTE MOTION FAILED 6 TO 1 WITH MPT HERRING VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE AND COMMISSIONERS FIELDS, STRICKLAND, HARRIS, BRIDGES, CURRIN AND WILLIFORD VOTING AGAINST.

ORIGINAL MOTION PASSED

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED TO AMEND ZONING ORDINANCE FOR HISTORIC SIGNS
MARCH 10, 2015

A VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE ORIGINAL MOTION MADE BY COMMISSIONER CURRIN TO CALL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MARCH 10, 2015 REGULAR SESSION TO AMEND THE OXFORD ZONING ORDINANCE FOR SIGNS UNDER SECTION 408 (OBSOLETE/ABANDONED SIGNS), TO INCLUDE AN OPTION TO RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) IF A SIGN IS OVER 40 YEARS OLD. THE MOTION PASSED 6 TO 1 WITH COMMISSIONERS FIELDS, STRICKLAND, HARRIS, BRIDGES, CURRIN AND WILLIFORD VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE AND MPT HERRING VOTING AGAINST.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

JOHN HARDY REAPPOINTED TO ZONING BOARD

Mayor Sergent presented for consideration appointing Dr. John B. Hardy to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a full 3-year term expiring February 2018.

Dr. Hardy was appointed in 2014 to fill a vacant seat on the Zoning Board of Adjustment that expires in February 2015. He has expressed interest, and completed an application to serve a full term. No other applications were submitted for the Board opening.

COMMISSIONER WILLIFORD MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT DR. JOHN B. HARDY TO THE ZONING BOARD FOR A 3-YEAR TERM EXPIRING FEBRUARY 2018. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

RESOLUTION ADOPTED SUPPORTING THE NC HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT

Mayor Sergent presented for adoption a resolution in support of the NC Historic Preservation Tax Credit Programs.

North Carolina has let the tax credit for historic preservation programs sunset. A coalition of organizations is asking for the tax credit to continue to be available as a tool to spur economic recovery in traditionally blighted or underutilized areas of our communities. The League of Municipalities also supports this tax credit. This credit is important to Oxford because of the many historical homes and businesses that could qualify.

COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NC HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING
NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION
TAX CREDIT PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford along with other local and regional partners is working to revitalize our downtown area and historic neighborhoods to establish them as vital economic sectors of the City for the community's benefit; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford realizes that a healthy, vibrant downtown and surrounding historic neighborhoods make all other economic development initiatives in the community easier to achieve; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford's uniqueness as a community along with its identity and attractiveness is tied to our historic structures and the preservation thereof; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford, as well as many private investors, has significantly advanced improvements in our downtown and area neighborhoods through strategic planning and reinvestment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford understands that it is fortunate to contain a wealth of historic commercial and residential structures that offer unique opportunities to differentiate our community from others and, as such, we wish to preserve them when appropriate for future use and re-investment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford recognizes that the highest concentration of our historic structures is in the downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods, and that this area provides more tax base value per acre than any other segment of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford recognizes that these buildings offer opportunities for small business development, job creation, and desirable living spaces in an existing built environment with previously invested infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford would like to build upon these established investments to strengthen our tax base, thereby decreasing the potential for our residents and stakeholders to incur future tax increases to maintain existing levels of service throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, the historic residential and commercial structures play a vital role in our capability to entice re-investment and create our market niche; and

WHEREAS, the rehabilitation of historic structures is challenging in terms of acquiring needed bank financing, meeting building code regulations, overcoming the general risks of unknown conditions, and securing private investment in blighted or transitional neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford has experienced success with meeting such historic rehabilitation challenges due to the availability of the North Carolina Historic Preservation Tax Credit (HPTC) programs, which have resulted in positive private investment projects that support our local economy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford recognizes that these programs offer an often necessary financial tool that levels the private investment risks and opportunities when competing for sites outside the built area, and also provides the leverage needed to meet financial gaps experienced with traditional lending institutions; and

WHEREAS, a number of residential properties in the City of Oxford have been restored using State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits, and the Historic Downtown is filled with buildings that would benefit from redevelopment using such tax credits; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oxford believes that more of this type of reinvestment can occur with continuing the availability of the Historic Preservation Tax Credits and believes the tax credit programs are a worthy leveraging tool to stimulate a specific, challenged area of our economy that will in turn support the entire community; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Downtown Development Association has adopted a position paper titled: "*Position Paper of Support for North Carolina's Historic Preservation Tax Credit Programs*" and the City of Oxford has reviewed this document and agrees that the HPTC programs are a necessary economic development tool and thus, generally agrees with the NCDDA Position Paper and will use it to advocate for the continuation of the HPTC programs; and

WHEREAS, developers with an interest in adaptive reuse of historic structures will choose to work in states where these credits are available, and states surrounding North Carolina have Historic Tax Credits; and

WHEREAS, the loss of these tax credits has put North Carolina at a competitive disadvantage compared to its neighbors; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina benefitted from \$1.5 billion in investment from HPTC when the Tax credits were available;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, *Mayor Jacqueline vdH Sergent and the Board of Commissioners for the City of Oxford*, on behalf of the employees, stakeholders, and residents of this City, do hereby support North Carolina's Historic Preservation Tax Credit Programs and their continued availability as a tool to spur economic recovery in our cherished City and throughout the state.

BE IT KNOWN that the Board of Commissioners for the City of Oxford was present on this day of February 10, 2015 and the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the unanimous vote of all members, and that said Resolution has been duly recorded in the Board minutes and is in full force and effect.

HIX FITNESS ROOM EQUIPMENT PURCHASE & BUDGET AMENDMENT APPROVED

Commissioner Fields, Chairman, Recreation, Parks, and the Environment Committee, presented for consideration approving the purchase of fitness equipment from low bidder, Fitness Concepts; and approving a budget amendment in the amount of \$10,250, payable from the General Fund, to purchase the fitness equipment and an access control center for the fitness center at Hix Gym.

In order to obtain budgetary estimates for the fitness center at Hix Gym, a fitness professional from Raleigh conducted an inspection. It was immediately confirmed that the current equipment was antiquated and dangerous to users. The center was shut down and the equipment removed.

Three quotes were received for replacement equipment. The equipment is light commercial with warranty; and should be appropriate for the level of use the equipment routinely gets. In addition, staff recommends adding an access control system to the workout center and limit

access to only those permitted to use the space. This will assist in prolonging the life of the equipment and allow us to better monitor use and obtain waivers for liability purposes. In order to purchase the equipment from the low bidder, Fitness Concepts, and the access card system, a budget amendment is required in the amount of \$10,250, \$564 for the access card center and \$9,686 for the equipment.

COMMISSIONER FIELDS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF FITNESS EQUIPMENT FROM LOW BIDDER, FITNESS CONCEPTS, AND APPROVE A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,250, PAYABLE FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO PURCHASE THE FITNESS EQUIPMENT AND AN ACCESS CONTROL CENTER FOR THE FITNESS CENTER AT HIX GYM. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

BUDGET AMENDMENT

Account Number	Description	Increase	Decrease
620-543	Fitness Equipment	\$9,686.00	
620-275	Access Control System	\$564.00	
010-29900	Fund Balance		\$10,250.00

FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED FOR HIX FITNESS ROOM

Commissioner Fields, Chairman, Recreation, Parks, and the Environment Committee, presented for consideration creating a Fit After 50 program for use of the Hix Gym fitness room that establishes program fees in accordance with the May 2014 Board approved Parks and Recreation Revenue and Pricing Policy, and authorizing the Recreation Director to create operating procedures and rules for access and use of equipment.

The Director of Recreation has worked to develop new standard operating procedures for the reestablishment of the workout room in Hix Gym. This will allow the City to operate the center in a safe manner providing accountability and safety for its users. Users of the space will now be considered “members” and will fill out registration paperwork and waivers of liability similar to other City provided programs. It will also establish access to the workout room. The space will be designated as the “Fit After 50 Workout Center”. The Parks & Recreation Department Director met on February 3, 2015 with the Recreation, Parks, and the Environment Committee who supported the program.

The Policy as presented included the use of the fitness room for ages 50 and older with no fees for anyone over 65 living within the City. Residents outside the City limits, 50 and older would be charged for participating in the program.

The Board discussed alternative options to the program that included no age restrictions and no fees for anyone over 65 living within the City of Oxford and Granville County.

ORIGINAL MOTION STATED

COMMISSIONER FIELDS MADE A MOTION TO CREATE A FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM FOR USE OF THE HIX GYM FITNESS ROOM, TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM FEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAY 2014 BOARD APPROVED PARKS AND RECREATION

REVENUE AND PRICING POLICY, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE RECREATION DIRECTOR TO CREATE OPERATING PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR ACCESS AND USE OF EQUIPMENT.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION INTRODUCED AND FAILED

COMMISSIONER BRIDGES MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION TO CREATE A FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM FOR USE OF THE HIX GYM FITNESS ROOM THAT OFFERS USE OF THE FITNESS ROOM WITH NO FEES TO ANYONE OVER THE AGE OF 65 LIVING WITHIN THE CITY OF OXFORD AND GRANVILLE COUNTY. THE SUBSTITUTE MOTION FAILED 6 TO 1 WITH COMMISSIONER BRIDGES VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE AND COMMISSIONERS FIELDS, STRICKLAND, HARRIS, HERRING, CURRIN AND WILLIFORD VOTING AGAINST.

ORIGINAL MOTION PASSED

FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED FOR HIX FITNESS ROOM

A VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE ORIGINAL MOTION BY COMMISSIONER FIELDS TO CREATE A FIT AFTER 50 PROGRAM FOR USE OF THE HIX GYM FITNESS ROOM, TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM FEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAY 2014 BOARD APPROVED PARKS AND RECREATION REVENUE AND PRICING POLICY, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE RECREATION DIRECTOR TO CREATE OPERATING PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR ACCESS AND USE OF EQUIPMENT. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

JANUARY FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS BY CITY MANAGER HEMANN

City Manager Hemann presented and summarized the January financial report.

General Fund revenue included collections of 82% Ad Valorem Taxes, 55% Licenses & Permits, 61% Intergovernmental, and 66% All Other Revenue. Expenses included 49% General Government, 98% Outside Auditors, 50% Finance, 55% Building & Equipment, 53% Street Dept. & Leaf Collection, 70% Swimming Pool, 79% Lake Devin, 91% Oxford Athletic Park Operations, 50% Engineering, and 243% Miscellaneous Non-Departmental.

Water Fund revenue included 52% Billing Revenue. Expenses included 46% WWTP, and 98% Stovall Booster Pump Station, 53% General Operations/Collections, 59% Miscellaneous Non-Governmental Wastewater.

All Other Fund revenue included 53% Stormwater Fund, and 51% Powell Street Fund. Expenditures for all other funds were well within the expected expenditure authority of 20%.

<u>JANUARY 2015 Financial Report</u> <i>58.0% of FY Complete</i>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Water Fund</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>
REVENUES			
YTD	\$ 6,442,288	\$ 2,783,384	\$ 1,255,961
YTD Percent of Budget <i>(minus loan proceeds and fund balance allocation)</i>	78%	59%	24%
EXPENSES			
YTD	\$ 5,186,526	\$ 2,671,079	\$ 1,341,910
Budget	\$ 8,472,365	\$ 4,955,044	\$ 5,225,264

YTD Percent of Budget <i>(minus loan proceed, and fund balance allocation)</i>	61%	46%	26%
DIFFERENCE <i>(Revenues – Expenses) 2014-15 YTD</i>	\$ 1,255,762	\$ 162,305	\$ (85,949)

CITY MANAGER REPORT
(Included written report presented on meeting night)

Board Goal Setting Retreat: Thank you Mayor and Commissioners for taking two days to meet and hear presentations and discuss your vision for the City. Thanks to our department heads who presented as well as those who coordinated visits from outside speakers. Thanks also to Warren Miller, our facilitator. Warren did an excellent job and expects to have the written report completed soon.

Fire Department: The Oxford Fire Department recently completed a Public Protection Classification (PPC) Survey by the North Carolina Department of Insurance Office of the State Fire Marshal. This evaluation will determine the ISO (Insurance Services Office) Rating for our fire district for the upcoming years. Currently, the City of Oxford is an ISO Class 5. The results for this evaluation are not expected until March 2015. A full report will be presented once the survey results have been received and reviewed. The fire department has scheduled a live burn exercise for March 7, 2015 to be conducted on Raleigh Street on behalf of the Oxford Housing Authority. The training shall begin at 8:00 a.m. (weather permitting) and will last until midafternoon. Also, we would like to congratulate fifteen (15) members of our fire department for completing the necessary coursework to obtain their Fire Officer I and Instructor I certifications. These are members from both our full time and volunteer rosters and are an asset to the fire department and the city.

Public Works: Street Division - Leaf season officially ended Jan 31, but we are still picking up some leaf debris for the Street Department. As of February 9th the department is fully staffed. We hired Mr. Milton Sutton, as a full time Street Maintenance employee, he worked for us during leaf season as a temporary employee. Mr. Bryan McRae was promoted to equipment operator and is being trained on the street sweeper. Mr. Limeuel Watts retired with 8 plus years of service on January 2, 2015. The knuckle boom truck is supposed to be delivered the end of February. The department is starting to use the trash route that Waste Industries follows for debris pickup with the dump trucks until the boom truck arrives. A trip to Clinton to review their Public Works and Sanitation department was very enlightening and further research on sanitation will continue. Water & Sewer Division - The department is working on fire hydrant audits. We repaired several hydrants and had a valve inserted on Hillsboro St. to repair a large leak at a fire hydrant and made several small line repairs this month. There have been repeated problems with the telemetry at the booster station. The telemetry has been down more than working resulting in manual fills, twice per day, of the Stovall water tower. We also hired Mr. Craig Painter as an equipment operator. Upon the advice of our counterparts in Clinton, we contracted with a vendor who will check the calibration on all of our large water meters (those over two inches). James is working toward having an Orphan Landfill Program approved vendor selected and a contract to proceed at the March Board Meeting. The State reimburses cleanup costs under this program.

Parks and Recreation: Youth basketball has a month left and the season is going very well. Baseball, softball and wee ball registration has begun. Our new "Get Fit in '15" campaign has begun including:

- a. We are considering starting a Belly Dancing Fitness Class. This Friday night at 5:30 pm at the Public Works building there will be a FREE introductory class for anyone interested.
- b. We have a new Fitness Boot Camp program beginning in April at Hix gym. This will be taught by a certified personal trainer.
- c. Walk The World is a new independent group walking program scheduled to start in March.
- d. Line Dancing on Monday nights and Zumba on Tuesday nights continues.
- e. Fit After 50 Workout Club will open later this month at Hix Gym.

We have hired a new teenager to work part time in the afternoons in our office. He will assist customers and process registrations and reservations. Our internship program is moving forward. We are continuing to work out housing details and will be interviewing candidates in March. We have 3 applications so far.

Police Department: Chief Coley is planning on an assessment team for the Captains position in the near future. He and Lt. Curl recently met with the owner of the Shell station on Linden Ave. to identify opportunities to work together. The store operator signed a trespassing agreement which allows Oxford Police onto the property at any time and clear out any individuals that are loitering. Upon becoming fully staffed, OPD will conduct an intensified "Hot Spot" initiative which will make different sites a higher priority of patrol.

Human Resources: Justin and I recently met and formulated some broad parameters to guide the process of creating a new career development and recognition program. Justin will be meeting with Department Heads to receive input. The Finance Director position has been posted but the response thus far has not been great because there are numerous finance director positions available across North Carolina.

Planning: Cheryl Hart is working on a proposal for your consideration that would change the parking requirements for upper floor residential units in the downtown. Many communities do not require designated parking for upper floor residential development for two reasons. First, there is both shared off street and on street parking available that can be used. Many people who rent such apartments work during the day and the closest parking at night is on the street at the front door to the building. Second, required parking sometimes encourages the demolition of historic structures to meet those requirements and the demolition of structures in the downtown should be discouraged. If we are to encourage these type developments we must remove all barriers to development.

Building/Grounds/Landscaping: Kenny expects to get bid packages out this week for the Elmwood maintenance contract as well as the Main Street tree planting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS BY THE BOARD

The City is represented by Commissioners on various committees and boards pertaining to our community and local government. Reports and updates by our representatives on meetings that occurred during the month are as follows:

- Downtown Economic Development Commission – City Manager Hemann
- Kerr-Tar COG – Commissioner Williford
- 200th Anniversary – Commissioner Williford
- County Board Meeting Update – Commissioner Strickland

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED

COMMISSIONER BRIDGES MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

- Accepted the January Financial Report as presented by City Manager Hemann.
- Approved the following 2015 meeting minutes:
 - * January 5, Agenda Session
 - * January 13, Regular Session
 - * January 27-28 Planning Retreat

ADJOURNMENT

WITH THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, AT APPROXIMATELY 8:55 P.M., COMMISSIONER FIELDS MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

Cynthia Bowen, Administrative Assistant

ATTEST:

Jacqueline vdH Sergent, Mayor