CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 13, 1998

CALL TO ORDER BY THE MAYOR
The regular meeting of the City Council of Mount Holly was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor McLean. The following were present:

Mayor Frank McLean, Jr.	
Mayor Pro-Tem Phyllis Harris	Adm. Services Dir. Sherry Borgsdorf
Councilman Michael Helms	Public Works Director Eddie Nichols
Councilman Andy Stewart	
Councilman Jim Hope	City Attorney Kemp Michael
Councilman Bryan Hough	Police Officer

INVOCATION
The invocation was led by Rev. Doug Peterson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mayor McLean led the Council and audience in the ceremony of the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES
Councilman Helms **MOVED** to approve the minutes of June 1 and 8, 1998, as written, seconded by Councilwoman Harris, with all in favor.

PRESENTATIONS
#1 Plaque to Honor Burlington Industries.
Mayor McLean presented a plaque in recognition of the community service and contributions of Burlington Industries. Their employees had volunteered to clean River Street Park on Earth Day.

#2. Plaque to honor Church Irrigation.
Mayor McLean presented a plaque to Church Irrigation in appreciation for an irrigation system donated and installed by them prior to Spring Festival in the flower bed in the courtyard at City Hall.

#3. Provident Development Group to Present Information Concerning Mountain Island Lake Development plans.

Mr. Tom Waters sent a representative to present a brief overview of the proposed residential development to Council. Approximately 400 acres tract adjoining Highway 16, would be developed with housing, boat ramps, nature trails (60 acres common areas). They have done studies on wetlands and environmental matters. The plan calls for a 100 foot buffer similar to Overlook Development in Mecklenburg County. He estimated a $150,000 to $400,000 range in price for the homes. The developer proposes to voluntarily annex, and apply for city water and sewer. The 350 lot sizes will be one-third to two-thirds acre. Docks will be prohibited in fish habitat areas. Councilman Helms asked if they had contacted Duke Power Company since only commercial areas can have docks on Mountain Island Lake, as he understands it. The man said they have. Mr. Helms said this presentation will have to be also made to the Mountain Island Marine Commission. Councilman Stewart asked if they have considered the location of the high tension power line right-of-ways. He said they have. Mrs. Lib Nichols was recognized and asked if they are asking the City to supply the water. He said they will pay for the lines to be installed. Mrs. Nichols asked if there would be enough water to cover all that development with the ones already being done. Mayor McLean said there would be. Some audience members asked questions about access and traffic. Councilwoman Harris said this is not a public hearing as yet, and that this has not gotten to that point. This is only at a concept stage. Councilman Stewart wondered why they continue to make the lots so small in all these developments. The man said his company is developing Brookfield in Huntersville, and to be affordable, the lot sizes are smaller. City Attorney Michael reminded the Council that the City has no say on this project until such time as Council may, at its option, enter a contract for utility services or annexation, since it is not in the city limits or its zoning jurisdiction.

PUBLIC HEARINGS
#1 To Consider Request to Rezone a Lot Located Off of Beatty Drive From R-A to R-12.

Mayor McLean declared the regular meeting in recess and called a public hearing for consideration of the request by Stephen Beatty to rezone a one acre lot off of Beatty Drive from R-A to R-12. He stated that the Planning Commission had voted in favor of the request and recommended our approval, and due advertisement has been made. No comments from audience for or against. No comments from Council. Mayor McLean adjourned the public hearing and resumed the regular meeting.

Motion: Councilman Hope **MOVED** upon recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve, seconded by Councilwoman Harris.
Vote: five ayes, zero nays. CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
UFB#1 Fire Chief Andy Godfrey to Discuss Fire Department Staffing Levels.
Councilman Hope asked him if the new City fire truck is well received. Chief Godfrey said that the truck has arrived and will be a great asset to the community. Councilman Hough said he felt that the three personnel requested was approved by the budget. Mr. Godfrey stated that the Council is to be commended for choosing to approve the new truck and the personnel and that this will be a benefit to the City for many years.

UFB#2 Public Works Director Eddie Nichols to Discuss Labor Shortages in the Street and Sanitation Department.
Mr. Nichols said that this has always been a problem in the 21 years he has worked for the City. He said it has improved over the years somewhat because sometimes in the past they did not have enough men show up on Monday to pick up garbage. Over the past few months, staff has contacted other towns to ask what they do in this regard. Several still offer incentives such as letting them go home when the route is completed, and bonuses for the crew with the fewest complaints. We found our pay scale is on line with the other towns. They asked what we were

doing because they are having the same trouble. At the last meeting, I heard comments from the audience and the Council indicating that perhaps they are willing to even pay more to keep the garbage pickup service as it is. Paying more seemed to work with the crossing guards. Mr. Nichols made a study of the impact once a week pickup would have. He found this would enable staying with two trucks and two crews, but this is only temporary as they would be covering only what we now have. He did not recommend this since the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. Mr. Nichols made several suggestions, namely, an additional intermediate supervisory position as recommended by Municipal Advisors Inc. in 1996, a 10% pay adjustment for sanitation workers and equipment operators plus a $500 bonus for employees who use no more than one sick day and have no unexcused absences per six-month period. Councilman Helms said he prefers "excellence awards" to bonuses, perhaps with peers secretly voting on it. Mr. Helms stressed that he really wants to see an exit interview, although he realizes you may not get one on every one leaving. City Manager Ponder asked what problem he suspects. Mr. Helms said this type of statistics often indicates a supervisor problem, but the exit interview would show what it really is. Councilman Stewart asked if going to once a week would help appreciably. Mr. Nichols said it will delay adding numbers of employees for maybe three of four years, but no longer. He also felt it will not help the employee situation especially in the summer months because they would be handling week old garbage. Councilman Stewart felt that 23 employees is too many for one supervisor. He is also concerned that we have already overspent our budget and will be using savings, and this is not good business practice. Councilman Hough said that in other towns they do not pick up garbage if it is not bagged; this would help working conditions, and might allow once a week pick-up. Mr. Nichols said if we do go to once a week, he would like to see bagging a requirement by ordinance. Councilman Hough asked if we have aggressively tried to get personnel. Mr. Nichols said they have used newspaper ads, but had about zero response. They get most from the Employment Security Commission, and some referrals. Councilman Stewart referred to the Salary Table included in the packet tonight, and asked if the Street and Sanitation are interchanged. Mr. Ponder said they are now. Discussion followed about current pay scales. Mr. Hope asked Mr. Ponder for a comment. Mr. Ponder said he was told by a city manager he worked for when he first started work years ago, that no matter how much you pay them, you will have high turnover in that department. Mr. Stewart said he feels there are too many under one supervisor, and we should add a supervisor. Mr. Hope said we should require bagged garbage to help their working conditions. The Council asked the City Attorney to bring back a proposed ordinance to require bagged garbage. Councilman Hough asked if we can agree on a format for an exit interview. He said they are used where he works, and his company found out problems that they did not know existed. It may or may not serve to validate what you suspect. It also cuts down on problems after employment. He agreed with Mr. Helms that it is a necessary tool. Councilman Hough asked what the appropriate ratio is between supervisor and employees for that kind of department. Councilman Stewart agreed we need that information. Councilman Helms and Councilwoman Harris said they were not ready to vote on this until they have more information.

Mayor McLean recessed this item until later in the evening to proceed with the agenda.

UFB#3 <u>To Discuss Traffic Control Measures at the Entrance to the Riverfront Development..</u>

Mr. Ponder said the Official Traffic Map would need to be amended to show the new stop signs locations and traffic patterns. DOT would be actually installing. Staff recommended a three way stop, and two left turn lanes if there is sufficient right of way.

Motion: Councilman Stewart **MOVED** to approve the amendment to the Official Traffic Map as recommended, seconded by Councilman Hough.
Vote: five ayes, zero nays. CARRIED.

UFB#4 To Consider Improvements to Lowe Street Extension.
Mr. Ponder said that residents on this street located in Catawba Heights have petitioned paving of Lowe Street Extension. There is a policy for acceptance and maintenance of streets in that district in place since its annexation. Also in the agenda packet he included the recorded plat right of way, a memo from the City Attorney regarding its width, as well as an estimate of cost if Council approves the request.

It was agreed to delay this until after New Business #2.

CONSENT AGENDA
Councilman Hough **MOVED** to accept and approve all two items on the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Councilman Stewart; and unanimously carried. They are:

1. Set a Public Hearing to Consider Request to Rezone a Lot located at 916 West Charlotte Avenue from R-8SF to B-3.
   -Mrs. Pamela Rickard made the request, and the Planning Commission recommended a public hearing be held.
2. Approve Tax Releases.
   -Amount of tax release for June 1998 in the sum of $338.00.
   -Amount of insolvents release for June 1998 in the sum of $136.10 tax and $2.00 tag fees.

NEW BUSINESS
NB #1 Request by Mr. Thung Hyn Chun for Permission for Street Sales.
Mr. Chun was not present. This matter was tabled upon motion by Councilman Stewart seconded by Councilman Hough with all in favor.

City Attorney Michael recommended that Section 10-6 be amended to update its terminology so it is more current. The Council asked him to return with a proposal.

NB#2 To Consider Paving Bids
Mr. Nichols said the low bid was $205,738.80 for the entire list, by Crowder Construction. Staff recommends about half be done since the budget is $100,000; from the list in the agenda packet this would be to the double line (from Dogwood to Hoover). These are all resurfacing jobs. Councilman Hough said that Lowe Street is not paved at all and is not included. Councilman Stewart said that he does not want us to spend over budget. Mr. Ponder said this expenditure is covered by the Powell Bill fund and he does not recommend going beyond an extra street or two. The Council may change the items on the list, and if want to go over that amount you can move

money from the General Fund. Councilman Helms asked if they are listed in order of condition; they are. Mr. Nichols said it was condition and frequency of use. Councilman Helms asked how many dirt roads there are in the city that are used by several residents, as more than a driveway. Mr. Nichols said most dirt roads are remnants at the end of paved streets, or are dead ends, or really more like driveways to a house or two. Powell Bill money can only be used for streets with at least 16 feet wide right of way. Mr. Ponder and Mr. Nichols agreed that none of the other dirt roads are through streets with more than five houses. Mr. Stewart wondered if they are going to add another $100,000 or not. Mayor McLean said they are recommending we do the top of the list this year and save the bottom half to next year. Councilman Hope asked if it was written in the specs that Council could reject any or all; it was. Councilman Hope asked why the budget was so low this year. Mr. Ponder said the level of the Powell Bill fund and the projects upcoming necessitated it. Mr. Hough felt the unpaved street should be done first and then the list, but not go over $100,000. Mr. Hope agreed. Mr. Stewart felt we should do the list and leave the unpaved for later.

Motion: Councilman Hough **MOVED** to include the Lowe Street Extension for paving this year at the beginning of the list, that the list be followed after that amendment, and that no more than $100,000 be spent, with the rest of the list waiting for next year; seconded by Councilman Hope.
Vote: four ayes, one nay (Stewart).

The Council took a five minute break.

NB#3 To Consider Joint Purchase of Police Department Smart Unit.
City Manager Ponder stated that Chief Bishop has requested that money budgeted for a smart unit be diverted to buying inboard computers. The City of Belmont has since then requested that we share the cost of buying one smart unit to be shared by both departments. Councilman Hope asked if we could share a unit without any problems. Mr. Ponder did not see a problem with that as long as logistics were handled in writing. Councilman Stewart felt that if the Chief wants the data terminals, then he would support that, and discuss the smart unit later. Councilman Helms said the computers do not help the people of Mt. Holly, only the policemen, but the smart unit helps the people because they can see their speed and it benefits them. He feels we should share it with Belmont. Mr. Stewart said the computer allows the patrolman to get information while he has the person with him without having to go through dispatch. Councilman Hope said the money is already budgeted and he sees no problem letting the Chief transfer the funds to use for purchasing the mobile data terminals. Mr. Ponder recommended using the savings from sharing the smart unit to help buy terminals. These complement the two we are getting from a grant.

Motion: Councilman Stewart **MOVED** to authorize the transfer of the funds in the police department for purchase of the data terminals, and to authorize sharing the purchase of a Smart Unit with Belmont contingent upon staff obtaining an agreement with Belmont for use of the smart unit, seconded by Councilman Hope.
Vote: five ayes, zero nays. CARRIED.

NB#4 To Consider Utility Easement Necessary to Access New Optimist Recreational Facility.

Mr. Ponder said the Optimist Club has broken ground on its new facility. They request a right of way across Sports Lane to allow them to obtain utilities. Council concurred to allow it, and when the survey is obtained, the City Attorney will prepare documents and bring back to Council for approval.

NB#5 To Consider Stop Signs in the Runnymeade Subdivision.
Request was made for stop signs on West Walnut Avenue, particularly at the intersections on the steep hill, in hopes to slow traffic down. Councilman Hough said the residents prefer two stop signs with a yellow alert before it, rather than speed bumps. It would be at the intersection of Sweetbriar Court and West Walnut Avenue. City Attorney Michael recommended that staff look at that for a recommendation as to the impact it would have since they would be coming over the hill. Mr. Nichols said he had looked at Mulberry Court at the top of the hill but not at that intersection.

Motion: Councilman Hough **MOVED** to erect stop signs both east and west traveling on West Walnut Avenue at Sweetbriar Court, seconded by Councilwoman Harris.
Vote: Five ayes, zero nays. CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Mayor McLean opened the floor for public comment.

David Farris, 120 Apt. 4, Highland Street. He stated a two fold reason to be here. First to raise awareness of something the Council may not know about, and second to request a refund. He did not get a water bill. He moved here in February. The water was shut off. He stated he realizes he did not follow through, but he did not get a cut off notice either. He spoke with people in the water department, who were very kind, and turned back on the water when he came up to pay. Since he did not get the bill or the cut off notice, he checked with the post office. The postmaster told him she get numerous complaints about people not getting a bill. It was not a full 30 days past due before it was cut off, and he felt 30 days is too short anyway, it should be perhaps 45 days. He stated the $25 reconnect fee is exorbitant and he requests it be refunded. Councilman Hope thanked him for bringing this to our attention.
No action.

Wayne Abernathy, Abernathy Garage. He said his company has an agreement that no one outside the city limits would tow on the rotation list. The police have allowed Jack's of Lowell to do it. He has no place in Mt. Holly. Mayor McLean said that in the past Abernathy alternated with Larry's, but Larry's is not in business now. The City Attorney was excused to look at his paper and the Mt. Holly Code and report back. Mr. Michael returned later and said the ordinance states those in the city or its e.t.j. may apply; the application for Jack's has an address in Mt. Holly. Mr. Abernathy says he went out there and they are not there, it is a false address. Mr. Michael recommended staff investigate the statements on the application and take appropriate action. Council concurred.

Joel Hubbard, 413 W. Charlotte Avenue. His mother who lives at 1300 Oak Grove Drive, had asked him to come here for her to ask Council to do something about the Lentz-Springs House.

Mr. Ponder stated that the previous Council was favorable to the house being moved, and was lenient as to enforcement of the code. Councilman Stewart called Ms. Hershey about the lack of inactivity; she said the contractor left and they cannot get anyone to do the work because they pay one month after the work is done. Councilwoman Harris said we have been good about trying to work with them, but they have not communicated with us, and have taken no action. Councilman Hope said it has been well over a year, and we need to go on and do what we have to do.

Mrs. Opal Conrad, 114 Nantz Avenue. I have a problem with trying to exit out of my driveway because of the man at 112 Nantz Avenue. She brought a video. He has a privacy fence and parks outside of that. Councilman Hough said he went by that street and did have trouble seeing around, although this is not a heavily traveled street. She had maps of the street, and stated that she believes he is parking in the road right of way. Councilwoman Harris said it is dangerous, and he is not being nice, but the City cannot do anything about it because he is either on his property or on public right of way. Mr. Hough said she might be able to install a sight mirror.
No action.

ROUND TABLE
Councilman Hough said he would like to see a way to keep them from stripping all the trees from these new housing development tracts. Mr. Ponder said he knows the Planning Commission is working on that now. Councilman Stewart asked if we can do something about Riverfront Development to keep them from doing just like they did on Runnymeade. He asked the City Manager to call them and let them know we are concerned. Mayor said we can look at that on future phases.

Councilman Hough said he would like to see exit interviews in all departments, not just sanitation.

Councilman Hope said when we get a presentation it needs to be stated it is not a public hearing.

Councilman Helms said the developer who spoke tonight will have to appear before the Mountain Island Marine Commission. Councilman Hope said he looked at the development in Mecklenburg County. Councilman Stewart said that types of housing would be beneficial to the City as it provides a higher tax base that what usually results from residential development.

Councilman Stewart asked if the has heard from Parkdale Mills and the YMCA yet about their plans at Gateway. Mr. Ponder said they want to buy the land and develop it and push the YMCA closer to Highway 273, but as of now they have not come to an agreement with Crescent Resources. Mr. Stewart wondered if there is an estimate of the value of properties after development. Mr. Ponder said the watershed regulations impact the property, and they are looking to the county for help with utility costs. Mayor McLean said there is also two gas lines, and communications. Mr. Stewart said we should do what we can to encourage them to come here because of the impact on tax revenue and jobs.

Councilman Stewart asked about the Fire Department report, and why Catawba Heights is not included. Mr. Ponder said he has requested that and they are developing a report now.

Councilman Stewart said he has had over ten people mention to him about the ABC vote in Belmont, Cramerton, and other towns; have any of the rest of Council heard about this. Mr. Hough has had comments. Mr. Stewart said he has not had anyone say they have gotten a petition. Mrs. Harris and Mr. Helms said if the citizens want a referendum, they would vote to let them have one, but it has to be petitioned.

City Manager Ponder said the joint effort on the wastewater treatment plant is now in a position to begin negotiation; there is a lot of gossip and misinformation. He wanted to be sure Council is in agreement before he proceeds. It is proposed to be built in Southpoint Township. Councilman Hope asked if we can request the County to help pay for the study. Council concurred; Mr. Ponder will call the County Manager.

City Manager Ponder said the Optimists are cleaning out the basement of the old gym to use, but we only lease it. Councilman Hope said it is okay with him as long as the Schools don't object. Council concurred.

CLOSED SESSION

City Manager Ponder requested closed session for discussion of personnel matters. Council agreed upon **MOTION** by Councilman Stewart, seconded by Councilwoman Harris, with all in favor. Council returned to regular session upon **MOTION** by Councilwoman Harris, seconded by Councilman Stewart, with all in favor.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, upon motion duly made, seconded and carried.

Phillip S. Ponder Jr. Frank E. McLean

Clerk Mayor

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cpm