

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
COMMISSION MEETING OF THE CITY OF BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 P. M., January 15, 1997**

PRESENT: His Honor Mayor Homer L. Wilson, Commissioners Roosevelt Lawrence,
Dr. James MacLeod, Ken Plyman,
and Harold E. Jennings.

INVOCATION: The invocation was given by Commissioner Dr. James MacLeod.

APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO-TEM

Commissioner Lawrence nominated Commissioner MacLeod to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem. There being no further nominations, the nomination was closed. Commissioner MacLeod was appointed by unanimous vote to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem for another year.

FREDERICA SQUARE

Rob Asbell, resident of the Southend of Brunswick appeared before the Commission to discuss Frederica Square. Mr. Asbell stated that he lives on the other side of Frederica Square and also played in the Park. Mr. Asbell asked the Commission to let the children play in the park. Mr. Asbell stated that Frank Vande Linde is a good man who will give a man his last dollar. Mr. Asbell pointed out that the children are willing to clean up the park and follow rules.

Mr. Asbell offered to allow the children to park their bikes on his lawn to avoid parking them in Mr. Vande Linde yard.

Commissioner Plyman told Mr. Asbell that the Commission was glad he came to the meeting. Commissioner Plyman stated that the Park on Goodyear Avenue was destroyed and rules should be established for Parks in the City.

Commissioner MacLeod stated that the City cannot deny access to a park; however, the City can limit playing games such as baseball and can also limit noise in the park. Commissioner MacLeod asked the Recreation Director Joey Cason to add Frederica Square to the list of Parks that have supervised games. Commissioner MacLeod stated that problems occurred with children coming into his yard, but he put up a white picket fence and children respected his property.

Commissioner Jennings suggested planting hedges to separate the park from Mr. Vande Linde's property.

Commissioner Plyman suggested setting the hours the children can play in the park and limit games to six children in the park at one time. Commissioner Plyman stated that maybe the children can get a park when the City receives the SPLOST funds.

Commissioner Lawrence stated it would be impossible to set a limit on the number of children who can play in the park. Commissioner Plyman pointed out that the size of the park will eliminate the number of children who could play in the park. The City should set a capacity limit on the number of children who could play in the park at a given time.

Mrs. Annette Belt stated that a question was asked and never answered concerning who gave the authorization to close Frederica Park. Mrs. Belt mentioned that the City Attorney never got in touch with her after the last Commission meeting. She stated that the children need to have some where to play instead of in the street. Mrs. Belt expressed concerns about

privatizing the park and supervised activity in the Park. Mrs. Belt asked the Commission to open the park.

Commissioner MacLeod stated that baseball should not be played in the park and there should only be supervised play in the park. Commissioner MacLeod mentioned it has been the City's plan to set up supervised play in each park by the Recreation Department.

Joey Cason Recreation Director recommended designing team sports to meet specifications of the park to satisfy Mr. Vande Linde and the children in the neighborhood.

Mayor Wilson spoke highly of Mr. Vande Linde for having patience. Mayor Wilson stated that he agreed with Commissioner Lawrence. Mayor Wilson pointed out that Mr. Vande Linde has a right to prosecute criminal trespassers and to have peace and quiet. Mayor Wilson stated that he had no choice, but to open up the park to the children.

Sammy Thompson stated that a park is located on the Southend near his house and children play ball there. Mr. Thompson stated that when kids use profanity he speaks to them.

Commissioner Plyman moved and Commissioner MacLeod seconded the motion to open up Frederica Square and restrict the use of bats, and have the Recreation Director place signs in the park. The motion passed unanimously.

The City Manager stated that the City will remove the passive park signs.

STRUCTURAL FITNESS BOARD

Rev. Tommie Herrington and members of the Structural Fitness Board appeared before the Commission to discuss condemnations in the City. Rev. Herrington stated that buildings and houses have been on the dilapidated list since 1994 and after the Judge gave the order to take them down they should be removed from the list.

Commissioner Plyman pointed out if the Judge granted a stay on a dilapidated house it is not torn down.

Commissioner Lawrence questioned whether the Structural Fitness Board is notified by the Building Inspector Office once the Judge gives the order to tear the dilapidated house down.

Rev. Herrington stated that the City should tear down all the houses and not show favoritism.

Commissioner Plyman stated that the Boone Building was ordered to come down because the building is dangerous and the Ice House building is not falling down or the Motel on Highway 17. Commissioner Plyman stated that they were mixing apples with oranges.

The City Manager stated that the ordinance does say that buildings can be ruled closed. The Judge must give property owners thirty days to carry out the order. Commissioner Jennings questioned how long did it take before the Motel on Highway 17 was ordered to be boarded up. The City Manager stated fifteen years. Mayor Wilson pointed out that a Structural Engineer rendered the building sound.

Commissioner Jennings questioned why is the City taking so long to tear down dilapidated houses that are placed on the list.

The City Manager stated that he received a list of buildings and houses that the Judge ordered taken down. The City Manager read the list and stated that other buildings would have to be ordered taken down. The City Manager pointed out that the ordinance has been updated several times in eight years. He had no idea that there was other houses that was ordered to be taken down.

Sammy Thompson stated that forty houses were on the list and he was upset because some houses have been taken down and other houses have not come down. Mr. Thompson recommended auctioning houses if their taxes are not paid.

Commissioner Plyman stated that once the Judge gives the order to demolish houses, the Structural Fitness Board should receive the information and also the City Manager.

Commissioner MacLeod commended the Structural Fitness Board for doing a good job.

Commissioner Jennings stated that the Building Inspector should issue the list after the Judge gives the order. Mayor Wilson recommended that the list be placed in the Commissioner's box immediately after the Judge gives the order to have houses demolished.

Mayor Wilson stated that the City Manager must be given the latitude of dealing with contractors to tear down the houses and buildings.

Commissioner Plyman moved to advertise for bids for demolishing houses in the City and there was no second to the motion.

Mrs. Mary Morris a new member of the Structural Fitness Board stated that after receiving the list she drove the back streets and it made her sick to see the conditions of some of the streets. Mrs. Morris stated the Structural Fitness Board would like to take a leadership role and clean up north of Gloucester Street.

Mrs. Morris noticed furniture left in burned out houses on Amherst Street between G and H Street. Mrs. Morris stated that citizens can work with the Clean and Beautiful Committee to clean up Brunswick. Rev. Herrington stated that he would be willing to supervise the community service worker's in cleaning up the area.

Commissioner MacLeod stated that the City should collect the delinquent taxes on property in the City. The City Manager stated that the City needs to conduct a tax sale this year and the Commission will receive a list of properties that are condemned.

Mayor Wilson stressed that the City will do everything to clean up the City of Brunswick and improve the community.

Commissioner Plyman moved and Commissioner MacLeod seconded the motion authorizing the City Manager to advertise to receive bids on houses after the order is handed by Judge Ligon, and bring the bids back to the Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Thompson questioned how long the advertisement will run in the newspaper and what guidelines the City would use. Commissioner Lawrence stated that the advertisement would run thirty days.

On call for the question the motion passed unanimously.

Hattie McIver Coleman appeared before the Commission to speak about the demolition of McIver Kindergarten Building located on M Street. Mrs. Coleman stated that on January 14, 1997 the City Commission, excluding Commissioner Roosevelt Lawrence, the Structural Fitness Board, Municipal Court, the Public Works Director and the City Manager proved to have little or no concern for historic integrity of this City. Mrs. McIver stated that she received several notices; however, the property and true owner was never notified and this fact was brought to the attention of the City Manager, City Attorney and Judge Ligon. Mrs. McIver stated that since early 1995 the fencing and gate on M Street was removed without notice. The Director of Public Works was asked to reinstall the fence and gate, the City Manager assured Mrs. Coleman that the gate and fence will be reinstated.

Mrs. Coleman suggested using tax dollars to clean up the City. Mrs. Coleman pointed out that the McIver Kindergarten was one of the oldest kindergartens in the State of Georgia and for almost forty years served the Community well. McIver Kindergarten produced teachers, preachers, medical directors and lawyers who hold a doctorate degree. The legacy of the school will go on through its many success stories. The land will be used to create a passive park where people in the community can reflect on the legacy of the McIver Kindergarten.

BIDS ON POLICE DEPARTMENT ROOF

The following bids was received for Architectual Services on the roof of the Police Department:

James F. Kent, Architect Insurance on file \$5,720.00
357 Oak Grove Island Drive
Brunswick, GA 31523

W.S. Ledbetter, Architect \$9,500.00
1522 Richmond Street
Brunswick, GA 31520

Commissioner Plyman moved and Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion to accept the low bid. The motion passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS TO OLD CITY HALL RESTORATION COMMITTEE

Mayor Wilson recommended that each Commissioner give the City Manager the names of the two persons they would like to appoint to the Old City Hall Restoration Committee. Commissioner Lawrence recommended that each appointee live in the city limits.

MONTHLY REPORTS

The following reports for the month of December were submitted and were filed as information (1) General Fund (2) Water and Wastewater (3) Community Development (4) Metro Squad (5) Municipal Court and (6) Uncollectible Water Accounts.

OTHER CITY BUSINESS

Delbert Griffin representing Glynn Teachers Federal Credit Union requested a letter of support from the Commissioners in support of having new membership join the credit union. Mr. Griffin stated that as a result of a permanent injunction the credit union has not had new membership since 1982.

Commissioner Plyman moved and Commissioners Jennings seconded the motion authorizing the Mayor to write a letter of support for the credit union. The motion passed unanimously.

Joseph Francis appeared before the Commission to request a letter of support from the Commission to apply for a grant to clean up Dixville Park. Mr. Francis submitted a list of clean up dates for Dixville. Mr. Frances requested the use of a sway car for the clean up.

The City Manager stated that the City would place a sway car in Dixville on Saturday.

It met the consensus of the Commission to hold a trash pick up day in Dixville.

Commissioner Plyman suggested having graffiti cleaned off buildings in Dixville by kids in boot camp. Commissioner Plyman stated that the owners will have to give permission to have

their buildings washed and painted.

Mr. Francis invited the Commission to attend the Dixville Coalition Business meeting.

The City Manager stated that he would like to go along the lines of the motion made earlier. He stated that Mr. Boone had no problem and understands that the building needs to come down and understands that the City will place a lien on the property. Mr. Boone did ask the City to do whatever is necessary to keep the cost to a minimum and if groups are interested in cleaning the bricks do not add the cost to the lien on his property. The City Manager stated that the City should move ahead with the demolition contract for the building and bring a recommendation back at the next meeting.

This met the consensus of the Commission to advertise for bids for demolition of the Boone Building.

Commissioner Plyman stated that he told Commissioner Lawrence that the west wall caved in this week. He stated that the building did not look like it would stay up for two more weeks until the Commission meet again. Commissioner Plyman recommended authorizing the City Manager to advertise for bids to at least secure the building. Commissioner Jennings agreed.

Mayor Wilson suggested having a called meeting with at least three Commissioners to accept the low bid. He stated that the criteria must be met established by Sunshine law.

Commissioner Plyman stated that the deterioration have gotten to the extent now that the west part of the back wall is gone and leaves only the east part.

The City Manager stated that advertising for bids will begin in the morning.

Commissioner Jennings recommended that each person who submits a request to be appointed to a Board must volunteer to have a background check. He stated that a person convicted of a felony should not be appointed to a City Board.

Commissioner MacLeod stated that the City should make it clear that persons convicted of felonies need not apply for appointment to a City Board.

Commissioner Lawrence recommended that persons who submit their names should be a registered voter.

The City Attorney stated that the City could not enforce some of the suggested restrictions because of a conflict with General State Law. Commissioner Jennings asked the City Attorney to bring back a recommendation at the next meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

Mayor

Attest _____
City Clerk