

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 30, 2002, 6:30PM
JOINT MEETING WITH THE TOWN OF STEDMAN

PRESENT: Chairman Breeden Blackwell
Vice Chairman Talmage Baggett
Commissioner Jeannette Council
Commissioner Kenneth Edge
Commissioner John Henley
Commissioner Billy King
Commissioner J. Lee Warren, Jr.
James Martin, County Manager
Amy Cannon, Asst. County Manager for Finance
Cliff Spiller, Asst. County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Charles Whittenton – Solid Waste Director
Larry Philpott – Recreation Director
Bill Peabody – Planning/Inspection Department
Marsha Fogle, Clerk
Billy Horne, Mayor, Town of Stedman
Commissioner Martin Jones, Town of Stedman
Commissioner Robert Johnson, Town of Stedman
Commissioner Ronald Phipps, Town of Stedman
Commissioner Eleanor Ayers, Town of Stedman
Commissioner Belva H. Maxwell, Town of Stedman
John Jackson, Attorney for Town of Stedman
Connie Spell, Town Administrator and Town Clerk

Chairman Breeden Blackwell and Mayor Billy Horne called their respective Boards to order.

The Invocation was delivered by Commissioner Belva Maxwell, Town of Stedman.

1. Discussion of the enforcement of zoning ordinances in the Town of Stedman

Mayor Horne and Town Administrator Connie Spell noted there are some violations in the Town that need to be addressed by the County's zoning inspector. Note: The County enforces the ordinances inside the town limits. It was suggested that someone from the Planning/Inspection Department be assigned to the Town of Stedman one day a month to inspect areas not in compliance. The Planning/Inspection Department has agreed to provide someone for Stedman one day a month.

2. Other matters of concern

Mayor Horne inquired about the status of the sales tax distribution. Chairman Blackwell noted that a working committee of the Comprehensive Planning Committee is working on this issue as well as the annexation issue and how it affects the county. A final report is due by the end of February. Commissioner Baggett said he did not believe anyone wanted to do anything that would put a financial burden on the small towns. He said it is the larger annexations that affect the county.

In response to a question, Larry Philpott, Director of the County Parks and Recreation Department, noted that work is ongoing in the Stedman area. He said there are plans for a walking track around the ball field. He also noted the county will be replacing the tile floor with a synthetic floor that can be used for basketball and for rollerblading.

Commissioner Robert Johnson, Town of Stedman, noted that it appears that REA will be closing the office in Stedman and moving its people out to a new complex on Ramsey Street. Mr. Johnson noted the importance of keeping this utility in Stedman. He asked that the Commissioners talk with officials who are in a position to make that decision and ask them to reconsider. Chairman Blackwell suggested that the Town Board write a letter to REA asking them to reconsider the decision to move the office from Stedman.

In response to a question about the new Cedar Creek Center, the County Manager noted there has been some delay in the construction of water/sewer lines. He said bids won't go out until the first of the year. However, one good thing to report is the County has received a \$1 million grant for the project.

Commissioner Baggett said he was proud of Stedman as it was the first community to get water and sewer. He noted that all of the municipalities east of the river are in the process of getting water and sewer, an infrastructure that is critical to economic development.

Commissioner Baggett and Mayor Horne acknowledged the importance of orderly growth as the communities begin to grow.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:00PM

Marsha Fogle, Clerk

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Chairman Blackwell called the meeting to order and opened the floor for public comment.

1. Russell McLaurin – Wade, NC. Asked the Board to consider adding requirements to the zoning ordinance that would assure there is buffering between recreation activities (ballpark) and residential. He said at this time there are no requirements. He noted his personal situation and that it was too late to do anything about his situation; however, he would like to see some regulations that will protect others in the future.
2. Ralph Lockamy – Mr. Lockamy asked if the county could clean up the fence line between his house and the ball field.

Chairman Blackwell asked Larry Philpott and Cliff Spiller to look into the situation.

3. Kenneth Fort – Mr. Fort who lives in Stedman has an auto service business at 7214 Clinton Road. He said he wants to make sure he is legal as far as zoning regulations.

Chairman Blackwell said someone from the County Planning/Inspection would be in touch with him.

4. Ken Freeman – Mr. Freeman asked the Board to do all it can to push the General Assembly to allow the citizens to vote on the lottery issue. He also noted concern that the school system is building “Taj Mahals”. He suggested that the school system use one design plan for all of the schools.
5. Billy Culbreth – Wondered why the influx of people into our county does not produce enough revenue for our schools.

Commissioner Kenneth Edge noted that from 1988 to 1994 the school system was growing at a rate of 1000 children per year and there was very little money to build schools. In addition the legislature has directed that class size be reduced, which means more classes and more teachers. Another factor that affects us financially is our Exceptional Children’s Program. Because we are known for our program, more military are drawn to Fort Bragg.

In the past the impact aid money we receive from the Federal Government to educate students of our military has been very sparse. However, this year the Board of Education has received about \$5.2 million in impact aid, which will be a big help to us.

Cumberland County also has many group homes and the County is responsible for education of these students.

Chairman Blackwell noted that county staff and Board of Education staff is working to come up with a funding formula that everyone can live with to address funding of the school system each year. It will probably be based on the percentage of the county's growth. He noted that any such agreement is not binding on either Board.

Commissioners thanked Stedman for its hospitality.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:10PM.

Marsha Fogle, Clerk