CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 20, 2004

The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on this date, at the hour of 6:00 p.m., in the Commission Chamber of the Cleveland County Administrative Offices.

PRESENT: Mary S. Accor, Chairwoman

Ronald J. Hawkins, Vice-Chair Tom Bridges, Commissioner Willie B. McIntosh, Commissioner Jerry L. Self, Commissioner R. L. Alexander, County Manager

David Dear, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director

Bob Yelton, County Attorney Wanda Crotts, CMC, County Clerk Patricia D. Spangler, Deputy Clerk Raymond Hamrick, Sheriff

Eddie Bailes, Human Resources Director

Bill McCarter, Planning Director

Joy Scott, The Star

Jennipher Hammerstein, Cleveland Headline News Other individual names on file in the Clerk's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Accor called the meeting to order and led the audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag of the United States of America. Vice-Chairman Hawkins provided the invocation for the meeting.

AGENDA ADOPTION

<u>ACTION</u>: Ronnie Hawkins made the motion, seconded by Willie McIntosh, and adopted by a unanimous vote of the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the County Clerk*.

CITIZEN RECOGNITION

John McBrayer encouraged Commissioners to "leave open" the Sunset Drive, stating he has heard "several people say they are willing to donate labor to repair the wooden barrier."

He also discussed the "increasing drug problem in the county" and suggested citizens meet with Commissioners and the Sheriff to "try to come up with solutions."

Economic development was another area of concern for Mr. McBrayer, stating he is usually not "negative" but feels the "county is hurting." He cited a recent loss in recruitment of an industry and R. L. Alexander, County Manager, outlined the process by which this industry had been recruited and explained the reasoning for their decision to select the South Carolina site.

IN-HOME CARE FOR ELDERLY CITIZENS

Robert Williams distributed a letter to Commissioners outlining his concerns regarding the need for one central location or one person to assist elderly citizens in accessing the programs and services they need. He advised a citizen had contacted him requesting he help her obtain services. Chairwoman Accor advised Mr. Williams she would personally see this situation was brought to the attention of Social Services.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There being no corrections, additions, or deletions to the minutes of *March 11, 2004* and *April 6, 2004*, motion was made by Ronnie Hawkins, seconded by Willie McIntosh, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *approve the minutes as written*.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #026)

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Tom Bridges, and unanimously adopted

by the Board, to approve the following budget amendments.

by the board, to a	pprove the following budget amendments.		
Account Number	Department/Account Name	Increase	<u>Decrease</u>
012.516.4.350.01	SMART START/Stave Gov't Grant-Sm. St.	\$ 2,500.	
012.516.5.211.00	SMART START/Controlled Property Exp.	2,500.	
012.530.4.810.00	GENERAL/Donations & Contributions	150.	
012.530.5.790.00	GENERAL/Donations & Contributions	150.	
012.531.4.810.00	AIDS/Donations & Contributions	250.	
012.531.5.790.00	AIDS/Donations & Contributions	250.	
012.531.4.510.00	AIDS/Local & Other Grants	8,500.	
012.531.4.980.10	AIDS/Contr. From Local Funds	\$	5,317.
012.531.5.121.00	AIDS/Salaries/Reg.	2,282.	
012.531.5.131.00	AIDS/FICA	142.	
012.531.5.132.00	AIDS/Retirement	112.	
012.531.5.135.00	AIDS/Employer 401K	114.	
012.531.5.136.00	AIDS/Medicare Ins.	33.	
012.531.5.310.00	AIDS/Travel	500.	
012.532.4.810.00	TB/Donations & Contributions	40.	
012.532.5.790.00	TB/Donations & Contributions	40.	
012.533.4.350.00	ADULT HEALTH/State Government Grants	\$	5,317.
012.533.4.980.00	ADULT HEALTH/Contr. From Local Funds	5,317.	
012.541.4.350.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/State Gov't Grants	7,098.	
012.541.5.121.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/Salaries-Reg	5,180.	
012.541.5.131.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/FICA	321.	
012.541.5.132.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/Retirement	253.	
012.541.5.135.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/Employer 401K	259.	
012.541.5.136.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/Medicare Ins.	75.	
012.541.5.211.00	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/Cont.Property Exp	. 1,010.	
Explanation:			
516)Budget S	Smart Start funds for purchase of PC/printer.		
,	lonation from Shelby Community Lions Club for e		
	lonation from Shoal Creek Baptist Church for med		
531) Budget in	ncrease in AIDS Consortium funds for salaries/fric	lge and tra	vel. Will transfer county f

- 531) Budget increase in AIDS Consortium funds for salaries/fridge and travel. Will transfer county funds to 533 to offset cut in State funds.
- 532) Budget donation from American Lung Association for miscellaneous TB incentives.
- 533) Transfer county funds from 531 to offset reduction in State BCCCP screening funds.
- 541) Budget state food and lodging inspection funds for overtime, longevity and merit pay of existing Environmental Health staff.

3RD PARTY PASS THRU: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #027)

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Tom Bridges, and unanimously adopted

by the Board, to approve the following budget amendments.

Account Number	Department/Account Name	Increase	Decrease
010.432.4.410.00	3rd Party Pass Thru/Other Grants	\$ 3,000.	
010.432.5.700.00	3rd Party Pass Thru/Grants	3,000.	

<u>Explanation of Revisions:</u> To budget funds to be received from the NC Rural Center that will pass through Cleveland County. Funding approved for City of Kings Mountain to operate an Internet lab and classes to the people of Cleveland County and surrounding areas.

SOCIAL SERVICES: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #029)

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Tom Bridges, and unanimously adopted

by the Board, to approve the following budget amendments.

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Account Number	Department/Account Name	Increase	<u>Decrease</u>
011.519.4.310.00	Public Assistance/Federal Government Grants	\$ 36,794.	
011.519.5.512.05	Public Assistance/Crisis	36,794.	

<u>Explanation of Revisions:</u> Budget amendment necessary to accept additional Crisis Intervention funds for FY 03/04.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #030)

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Tom Bridges, and unanimously adopted

by the Board, to approve the following budget amendments.

Account Number	Department/Account Name	Increase	<u>Decrease</u>
012.533.4.650.00	Adult Health/Medicare	\$ 6,000.	
012.533.5.490.00	Adult Health/Professional Services	6,000.	
012.537.4.510.00	Child Health/Departmental Fees	4,000.	
012.537.4.610.00	Child Health/Insurance Fees	2,000.	
012.537.5.513.00	Child Health/Hospital & doctor fees	6,000.	
012.539.4.350.00	Family Planning/State Gov't Grants	7,625.	
012.539.5.121.00	Family Planning/Salaries-Reg.	6,487.	
012.539.5.131.00	Family Planning/FICA	402.	
012.539.5.132.00	Family Planning/Retirement	317.	
012.539.5.135.00	Family Planning/Employer 401K	325.	
012.539.5.136.00	Family Planning/Medicare Insurance	94.	
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Explanation of Revisions:

- 533) Budget additional funds needed to cover lab fees for pap smears thru year end.
- 537) Budget funds for hospital and doctors fees for expenses to be incurred during absence (vacations/sick leave) of Physician Extender.
- 539) Budget DHHS funds to cover longevity/merits for current staff in that department.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #031)

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Tom Bridges, and unanimously adopted

by the Board, to *approve the following budget amendments*.

<u>Account Number</u>	Department/Account Name	Increase	<u>Decrease</u>
010.441.4.810.00	Sheriff/Contributions & Donations	\$ 1,500.	
010.441.5.790.00	Sheriff/Donations & Contributions	1,500.	
010.440.4.810.00	Sch. Resource Officer/Contributions & Donations	1,000.	
010.440.5.790.41	Sch. Resource Officer/Donations-DARE	1,000.	
Explanation of Re	visions:		

Explanation of Revisions:

- 441) Donations received from calendar sales conducted by Beaty Sales Sheriff's Journal
- 443) Wal-Mart donations, both were designated to be used to thank officers for their dedication and service to the community.

TAX COLLECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

The Tax Collector provided Commissioners with the following detailed written report regarding taxes collected during *March 2004* (copy found on Page _____ of Minute Book 27).

2004 STAR STUDENTS: RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS

Commissioners presented a certificate of recognition to each of the following students who are the five top students in their graduating class:

Burns High School

Diana Michelle Davis

Shauna Marie Porter

Meredith Ann Royster

Christopher Andrew Elliott

Troy Matthew Dellinger

Crest High School

Katie Lynn Gantt

Stacy Ann Hall

Sarah Elizabeth Koch

Jonathan Mendle Smith

Aaron Brian Stitzel

Kings Mountain High School

Jacqueline Marie Jarvis

Kristen Leigh Ammay

Lauren Petty Horne

Charles Justin Smith

Hayley Krista Flynn

Shelby High School

Sarah Jean Miller

Andrew Charles Hayek

VIDEO GAMING MACHINES - PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENT

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Ronnie Hawkins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to open the public hearing. (Public notice of this hearing was accomplished in accordance with NCGS 153A-343. Legal advertisements published in the Star on April 7 and April 14, 2004.)

Bill McCarter reviewed the history of the proposed amendments, "Sheriff Hamrick and Lt. Shores came to us back in the fall of 2003 to request the assistance of the Planning Board in developing standards for the placement of video gaming machines in the county. Currently, the machines are permitted only in a General Business zoning district. We have 67 sites in the county jurisdiction with registered machines, 57 are in residential zoning districts. The Sheriff's office did not realize until this fall that zoning would limit where these machines could be located."

Mr. McCarter explained, "The Planning Board discussed various changes to the code and reviewed the standards adopted by Kings Mountain. The Board felt the best option to address these existing machines over time was to require a conditional use permit for each location every three years. Sites in residential areas could be amortized over a period of time, as recommended by the county attorney. After this time period, the sites would also need to obtain a Conditional Use permit and comply with new standards."

A memorandum to Commissioners from Mr. McCarter provided the following background information:

Our proposed code amendment would continue to limit this use to GB zoning, but also require a conditional use permit to be issued by the Board of Adjustment. This process would allow input from the neighbors through a public hearing. In addition, new arcades would need to be located at least 1000 feet from a church or school.

Unfortunately, of the 67 sites in the county jurisdiction with registered machines, 57 are in residential zoning districts. The previous Sheriff did not require the owners to obtain a zoning permit prior to registering these machines. Sheriff Hamrick is very concerned about these machines located in residential areas. He reported to our board that in 2003, there were 11 robberies in the county, 8 were at a location where video gaming machines were located (73%). In order to correct this problem over time using zoning standards, we must determine an amortization period. Amortization allows a non-conforming use to remain for a specified grade period after a zoning standard has been amended so that the owner can try to recoup much of their investment, and after that period of time the non-conforming use must be brought into compliance or removed.

The Planning Board has recommended the attached (reference Pages ________of Minute Book ______) amendment to the zoning code, but suggested that the county attorney provide you with advice on the amortization period. The City of Kings Mountain allowed a six-month amortization period (7-25-2000 to 1-31-2001). This time was challenged in Superior Court and upheld, and again in the NC Court of Appeals and dismissed. Mr. Corry indicated that a second case was upheld in Superior Court in December 2003 and this case is now being appealed to the NC Court of Appeals.

Mr. McCarter said, "After the amortization period ends, the sites in the residential areas would also need to comply with zoning and would begin to go through that Conditional Use permit process and be reviewed every three years like the other sites." He said, "In the proposed code amendments, we've identified the need for a definition of what video gaming machine is, we've also indicated in the Table of Uses that should be amended to specify an arcade with video gaming and that would be permitted by a Conditional Use permit in GB; then creating a new section, Section 12-157, called Video Gaming Machines. Under that section it talks about the Conditional Use process. It also identifies some separation standards that a new location would need to meet when it comes to the Board of Adjustment for that permit. Under those standards, the minimum distance from a school or church would be 1000 feet as measured from the property line boundary containing the arcade to the property line boundary containing a church or school and that property has to be used for education or religious purposes, as we realize there are a lot of locations or property out there that are donated to churches that would not need to be measuring these standards from." He said, "Also, another standard they saw in the

Kings Mountain ordinance was machines must be visible from the exterior of the building facing the public road . . . it would also need to meet all other State and federal laws. The Board of Adjustment also has the authority to request supplemental information in that permitting process and we've identified several of the items they would typically ask for to be provided with the application."

There was discussion regarding amortization or "grandfathering" existing sites. Mr. McCarter stated two sites were registered by the Sheriff's Office prior to the October 3, 2000 adoption of county wide zoning; however, none have zoning permits. There was also discussion regarding the definitions of the basic terms and how long the Planning Board deliberated on this issue before sending it to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Self asked, "The 1000 feet separation from a school or church, that would also imply that if a video gaming machine was in place, then a church couldn't build within 1000 feet of it." Mr. McCarter stated, "That would be up to the church. It would have a long-term affect in that if you choose to do the three-year permitting cycle, that the next time that location came up for review, it basically would be in violation of that standard, but it would not prevent the church from building there." Commissioner Self said, "I guess the question to me is if there is a reason to separate the two, then there's a reason to separate them, a logical reason, so if there is a video poker machine, you shouldn't allow a church or school to be built close to it." Commissioner McIntosh said he felt this was a "fairness" issue and "this is one-sided." There was discussion regarding various aspects of how the zoning restrictions are applied; actions taken to inform those in violation since the previous Sheriff didn't enforce the permitting requirement for machines; the different interpretations of terms used within the code, the difficulty in defining every situation that may be encountered, and the "federal government standards" publication which attempts to define all the different applications of terms; conditional use permits and for what reasons they can be denied.

Chairwoman Accor opened the floor to receive public comment and the following people spoke regarding the proposed amendments:

Andrew Hopper (opposition) said he would like to see these "concerned citizens" put this "energy" toward combating drugs and violent crime and that people "need to get their priorities straight."

John Smith (opposition) said he felt video machines were used for fun and supplied jobs and tax revenue and it "will not stop" if prohibited but will only "change venue."

Wanda Bowen (opposition) said the machines are used as amusement and that focus should be on drugs and "so many other things that need to be addressed other than poker."

Roy Van Floyd (opposition) said machines are legal in North Carolina and generate revenue and that law enforcement should focus on unsolved murders and drugs.

Franklin Rudisill (opposition) said he had tried to get his property rezoned in order to install video machines and his petition was denied.

Rev. Charles Reed (support) said he was concerned about video poker due to crime and the disruptive elements that follow it.

Sheriff Raymond Hamrick stated, "I've heard the talk about there's not violence in the video gaming industry or where the communities are at and I go and pull records from our Sheriff's office from the robberies that have occurred and the record speaks for itself that 20 businesses out of 44 armed robberies last year were video poker establishments. I to agree that drugs are a major concern. I've addressed this board of commissioners two or three times already and expressed my concerns in needing additional help and that sort of thing to help in the fight to combat the drug problems. I would like for these people to have been here when I was fighting for that also. Drugs is a terrible problem and I will continue to fight against that but to say there is no violence associated with that I don't agree with that . . . I didn't invent the zoning ordinance, we found this by going over the zoning ordinance, we found where those 57 locations were zoned. Don't blame me for that problem, I wasn't in control in that time, but we have to address it now for the future. I'm going to ask you to address it and I'm going to ask you to support our position in that those businesses be amortized, I have no problem with that, but I certainly think we need to address it in a neighborhood, especially when there is a potential for violent crime, like armed robberies, to occur in a neighborhood where there are children present or near a school or near a church."

Chairwoman Accor stated, "One thing that you mentioned is the neighborhood and how you had heard this discussion of how it was affecting the neighborhoods. There are some neighborhoods out there right now

that if this is passed, those neighborhoods may be affected also. . . . I don't want my problems to become another neighbors problems, if I can't clean it up, I don't want to send it to another neighbor." Sheriff Hamrick noted that municipalities have the option of adopting a similar ordinance.

Commissioner McIntosh said, "This kind of looks like we're taking a law enforcement issue and trying to make a local government legislative issue out of it . . . ya'll did a great job three or four weeks ago when you busted people who were violating the law . . . if we pass this ordinance as presented, then out of these 67 establishments, then they can go to the other 10 municipalities that don't have zoning ordinances and then you got the same problem again and I'm sure then you'd be required to go see if they were gambling anyway. So, why can't you just continue to investigate and bust the people that are illegal, take the machines from them and arrest them?" The Sheriff responded, "I'm not trying to make a zoning issue out of it, but like I said earlier, we found this in the zoning law, we didn't make that issue, that issue was there was there when we took over and that issue had not been addressed, we just called it to the attention of the public."

David Morrow said he did not appear representing those for or against video poker but had "problems with the Sheriff trying to put these businesses out of business." He suggested a "permitting fee" be charged and the money used by the Sheriff's office to offset budget expenses.

Matthew Holland (support) said the discussion had gotten "off track" and this doesn't "have to do with the Sheriff" but is about "gambling and corruption and addictions." He said when video poker was banned in South Carolina it moved to North Carolina and read comments from other North Carolina Sheriffs regarding the need for control of video poker.

Rob Deaton, attorney representing "some of the video owners," said he agrees that this is a "law enforcement issue" in that the Legislature has made these machines legal in North Carolina. He said, "You've now had an unprecedented request by a Sheriff to make it a zoning issue. The zoning code as it's written right now, I tell you, it's going to bring on a wrath of issues and litigation . . . what you're seeking to limit are amusement parks and arcades." He said, "We as a society haven't regulated ourselves to having to come get a zoning permit every time we change the use of our business."

John Moses (opposed) said "a fool and his money are easily parted"; "there is no problem there is no help for"; you "can't blame whole community for what a few bad people are doing."

Darrell Blanton (support) said he is "against gambling period" and what is "best for the moral fiber of Cleveland County does not always mean what makes bottom line look good."

Johnny Lookabill (opposed) said people "gamble all the time" citing baseball, golf and other sports. He encouraged Commissioners "to consider not taking one of our rights away."

Wayne Blanton said he was "not against" video poker but feels it should be "in appropriate places" and not in a residential area.

Ted Easter (support) said the "elected officials are here to protect us" and things that are fun can often be dangerous giving the example of drug usage. He said this is not a "right" and Commissioners should consider "the moral fiber of the community."

Thurston Hamrick (opposed) said he felt this is a case where "zoning is being used to throw this in your lap to deal with and what will it be next week"; that you "can't protect everybody"; "you would not really be eliminating anything."

Bryan Gold (opposed) said "if the Sheriff hasn't been able to determine then why should it be up to the zoning officials."

<u>ACTION:</u> Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Ronnie Hawkins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *close the public hearing*.

There was lengthy discussion, with Commissioners expressing their concerns over various aspects of this issue and the proposed amendments.

<u>ACTION:</u> Ronnie Hawkins made the motion, seconded by Willie McIntosh, and **adopted by a** majority vote of the Board, to deny the planning board request to amend the code. (Votes were recorded as Commissioner Bridges voting no and all other Commissioners voting yes.)

Commissioners thanked Sheriff Hamrick for his efforts and assured him that "just because we don't agree on this" did not mean they do not support his efforts toward dealing with crime. Commissioners said they would discuss the possible development of a community crime taskforce during their next planning retreat.

Mr. Yelton stated, "Since there are discrepancies and problems with the ordinance as it exists now, especially with the definition or arcade, it could apply to your kiddie rides and things at different places, we've got some problems with our ordinance and enforcement and the way it's written. Mr. Alexander and I talked about it and we would like to recommend that you put a moratorium on enforcement on any part of the arcade provisions of the zoning ordinance until such time that we can develop the taskforce that you want and work out the wording and make it clearer in the ordinance what you want to do. This moratorium would mean no more permits for any arcades . . . at the present time." He suggested a six-month time for the moratorium. He noted "if they're breaking State Statute by paying off in excess of what is allowed by State Statute then it's still a criminal violation and the Sheriff should go after them . . . we are just saying we're going to leave everything in place the way it is now until we resolve it."

<u>ACTION:</u> Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Ronnie Hawkins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *initiate the moratorium as outlined by the County Attorney for a period of three months (August 1, 2004).*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PROPOSED acquisition OF PROPERTY (LOCATED AT 687 WASHBURN SWITCH ROAD)

<u>ACTION:</u> Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Ronnie Hawkins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to **open the public hearing**. (Public notice of this hearing was accomplished in accordance with NCGS 158-7.1 with a legal advertisement published in the Star on April 9, 2004.)

Mr. Alexander explained this property contains approximately 100.52 acres and is owned by Clorox Realty Company. The property is currently zoned Heavy Industrial and has rail access. In December 2003, an appraisal of the property was completed by Booth Realty Inc. and the final estimate of value was \$704,000.00.

Mr. Alexander advised the Cleveland County Chamber presently has the property under option for \$5,800.00 per acre. He said the property is near the new bypass and the jurisdictional stream "can be handled" and the wetlands are less than one-third of an acre. He said it would be an economic asset to the county to have this site ready to be marketed to any prospective industrial client.

Stuart Gilbert, Chamber President, advised the Chamber leadership is in support of this request, as this property is an ideal site to attract industry and subsequently jobs. He urged Commissioners to "give serious consideration to this site for new jobs and investment."

<u>ACTION:</u> Ronnie Hawkins made the motion, seconded by Willie McIntosh, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *close the public hearing*.

ACTION: Willie McIntosh made the motion, seconded by Ronnie Hawkins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, approve (1) acquiring the option; (2) to authorize the County Manager to seek mitigation process for the jurisdictional streams and pursue site certification, attempting to use Golden Leaf monies or other monies to help defray the cost of that action, however in the event those funds are not available, authorizated to use county funds to see those two things are accomplished for this site.

BOARD APPOINTMENT: CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ACTION: Ronnie Hawkins made the motion, seconded by Jerry Self, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to reappoint Mary Accor to serve as a member of the Social Service Board. This reappointment is for a period of three-years, scheduled to conclude June 30, 2007.

BOARD APPOINTMENT: CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

ACTION: Tom Bridges made the motion, seconded by Jerry Self, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to (1) appoint Leon Leonhardt and Edward Lee to serve as members of the Board of Adjustment (three-year terms, scheduled to conclude December 31, 2007); and, (2) appoint Bill Chambless and Joe Beiker to serve as alternate members.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time (8:35 p.m.), Ronnie Hawkins
made the motion, seconded by Willie McIntosh, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to adjourn the meeting
The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for <i>Tuesday, May 4, 2004, at 6:00 p.m.</i>
Mary S. Accor, Chairwoman CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CLE VELAND COON I' BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Wanda Crotts, CMC, Clerk CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
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