

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWN OF LAKE LURE, N.C.
September 21, 1977

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held in the Community Building September 21, 1977 at 7:30 p.m. The following members were present: Mayor J. Paul Wilson, Commissioners Claude R. Nelon, A.T. Cashion, Jr., and Town Attorney Martin L. Nesbitt, Jr.

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order and asked that the minutes of a regular meeting held on August 16, 1977 be read. Upon completion motion was made by Commissioner Cashion, seconded by Commissioner Nelon they be accepted as read and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Nelon reported a visit from Mr. W.J. Sherrill, Program Officer, Governor's Highway Safety Program. The Office of Highway Safety Proposes to implement a program, effective October 1977, to assist Municipalities in improving their traffic and street identification signs and establishing a method for performing periodic maintenance so their overall condition is not allowed to become degraded in the future. Signs will be procured from Prison Enterprises with the Municipality paying 50% of the cost for regulatory signs and 30% for nonregulatory signs. Commissioner Cashion made a motion to request the Municipal Signing Program, seconded by Commissioner Nelon and the vote was unanimous.

Mayor Wilson read the minutes of two special meetings, one held on August 23rd and the other August 26th. Commissioner Nelon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cashion to accept both as read and the vote was unanimous. The minutes are hereto attached.

Mrs. Burch reported the Town received recognition and a \$50.00 check in the last county beautification judging.

Mayor Wilson read a letter, submitted by Mr. Bell, requesting the Town to post in a public place the names of all delinquent tax payers. The letter is attached to the minutes. Mr. Nesbitt briefly ^(EXPLAINED) the mechanics of tax collection and after a discussion between the Board and Mr. Nesbitt motion was made by Commissioner Nelon seconded by Commissioner Cashion to review unpaid taxes every three years. The vote was unanimous.

Mayor Wilson announced the forthcoming benefit golf tournament, being held at Fairfield Mountains, for the Bills Creek Volunteer Fire Department and the Hickory Nut Gorge Emergency Medical Service. It is to be held October 29th. Entry fees for the tournament will be \$10.00. Mayor Wilson next gave the police report for the month of August. A copy is attached to the minutes. He also informed the citizens present the Board had hired a new policeman, David Bond, who will be sworn in this week.

Commissioner Cashion read excerpts of a letter from the N.C. League of Municipalities encouraging officials to secure voter approval for a

\$230 million Clean Water Bond issue on November 8th. He went on to say that municipalities will be the principal recipients of the proceeds from these bond funds. Over the next five years these bonds will provide 50% of the municipal share of the cost for water pollution control projects and up to 25% of municipal cost for water supply projects. Next he gave the fire report for August. A copy is attached to the minutes.

The Board discussed the need for a backhoe. Commissioner Nelson suggested it be tabled until the Board could meet and go over some literature before making a decision.


Motion was made by Commissioner Cashion to have Mr. Nesbitt draw up an ordinance, for the Boards approval, to prohibit anyone from opening or closing a dam within the corporate limits of Lake Lure without first obtaining permission ^{from} ~~from~~ the Town Board. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Nelson and the vote was unanimous.

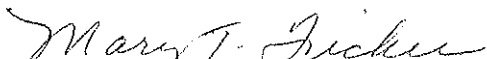
Commissioner Nelson reported, Mr. Charles Hedgepeth suggested working with the county on building codes and zoning. He went on to say cities and counties with a population of 25,000 and under must arrange for enforcement of a building code by July 1, 1985. Next Mr. Nelson reported that Mr. Roger Lyda, Town Engineer and a scientist are planning to use a hydrophone to try to locate the inflow of water into the sewer lines.

Mayor Wilson informed the citizens present that the lake needed to be lowered to install seals and hoist chains on the flood gates and to disassemble, inspect, clean and repair a generator and turbine that is now inoperative. Motion was made by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Cashion to start lowering the lake January 2, 1978 and the vote was unanimous.

Mrs. Martha Near thanked the Town for all the work they had done in preparation for the beautification judging. She asked the Board to clean again before the next judging which will be held on October 11th, 12th and 13th, plant the willow trees, paint the walkway in front of the planters white, mark the shuffleboard courts and if possible connect the water fountain.

There being no further business motion was made by Commissioner Cashion, seconded by Commissioner Nelson the meeting be adjourned and the vote was unanimous.


J. Paul Wilson, Mayor


Mary T. Ficker, Clerk

Lake Lure N.C.
Sept 20th 1977

Honorable Mayer and Councilmen
Town of Lake Lure
(Here we go again)

Since we will not be at the meeting tomorrow night, we are sending this proposition along for your consideration.

It should be recalled that a couple of years ago in discussion of ways to improve the collection of delinquent taxes, we suggested that at an appropriate date each year a list of tax delinquents and the amount of their delinquency be for the taxable and previous years be prominently posted at the Town Hall. In the discussion but not by formal action this suggestion was rejected on the feeling that such measure would be "embarrassing to such delinquents". We commented at the time that that was just too bad that anyone could avoid such embarrassment by paying, when due, their just taxes for the provision of the excellent services rendered by the Town- rather than having their neighbors carry their share of the load which, by their failure, increases each year. We stated then that this is not a new or radical idea, it dates back to colonial times. Now we are sure Council will be interested that this collection device has been introduced in other parts of the country as reported in the attached press clippings (Charlotte Observer- Wall St. Journal) So- we again recommend this proposition for Council consideration. Surely, if these proper Bostonians can be brought to bit by such publication, it should work to some extent in Lake Lure, human nature being as it is. We appreciate that Council knows that in preparing the budget every delinquent dollar must be replaced by increased levy. The proposed idea does more than act as a collection device for delinquents- people will appreciate that they pay up when due or be proscribed as delinquents.

This suggestion is made as an action that might be taken to supplement the ~~excellent~~- excellent program which Council, its Attorney and Town staff have been pursuing in the past several years- a program that is showing that it can be done. We also are mindful of recent legislation restricting onerous collection practices. Whether such apply to the instant case we leave to the Attorney.

Since a number of taxpayers have expressed their interest in this proposal we feel that it might be given public notice at the meeting if in the opinion of Council it is appropriate or at least, that it be recorded in the minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph V. Bell
Ch Ann Bell

Joseph V. Bell

9/9/77

Dead or Alive?

Boston is trying a novel idea for collecting delinquent property taxes. "Wanted" posters with pictures of prominent residents who are behind on their payments are being posted around town.

The theory is that by treating residents of Beacon Hill or other prosperous enclaves as common criminals, the city could sharply reduce its \$50 million or so in overdue bills. Leading citizens would flock to city hall, checks in hand, pleading to have their pictures removed from Park Square billboards.

Public exposure is a powerful weapon, but there is another possibil-

ity to consider. Some of those prominent citizens might decide to make a run for it and escape to more liberal jurisdictions, like New Hampshire. That's not so unlikely when you consider that the flight of middle- and upper-class taxpayers to escape high taxes and other disincentives to living and doing business in cities is a major reason for a good many of the fiscal problems of urban centers.

If that happens, we suppose Boston could go a step further towards bringing back Western frontier law and hire itself some bounty hunters. But maybe things aren't that desperate yet.

9/9/77

Boston Mounts Photo Show to Embarrass Citizens, Firms for Unpaid Property Tax

By MITCHELL C. LYNCH

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

BOSTON—Two aides rolled out a red carpet. Mayor Kevin White strode to the podium. Others ripped away brown paper to unveil a grainy photo exhibit.

On display were portraits of property owners and buildings that are allegedly overdue on their property tax payments to the city.

Thus began another episode in Boston's drive to embarrass property-tax delinquents into paying their back taxes.

In the collection drive, begun a few months ago, lists have been published of alleged tax owers, the building housing the Boston Stock Exchange has been taken over, cabs have been seized from unsuspecting taxi drivers, and an unsuccessful attempt has been made to snatch a helicopter owned by trial lawyer F. Lee Bailey.

So far, city officials say, the drive has brought in about \$15 million of overdue money. Overall, Boston gets about \$415 million a year in tax revenue.

The drive, unofficially called Operation Embarrassment, is aimed at retrieving about \$10 million in money the city claims has been owed for years by some property owners. Most U.S. municipalities routinely try to collect back taxes, but few have been as zealous in their efforts as Boston.

The photos unveiled yesterday at Boston City Hall included close-ups of a state senator and a former city building inspector, a front view of the Boston Stock Exchange

and a picture of a boxcar owned by Penn Central Transportation Co.

The exhibit, entitled Selected Professional Tax Delinquents, will be shown for a week in the City Hall lobby and later moved to other places in the city, Mayor White said.

Eastern Paid \$2 Million

Also displayed was a photo of an Eastern Airlines jet. But slapped across it was a red-lettered "paid" sign. Eastern paid about \$2 million in back taxes while the exhibit was being assembled, officials said.

Speaking before television cameras and a group of news reporters and City Hall workers, Mayor White said the exhibition was "obviously a little dramatic." Still, he added, pointing to the photos, "We're going to pursue them and seek to embarrass them."

Newell Cook, assistant city treasurer in charge of the embarrassment program, says it is aimed largely at "showing the honest taxpayers that the others aren't going to get away without paying."

Boston's property taxes last year were increased 28%, prompting, among other things, complaints that some property owners were escaping payment. Mr. Cook said the delinquents make up about 5% of the city's listed property owners.

He said the city began its publicity campaign only against those who received overdue-tax notices and refused to answer them. "That's why we're going after some of the

big people, to give this thing some clout," he says.

Among those to feel the pressure were some Boston cab drivers, who found their license plates and medallions taken away by city tax collectors. Mr. Cook said cab-company dispatchers were ordered to call in the unsuspecting drivers.

Later, the cab companies paid a total of \$5,000 as a first installment on their total tax bill, Mr. Cook says, and the plates and medallions were returned.

Takeover of Exchange Building

Last month, city tax collectors formally took over the building housing the Boston Stock Exchange for one day, until the building owner got a restraining order from the court, Mr. Cook says.

He named Harold Theran and Old State Trust as owners of the building, claiming that they owe the city around \$2 million. Mr. Theran wasn't available for comment at Old State Trust yesterday.

Last week, Mr. Cook himself and two Boston policemen traveled to an airport in Plymouth, Mass., to seize a helicopter owned by Mr. Bailey, the lawyer. The helicopter, Mr. Cook says, was to fly the craft 10 miles to Boston Common, a park in the center of the city, where it would be "on display for the public."

The helicopter wasn't there when Cook arrived at the airport. He said the policemen tried to look into a hangar but were told that they couldn't because they didn't have court warrants.

Mr. Cook says Mr. Bailey owes \$18,000 in personal property taxes. Johnson, Mr. Bailey's lawyer, said "personal property" consists of furnishings and fixtures that have been

rather than bought. Therefore, he says, they aren't subject to personal property taxes.

Tax Suit Filed in July

The city filed a civil tax suit in Boston municipal court against Mr. Bailey in July, and formal court notification papers were delivered to him in August, Mr. Johnson says.

"We had thought this was a matter of litigation," he says, "We were prepared to answer to the court" at the time Mr. Cook tried to snatch the helicopter.

While the collection drive has been lauded by many, it has been criticized by others, and the situation points up the hazards of such a sweeping move.

For example, when the city released the full list of alleged tax delinquents, it said Fidelity Management & Research Co., part of the big mutual-fund concern, owed \$300,000. After that appeared in the local newspapers, Fidelity complained. The city treasurer's office said the mistake was a "clerical error," Mr. Cook says.

Mr. Cook says that Penn Central owes Boston nearly \$18 million in back taxes and that both sides are trying to work out a plan for payment.

Town of Lake Lure

LAKE LURE, N. C. 28746

S. R. SWARINGEN
Chief of Police

704/625-9396

POLICE REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1977. TOTAL FOR ONE OFFICER

Miles Patrolled -----	3,250	Miles
Calls Answered -----	203	Calls
Traffic Accidents Investigated -----	4	Accidents
Breaking and Entering -----	0	
Larceny -----	1	
Total Loss -----	\$50.00	
Hours Worked on Lake -----	134	Hours
Total Hours Worked -----	468	Hours

Town of Lake Lure

LAKE LURE, N. C. 28746

9-12-77

Report of Lake Lure Vol Fire Dept--

The department has answered one fire call in the past month. The loss was about \$1,000. The building was worth \$35,000 with contents of \$15,000.


William H. Burch, Chief