

Montgomery County Commissioners Meeting
May 17, 2005 ~ 5:30 p.m.

Chairman – William D. Maness
Vice Chairman – Sally M. Morris
Commissioner – Dolon W. Corbett
Commissioner - R.C. Bostic

Commissioner – George H. Knight, Jr.
County Manager - Lance Metzler
Finance Officer – Cathy S. Baxter
County Attorney – Russell J. Hollers

The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 5:30 p.m. in a regular session. All members of the board were present. *Chairman Maness called the meeting to order.*

Invocation

Commissioner Bostic gave the invocation.

Approval of the Minutes

In a motion made by Commissioner Corbett, seconded by Commissioner Bostic, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

Public Forum

Mrs. Jimmie Morris was present to discuss her mother's water account. Her name is Vesta Gatta. She lives in Florida and was going to move back to the property on 109 with a water bill. She will not be able to come now because she is in a wheel chair and her husband has had a stroke. Mr. Maness asked if they are going to sell it. Mrs. Morris said as a last resort. If anything it would be divided.

Commissioner Corbett asked where it is at? Mrs. Morris said it is the old Ida Harris Plantation on 109 N.

Mr. Corbett asked if anyone is renting it? Mrs. Morris said my brother was.

Chairman Maness directed Mr. Metzler to check the rules and regulations for anything that might apply to this.

Mrs. Debbie Walser was present regarding the rules with signs placed in the courthouse yard. *She gave the following presentation:*

It saddens me to have to bring this to your attention, again. Commissioners, all of you are well aware of the problems that I have faced this year with the Crime Victim Ceremony Banner. Due to recent events that have taken place in the past couple of weeks, I fill it is necessary to bring this situation to your attention, once again. At least a couple of you know about the ceremony because of your attendance; one of you lights a candle each year for your family member. I want to give all of you a little background about this banner and what it represents.

For three (3) years, Southern Correctional Institution and Montgomery County Sheriff's Office have placed this banner on the northwest corner of the courthouse lawn. It has been approved by the County Manager each year. The first year he told me that signs were not allowed to be displayed on the courthouse lawn, but that he would look into the matter and get back with me. He called me and said that since it is a county government ceremony that it would not be a problem and he told me where to place it on the lawn.

The reason for this banner is to let the public know that the ceremony is taking place to honor and remember crime victims in Montgomery County. The banner is up for two (2) weeks out of the month of April (This is when our nation honors and remembers crime victims throughout our country). We like placing the banner at the courthouse because this is a county government ceremony and the courthouse is public property. The ceremony is held on the courthouse lawn, unless in the event of rain. We receive assistance from the DA's Office, Clerk of Courts Office, 2nd graders at Troy Elementary School, West and East Montgomery High Schools, and various other volunteer's who give their time to come and make this ceremony special for crime victims in Montgomery County. This ceremony has been so successful for these victims that it has grown over the years bringing other victims and their families from various counties in North Carolina. It is also a ceremony that is endorsed by our Governor.

We chose the courthouse because it represents our Justice System. Even though some of the victims do not always receive the justice that they deserve, the courthouse is the heart of our county and the foundation of our Justice System. It is the solid rock upon which victims and their families can come together for closure, connection, and comfort during a ceremony that was created to recognize them, honor and remember them, as well as to let them know that they are not alone. As one of my victims has said, "The ceremony is more like a like a memorial for my daughter."

The pain inflicted and the sadness of it all is that the crime victims are forgotten and that is why I am here. I have to speak out for them because they are no longer here to be heard. If you have never faced losing someone due to a violent crime or have never experienced violence committed against you, you have no clue of how your life can be changed in a matter of seconds. The pain, the sorrow, and the fear will haunt you for the remainder of your life. All you will have left are the memories of the one you loved and the emptiness left behind.

As you are well aware it was brought to my attention that a few veterans complained about the banner blocking the monument. I want you to know that this is not the general consensus, as they do not speak for all veterans on this issue. But, I can tell you that I do speak for all crime victims in our county, in our state, and in our country. I will not allow these crime victims to be victimized a second time. I was very saddened with such disbelief that anyone could complain about the banner. The Victim Crime Ceremony recognizes our active military, and honors our retirees, as well as remembers our veterans. They are the reason we enjoy the rights and freedom of being American. I guess that is why it has caught me so off guard that the banner should be an issue now.

The banner has never been an issue with anyone until this year, and that is why it is so sad that someone would push an agenda with so much disgrace. I have always supported the Veterans of Montgomery County because I, too, have family members' names inscribed on these monuments, and that is why over the years I have felt so honored to place our banner by the monuments because the reality is that they are victims of crimes themselves. We support all veterans and soldiers who have fought and continue to fight and risk their lives each and everyday to ensure our basic human rights, freedom, and safety.

Commissioners, these monuments are in front of the courthouse lawn 365 days out of the year. All I am asking is that a resolution be passed for this banner to be placed in front of the courthouse lawn for two (2) weeks in the month of April where it has been for the past four (4) years. Please give these crime victims and their families a voice and a public place to come together as one. I ask for you to do what is right because someday I may be speaking out for you or for one of your loved ones. We cannot change what has happened to these victims, but we can make a difference in their lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important and worthwhile cause. Chairman Maness asked how long has the sign been put out there. Mrs. Walser said this was the fourth year.

Commissioner Knight asked what Mrs. Walser would suggest. Mrs. Walser said I truly understand sign regarding BBQ, etc. this is for county government. Mr. Knight said I was just trying to find out how would we respond. Chairman Maness asked if she has information from the Governor and get it to Mr. Metzler. Mrs. Walser said yes. As a matter of fact this is the 25th year since Ronald Reagan signed it.

John McIntyre was presented representing Cristina Histenroff. She lives close to Lovejoy Church. They came up to see if they could put a mobile home and zoning requires a doublewide. She can not afford a doublewide. She is a single mother with three kids. She is asking for a hardship waiver. I may have jumped the gun, that it could be done today. In all honesty, if a house was burned or damaged by hurricane, the owner should not be penalized.

Chairman Maness explained that all citizens have to go through the Planning Board and Phil Henley heads that up for us. Each commissioner has an appointee on that board.

Mr. McIntyre said why can't there be just a permit.

Mr. Maness asked when did your home burn? Christina Hattendorf said in April. Ms. Hattendorf had a Ziploc bag with all that is left from the fire. She said she was left with nothing. I am not one to ask for help. Mr. Maness said the next meeting will be the 27th. He explained we will be glad to rush it through, but there are procedure and policies in place that need to be followed. We have granted them before. Have you been to Phil's office? Mr. Henley said no. Mr. Maness said if you will get with Phil we can work on it.

Commissioner Bostic asked if she has the means to meet the qualifications of the state and county? Mrs. Hattendorf said yes.

Commissioner Bostic made a motion to dispense with the normal formalities to allow this lady to put in a singlewide that would meet the qualification of the state and county, with septic approval.

Commissioner Corbett seconded the motion.

Mr. Henley said the county's ordinance doesn't allow the board to override.

Mr. Knight said we have rules and regulations for a purpose, we can waive the fee. We don't have the authority the override rules.

Mrs. Morris asked if we can expedite and get on this Monday's meeting.

Mr. Henley said we would have to advertise and notify adjoining property owners.

Motion failed 2-3.

Mr. Corbett said doesn't her father have to come. Mr. Henley said yes.

Chairman Maness said asked Phil Henley to work with this lady to expedite.

Mr. Bostic said the motion didn't agree.

Mr. Corbett said we also need to have compassion.

In a motion made by Commissioner Corbett, seconded by Commissioner Bostic, and so the motion carried unanimously to waive the fees required for this case.

Mr. McIntyre said I wish you would revisit your ordinance regarding the hardship case. Mr. Maness said we will work with her.

He also talked about scholarships. He said I have been watching politics. I wish you would reconsider the Teaching Fellows Scholarship. We need teachers. It is money well spent. It is money well invested. 1 cent of the tax rate is not that much. We could get a good supply of teachers.

On 911, I am sure I got this letter today. If I can bring you valid figures that it will exceed \$125,000 will reconsider. Chairman Maness said if Lance brings to us.

Public forum policy should be re-titled to "Stop John McIntyre from Speaking". He said the last page. The Board of Commissioners will not address questions and go to the county manager's office. If I wanted to talk with him I wouldn't be here. Chairman

Maness said we all have phones at home. You are not doing the public a service by stopping them from asking questions.

Mr. McIntyre talked again on Mrs. Hattendorf's case.

Mr. Knight asked if he could make a suggestion. He said sometimes you help them you can take them by the hand and help them. There are a lot of church and clubs that will help. I don't intend to sit up here everyday and make new rules because what applies to you applies to me. There are a lot of people out here that are willing to help her financially, food etc. Mr. McIntyre said she has to have some place to put these things, she needs somewhere to call home.

Montgomery County Planning Committee for Services to the Elderly

In a motion made by Commissioner Corbett, seconded by Commissioner Morris, and so the motion carried unanimously to appoint Ralph Beane to serve on the Montgomery County Planning Committee for Services to the Elderly.

Pee Dee Region Workforce Development Board Appointment

In a motion made by Commissioner Morris, seconded by Commissioner Bostic, and so the motion carried unanimously to reappoint Jim Sanders, DSS Director to serve on the Pee Dee Region Workforce Development Board.

Budget Amendments

Cathy Baxter, County Finance Officer presented the following budget amendments. Chairman Maness explained there are 10 budget amendments. The board agreed to take all amendments that didn't require additional county funds all together. (That is all but Jail (BA 60/05)).

Home and Community Care Block Grant – (BA 53/05) - \$1,364.00

Health Department – Bioterrorism – (BA 54/05) - \$10,978.00

Health Department – Family Planning – (BA 55/05) - \$2,063.00

Water Department – (BA 56/05) - \$3,136,958.00

Water Department – (BA 57/05) - \$336,000.00

Board of Elections – (BA 58/05) - \$1,468.00

Maintenance Department – (BA 59/05) - \$21,286.80

Public Schools – Budget Amendment #14 - \$7,273,673.00

Health Department – (BA 61/05) - \$369.00

In a motion made by Commissioner Bostic, seconded by Commissioner Corbett, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve all budget amendments except the jail in one motion.

Jail

Mrs. Baxter said food and provision is over and expect medical care and drugs will be over.

Mrs. Morris if there is money from other line items? Mrs. Baxter said no. Mr. Corbett asked if there is any money left from the Pee Dee Community Building sale.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bostic and seconded by Commissioner Corbett.

Mr. Knight asked what is the biggest reason for the increase? Sheriff Jordan said what comes out of food and provision is food, juvenile detention, safe keeping, and over crowding female prisoners. The biggest problem this is we maintain more in safe keeping and more females. Mr. Knight said the reason I was asking could we put some of those items in another line item that would be more what it is for. Mrs. Baxter said we can add a new line item. Sheriff Jordan said it is kind of an unintentional disguised in this. Mr. Knight said we don't need to disguise it. There was a discussion that the county can not house juveniles.

The motion carried unanimously to approve this budget amendment.

Items Carried Forward from the Work Session

Public Forum Policy

In a motion made by Commissioner Morris, seconded by Commissioner Knight, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve the public forum policy contingent upon the changes that are to be made by the county manager.

Chairman Maness reminded the board of the tour of the alternative sites in the morning and other budget meetings.

There being no further business, Chairman Maness adjourned the meeting.

William D. Maness, Chairman

Laura B. Morton, Clerk to the Board