

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2002, 8:30 AM**

Present: Kenneth Edge, Chairman
John Henley, Commissioner
James Martin, County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Deputy County Manager
Cliff Spiller, Assistant County Manager
Amy H. Cannon, Assistant County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Tom Lloyd, Interim Planning/Inspections Director
Bill Peabody, Chief Zoning Inspector
Rhonda R. Britt, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Others: Press

Absent: Commissioner Jeannette Council (due to illness)

Chairman Edge called the meeting to order.

1. Invocation.

Commissioner Henley offered the Invocation.

2. Approval of Minutes: April 4, 2002 and May 14, 2002.

MOTION: Commissioner Henley offered a motion to approve the April 4, 2002 and May 14, 2002 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Commissioner Edge

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Consideration of Proposed Fees for the Planning/Inspections Department.

Juanita Pilgrim advised Tom Lloyd would be making the presentation to the Committee.

Mr. Lloyd noted there has been one fee change in the past twenty years. That was a zoning fee change when conditional use overlays were adopted in the late 1980's. He noted two options are being presented for consideration. One is higher than the other. He noted examples of costs with the new fees were arrived at by applying the proposed fees to actual 2001 cases. He reviewed the handouts for the committee members. He noted one of the reasons for the increase is so that the County's fees would be comparable to other jurisdictions. He noted Hope Mills is much higher than the County. The City of Fayetteville's fees are lower, but noted it is waiting to see what the County adopts before it adjusts its fee schedule.

Commissioner Henley asked if these proposed fees had been presented to and approved by the Planning Board or discussed with the homebuilder community.

Mr. Lloyd advised the fees had been presented to the Planning Board. No vote was taken, but the Planning Board endorsed the proposal. The proposals had not been discussed with the homebuilders.

Mr. Barrett noted the Planning Board was advised that the Finance Committee would consider the fees at its meeting on June 6th. They understood that a representative could attend and speak to the committee. The Planning Board noted that adjustments to the fee schedule need to be made. The Board noted its wish that the fees be increased as little as possible.

Mr. Lloyd stated the developers and builders concern would be with the fees for plat reviews and preliminary subdivision review. He noted the philosophy with the changes to the zoning fees was to keep the increases as little as possible for the individual citizen with small acreage. The larger increases are for 50 acres or more.

Chairman Edge noted the expenses incurred by the Planning/Inspections Department to perform these functions have not been discussed.

Mr. Lloyd noted an increase in expenses to the department has been seen for conditional use overlay districts. The costs for mailings and sign postings have remained the same. He believes the County has a lot of rezoning requests because the costs are minimal.

Commissioner Henley stated he would like to see comparisons with Hoke and Robeson counties. He noted that the fee adjustment is long overdue since it has not been done in twenty years. He feels the Committee should receive input from others involved to discuss the implications of the changes. He noted many local governments are increasing fees to deal with budget situations. He thinks they should speak to the developers and let them see the comparisons presented to the committee.

Mr. Martin noted the additional information requested on Hoke and Robeson counties could be gathered and discussed at the next meeting in July.

Mr. Peabody then reviewed the information with regard to the inspection fees for the committee. He noted the proposal would encourage more honest reporting of construction costs.

Mr. Lloyd noted the plumbing, mechanical and electrical fees would be based on the square footage of the structure.

Commissioner Henley asked if it would not be better to have a method that charged one fee to cover everything. He noted Harnett and Wake counties are doing that.

Mr. Martin noted one fee could be used for new construction and one fee for renovations, etc.

Mr. Barrett noted there was discussion with the Manufactured Housing Task Force about having the same zoning/inspection fee for houses and mobile homes. It was noted more inspections were needed for stick-built homes than for mobile homes.

Commissioner Henley noted the inspection fee for mobile home parks was too low. A fee should be charged when each unit is moved into the park. He noted he would like to have as many one-time fees as possible and make the process as simple as possible.

Chairman Edge noted he did not feel the increases are drastic.

It was noted that a representative of the Homebuilders and Surveyors should be invited to the next Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Barrett noted the committee may want to notify the municipalities participating in the Joint Planning Board to get concurrence from their governing boards.

Ms. Pilgrim then presented an analysis of inspections completed for the period July 1994 to June 30, 2001. This analysis indicated the number of inspections, employees used to perform the inspections, the revenue generated and the costs. She noted the fees are not generating enough revenue to cover the salaries of the inspectors performing the tasks.

It was noted the Finance Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 4, 2002 which is a holiday.

It was the consensus of the committee to hold its next meeting at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, July 2, 2002. It was noted the appropriate persons will be forwarded information, but advised the committee would not be holding a public hearing.

4. Other Committee Concerns.

No other committee concerns were raised.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 AM.