CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, August 10, 2009
Council Chambers
7:00 pm

Call to Order
Mayor Robert Whitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The following were present:

Mayor Robert Whitt	Eric Davis, City Manager
Mayor Pro-Tem David Moore	Jamie Guffey, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Jerry Bishop	Danny Jackson, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Frank McLean	James Friday, Director of Utilities
Councilman Bennie Brookshire	Dale Oplinger, Fire Chief
Councilman Perry Toomey	David Belk, Chief of Police
Councilwoman Carolyn Breyare	Mike Santmire, Streets and Solid Waste Director

Brooke Lopez, Attorney, Kemp Michaels' office

<u>Call to Order by Mayor Whitt</u>

Mayor Whitt called the Mount Holly City Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

<u>Invocation</u>

In the absence of Reverend Jeremiah Robinsons, the retired pastor of New Zion Baptist Church, Councilman McLean was asked to lead the invocation.

<u>Pledge of Allegiance</u>

Boy Scout Troop 59 of the First United Methodist Church in Mount Holly led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

<u>Set Agenda</u>

Mayor Whitt asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the April 10, 2009 Council Meeting agenda. Mr. Davis asked that a Presentation of the Website by David Jordan be added as a forth item under presentations. Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilman McLEan seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

<u>CONSENT AGENDA</u>

1. Approval of a Resolution for the City of Mount Holly to Participate in the NCDOT Bridge Inspection Program
2. Approval of Knuckleboom Truck for the Street and Solid Waste Department
3. Approval of an Ordinance to Abate Minimum Housing at 200 River Street
4. Approval of Lien for 91 Lynnbrook for Clearing of Grass and Weeds
5. Approval of Lien for 107 Killian Avenue for Clearing of Grass and Weeds
6. Appointment of Africa Otis as Finance Officer

Councilman Toomey made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

At this time, Mr. Davis introduced the newly appointed Finance Officer, Africa Otis. Ms. Otis thanked the Council for the opportunity to work for the City.

MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes for the April 13, 2009 business meeting.

Councilman Toomey commented that on the last paragraph of the second page, the statement being made by Mr. Guffey seems to be incomplete. Mr. Guffey was asked to complete the statement as he remembered. Councilman Toomey made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2009 meeting as amended by Mr. Guffey. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

2. Approval of the minutes for the April 27, 2009 work session meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the minutes of April 27, 2009 meeting as presented. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

3. Approval of the minutes for the May 11, 2009 business meeting.

Councilman Toomey made a motion to approve the minutes of May 11, 2009 meeting as presented. Councilman Brookshire seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

4. Approval of the minutes for the July 27, 2009 business meeting.

Councilman Toomey made a motion to approve the minutes of July 27, 2009 meeting as presented. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of Proclamation Honoring the Dixie Youth Little League Team

Mayor Whitt and the City Council honored the Dixie Youth 12u All Star Little League Team for placing runner-up in the State for their age group. All team members and coaches were recognized.

2. Presentation of the Mount Hollydays 4th Annual Christmas Event

Mr**.** Guin came before Council to request permission to close Main Street from Catawba Avenue to Glendale Avenue on December 11, 2009 during the annual Mount Hollydays Christmas festivities. He added that the event would be held from 6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. Councilman Bishop made a motion to close Main Street from Catawba Avenue to Glendale Avenue on December 11, 2009 for the Mount Hollydays Christmas festivities. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. All Council Members voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

3. Presentation on Solar Energy Feasibility for the Citizens Center

The summer intern, Ms. Ashleigh Martin, presented information regarding the feasibility of solar energy at the Citizens Center. Ms. Martin explained the difference between passive solar energy and active solar energy. Ms. Martin advised that it is not feasible at this time for the City to consider solar energy. Mr. Davis advised Council that today is Ms. Martin’s last day with the City and commended her on the fantastic job she has done this summer with the City.

4. Website Presentation

Mr. Jordan with Gaston Technical Support presented that newly designed website to the Council. He advised that the website will constantly be updated and changed. He advised that there are numerous pictures on the new site as well as minutes that date back to 2007. Mr. Jordan asked Council for their final approval before moving forward with making the new website live. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with the publication of the new website.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Public Hearing on the Sign Ordinance

Mayor Whitt opened the public hearing on the sign ordinance. Mr. Beal explained that the revisions to the sign ordinance have been a rather lengthy process. He advised that the Planning Department looked at several sign ordinances from different areas and made the appropriate modifications to fit the needs of Mount Holly. There were questions from Council regarding the timeframe of 15 years for landmark signs. Mr. Beal explained that the 15 years came as a recommendation from the Planning Commission. After further discussion in regard to the 15 year timeframe for landmark signs, Council discussed the requirement for an encroachment agreement for signs that remain in the public right-of-way. Mayor Whitt asked if there is a fee for a sign permit. Mr. Beal advised that the fee for a sign permit is included in the fee schedule that is approved by Council during the budget process. With no one signed up to speak on the proposed sign ordinance, Mayor Whitt closed the public hearing. Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the sign ordinance with the exclusion of the 15 year time frame for landmark signs as well as the exclusion of the encroachment agreement for signs located in a public right-of-way. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion. With no additional discussion, all Council members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

2. Public Hearing on the application for the Community Development Block Grant

Mayor Whitt opened the public hearing on the application of the Community Development Block Grant. Mr. Jackson informed Council that to move forward with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application process the City has to hold two (2) public hearings. He advised that Staff also needs permission from Council to move forward with this process. Mr. Jackson introduced Michael Walser from Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates. He explained that with permission from Council, Mr. Walser's firm will be administering the grant process. At this time, Mr. Walser explained in more detail the CDGB grant and the process. He advised that the CDBG Grant is designed to help people with low to moderate incomes. Mr. Walser advised that the City will be applying for $850,000 in grant funds. He further advised that this is the first year that State has ever done away with the requirement of matching funds. Councilman Brookshire asked which areas of the City are being considered for funding with CDGB money. Mr. Walser advised that the River Street area and the Old Mill area are both being considered for funding. With no further comments, Mayor Whitt declared the Public Hearing closed. No action was taken at this time.

<u>PUBLIC COMMENT – Three (3) Minute Limit</u>

Mr. George Puckett
200 Margarette Avenue
Mount Holly, NC 28120

Mr. Puckett expressed his concern regarding speeding traffic on his street by the Catawba Heights Elementary School. He advised that he is worried about the safety of the children in the area.

Karen Heroy
205 Dogwood
Mount Holly, NC 28120

Ms. Heroy with the Mount Holly Community Foundation was present to ask permission to display the photo contest winners in the lobby area of the Water Department in the Citizens Center. She advised that Art Committee will come up with a way to fashionably display the photographs. Councilwoman Breyare made a motion to allow the Foundation to display the winning photos of their contest. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. All Council Members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>

1. Consideration and Approval of the NC 27 Traffic Study *Danny Jackson*

Mr. Jackson explained that when the Corridor Plan was approved included in the Plan was the reconfiguration of the Highway 27 intersection. He advised that NCDOT requires a traffic study before the State will consider the reconfiguration. Therefore, staff has sought proposal for the traffic study and is coming before Council for approval to move forward with this project. Council was concerned that due to the drop in the economy, this is not a good time to proceed forward with the plan to reconfigure the intersection. Councilman McLean advised that this item should be postponed until a final decision is made in regard to the hospital. Councilman McLean made a motion to table this decision in regard to the traffic date until a future date. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion. (Motion carried)

MANAGER'S REPORT

Chief Belk expressed his appreciation to the Police Department and Fire Department for the success of National Night Out. He hopes for a bigger and better event next year.

Mr. Davis reported that the State has adopted a budget and the Cities and Towns are going to loose some of the beer and wine tax. It is estimated that Mount Holly will get to keep approximately $30,000 at this time. Mr. Davis reported that the Fire Department was involved in an accident on Saturday night. He advised that Council will be updated in the investigation as reports are made.

Mr. Davis reported that legislation has passed that will require all elected officials to have two (2) hours of ethics training. He advised that the League offers this training in yearly classes.

Councilman Toomey reported that the summer circular put out by the Gaston Gazette still has the old Council Members names. He asked if staff would notify the Gazette of the changes.

Councilman Bishop advised that he read in the weekly memo the construction is scheduled to start Monday on the Fitness Center. Councilman Bishop asked where the funds were coming from to cover the costs to build the room at the Tuck Center to house the Fitness Center. He advised that Council was told it would cost approximately $3200 to construct the room and it is his understanding the low bid for the project came in at $6800. Councilman Bishop advised that he has no objections to the relocation of the Fitness Center just the way the entire process was handled. There was further discussion among Council in regard to the way this project was handled. It was the consensus of Council that they would like to be kept more informed about the fiscal happenings in the City because ultimately they are the ones that have to answer to the tax payers.

At this time, Mayor Whitt called for a motion to enter into closed session. Councilman Brookshire made the motion to enter into closed session for attorney client privilege. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. Councilman Bishop added a personnel item to the closed session. All Council Members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Councilman Toomey made a motion to return to open session. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. In a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Councilman McLean made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Brookshire seconded the motion. In a vote, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Whitt declared the meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.