



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: JERRY D. ROSEBERRY, MAYOR; COUNCILMEMBERS: JIM WINDHAM; SARAH DAVIS; GEORGE HOLT; DAVID EADY; COUNCILMEMBERS TERRY SMITH AND LYN PACE WERE NOT PRESENT.

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Schwartz, City Manager; Dave Harvey, Police Chief; David Strickland, City Attorney; Hoyt & LaTrelle Oliver, Judy Greer, Mike & Cheryl Ready, Vivian Harris, Anderson Wright, Norbert Thompson, Kendra Mayfield, Carol and Neil Penn, William Moran

The meeting was called to order by the Hon. Jerry D. Roseberry, Mayor and the invocation given by Hoyt Oliver.

Pledge of allegiance

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Davis to accept the Agenda for the September 8, 2015 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting. The vote was 5 in favor and 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Attachment A

HONORARY COUNCILMEMBER

Mayor Roseberry announced Cheryl Ready as the Honorary Councilmember for September as appointed by Councilmember George Holt. Mayor Roseberry presented her with a Proclamation as appreciation for her participation. Attachment B

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Eady to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, August 3, 2015. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved. Attachment C

A motion was made by Eady, seconded by Windham to accept the Minutes of the Trees, Parks and Recreations June 9, 2015 meeting. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Attachment D

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS/PETITIONS

None

CITIZENS COMMENTS/CONCERNS

LaTrelle Oliver addressed Council and Cheryl Ready in thanking her for her representing the Trees, Parks and Recreation. LaTrelle then presented to all gathered and City Council her "Thoughts on Oxford's future".

Judy Greer announced that Mrs. Sharp wife of Homer Sharp passed last week. She asked that everyone keep them in their prayers.

Mayor's Reports

Mayor Roseberry reminded Council of the retreat on November 13 and asked City Clerk Luran Willis to explain the lunch options. After discussion everyone was in agreement of having Luran reserve the private dining room at the college cafeteria and all attendees will select their lunch based on their own preferences.

Mayor Roseberry presented Council with a copy of an article he sent to the Newton Citizen titled "Spirit of Collaboration Lives on in Newton County". This article reflects the work and successful collaboration with school systems partnering with local governments. Attachment F

Tree Board Report

As chair of the Tree, Parks, and Recreation Board, Cheryl Ready gave a Power Point presentation on the functions of the Tree Board explaining the Arbor Day festivities, restoration of the tree canopy, revitalization of the parks, the immediate needs for pruning the trees, and future activities.

Consulting Services for Funding of City Projects

Mayor Roseberry requested Council continue discussion regarding retaining Kay Lee, dba Church Street Services LLC, to assist the city in identifying sources for funding of city projects. Councilmember Eady expressed concern stating perhaps Council should solicit to see if there are others who may be interested, also stating that Council should first discuss having a project focus with an objective and asked if we are going to hire someone to design the park in a way that Council desires, and keeping cost in mind. Councilmember Windham said that after meeting with Kay all of these items and concerns were discussed as well as having a facilitator, and a project manager to help make decisions. Windham stated that Kay is someone with a strong personality; she knows how planning works; she is familiar with the college planning; she knows the community not only Oxford but county as well. She will be someone able to suggest proper ways in handling the projects and is reasonably priced. Councilmember Holt said for clarification she would not be put on payroll that she would be assigned to projects based on the needs of the Council. After discussion:

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Holt to authorize the Mayor and Committee to be appointed by the Mayor to negotiate with Kay Lee, dba Church Street Services LLC, to provide consulting services to include identifying sources for funding of city projects and persons or organizations qualified to prepare documentation needed to apply for such funding. Any negotiated agreement will be submitted to the Council for its approval prior to implementation. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Mayor Roseberry appointed an *ad hoc* committee with Councilmembers Jim Windham and George Holt to serve with him appointing Jim Windham to serve as Chairman of the committee.

City Elections

Elections for the Mayor and City Council will be Tuesday, November 3, 2015. Those who qualified are:

Mayor – Jerry Roseberry - Incumbent
City Council Post 1 – Sarah Davis – Incumbent
City Council Post 2 – George Holt – Incumbent
City Council Post 3 – Michael Ready
City Council Post 3 – Jeff Wearing

INVOICE APPROVAL**INVOICES OVER \$1,000.00**

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
ROUTINE MONTHLY BILLS PAID		
City of Oxford	Mthly Utility Billing/City properties August Billing	1,675.52
GMA	GMEBS Retirement Fund (August)	5,946.33
GMA	GMEBS Retirement Fund (September)	5,946.33
Humana	Health Insurance (September)	6,138.29
Newton County BOC	Cornish Creek Water Fund (July)	12,659.00
Newton County BOC	Cornish Creek Water Fund (August)	14,504.00
Newton County BOC	Insurance Premium Tax (Fire Tax)	18,202.09
Newton County Water & Sewer	Services from 6/29 – 7/30	6,371.39
Newton County Water & Sewer	Services from 7/30 – 8/28	6,371.39
Sophicity	IT in a Box August	1,352.13
Sophicity	IT in a Box September	1,352.13
Southeastern Power Administration	SEPA energy cost	3,358.25
PURCHASES/CONTRACT LABOR		
Ace/Kimble Service	W. Richardson St. Asphalt Patch at Mt. Zion Church	1,850.00
Altec Industries	Repairs to Line Truck	1,580.51
Bankcard Center	Flowers Womack/Croy Father/Bob Travel Exp. - Annual MEAG Meeting/Flowers Wilbanks Funeral /CDL Registration for Dustin/ Hotel for Dave, Chiefs Conference, Misc.	1,178.65
Barbara Dingler	Tax Commissioner, Property tax billing	1,630.00
Cintas	July Billing and purchase of floor mats for city hall & Maintenance (\$1,330.00)	2,54.96
Covington Ford	Oil change & repairs to 03 Dodge Ram 1500	1,003.77
David Strickland	July Billing	2,642.86
David Strickland	August Billing	1,136.33
Gresco	Electric Supplies & Material	1,446.00
Harris Computer System	Annual Software Maintenance	14,833.79
HOPi Contracting Inc.	Swap one truck body onto another	8,000.00
Keepers, Inc.	Police Uniforms	2,243.99
Latham Home Sanitation	Waste removal service (July)	5,525.18
Latham Home Sanitation	Waste removal service (August)	5,636.10
Mobile Communications	Rewire Impala due to electrical problems	1,115.00
Mobile Communication	Equipment & Installation for Police Vehicles	2,122.00
Premier Tree & Shrub Care	June 29 – July 29 Grounds Maintenance	4,367.00
State of GA DNR	Annual Water system fees	3,900.00
Stuart's Electrical	Welcome to Oxford sign LED lights installed	1,895.00
Woco Pep Oil, Inc.	July Gas & Fuel Charges	3,207.98
Woco Pep Oil, Inc.	August Gas & Fuel Charges	2,652.05
1-800-GOT-JUNK	Removal & Disposal service for 104 W. Watson	2,755.00
APPROVED CONTRACTS		
Designed Installations/Jim Williams	Hamill Street Intersection for Oxford College	102,350.00

Jordan Engineering	Survey E. Clark St 6.5 acre/Asbury Park base mapping and tree survey/Whatcoat project/George Street Park Drainage	7,995.00
Scarborough Tree	Tree Removal 1003 Wesley/1306 Coke St.	7,200.00

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Windham to approve payment of the invoices. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Eady to adjourn the regular session and go into an Executive Session at 7:52pm. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Eady to leave the Executive Session at 8:25pm. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Eady to adjourn 8:25pm. The vote was 5 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted;



Lauran Willis
City Clerk

Attachments:

- A. Agenda for September 8, 2015
- B. Honorary Councilmember for September
- C. Minutes Regular Session August 3, 2015
- D. Minutes Trees, Parks, Recreation Board June 9, 2015
- E. Thoughts on Oxford's Future by LaTrelle Oliver
- F. Spirit of collaboration lives on in Newton County by Jerry Roseberry

**OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL
A G E N D A**

1. Call to Order, Mayor Jerry D. Roseberry
2. Invocation
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Motion to accept the Agenda for the September 8, 2015 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting
5. * **Honorary Councilmember** – Councilmember Holt has appointed Cheryl Ready as the Honorary Councilmember for September.
6. * Motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting August 3, 2015.
7. * Motion to accept the Minutes of the TPR meeting June 9, 2015.
8. Planning Commission Recommendations/Petitions
9. Citizen Concerns
10. Mayor's Report
11. **Tree Board Report** – Since Cheryl Ready is the honorary councilmember this month and since she is chair of the Tree, Parks, and Recreation Board, we have asked her to present a short report.
12. **Consulting Services for Funding of City Projects** – Continue Council discussion regarding retaining Kay Lee, dba Church Street Services LLC, to assist the city in identifying sources for funding of city projects. If Council approves moving forward, then:

Move to authorize the Mayor and Committee to be appointed by the Mayor to negotiate with Kay Lee, dba Church Street Services LLC, to provide consulting services to include identifying sources for funding of city projects and persons or organizations qualified to prepare documentation needed to apply for such funding. Any negotiated agreement will be submitted to the Council for its approval prior to implementation.

13. **City Elections** – Elections for the Mayor and City Council will be Tuesday, November 3rd. Here is who has qualified for the election.

- Mayor – Jerry Roseberry
- City Council Post 1 – Sarah Davis
- City Council Post 2 – George Holt
- City Council Post 3 – Michael Ready
- City Council Post 3 – Jeff Wearing

14. Invoice Approval

15. **Executive Session** – To consider real estate transactions.

16. Adjourn

INVOICES OVER \$1,000.00

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Sophicity	IT in a Box September	1,352.13
Southeastern Power Administration	SEPA energy cost	3,358.25
PURCHASES/CONTRACT LABOR		
Ace/Kimble Service	W. Richardson St. Asphalt Patch at Mt. Zion Church	1,850.00
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Cintas	July Billing and purchase of floor mats for city hall & Maintenance (\$1,330.00)	2,54.96
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Keepers, Inc.	Police Uniforms	2,243.99
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APPROVED CONTRACTS		
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Scarborough Tree	Tree Removal 1003 Wesley/1306 Coke St.	7,200.00

REMINDER

The annual city council retreat will be Friday, November 13th. We will meet on the second floor (room 230) of the Oxford College Library from 9 AM until 3 PM. The meeting will be facilitated by Jim Dove and Mott Beck of NEGRC.



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, citizen input is important to the City Council of the City of Oxford so we can better govern our City; and

WHEREAS, it is important to show the citizens of our City how our City operates and how City Council functions; and

WHEREAS, City Council has created the Honorary Councilmember of the Month Program in Oxford; and

WHEREAS, Councilmember George Holt has nominated Cheryl Ready to serve for this month.

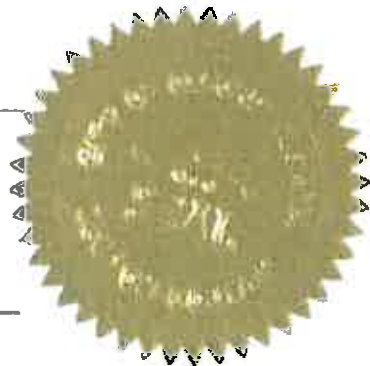
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Jerry D. Roseberry, do hereby appoint Cheryl Ready as the Honorary Councilmember for the City of Oxford for the month of September.

SO PROCLAIMED, this eighth day of September 2015.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF OXFORD

BY: _____
Mayor

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: JERRY D. ROSEBERRY, MAYOR; COUNCILMEMBERS: JIM WINDHAM; SARAH DAVIS;
GEORGE HOLT; LYN PACE; DAVID EADY; COUNCILMEMBER TERRY SMITH WAS NOT PRESENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Schwartz, City Manager; Dave Harvey, Police Chief; David Strickland, City Attorney;
Stacey Mullen, Deputy City Clerk, Hoyt & LaTrelle Oliver, Judy Greer, Mike & Cheryl Ready, Patsy Burke, Vivian
Harris, Anderson Wright, Lisa Dorward**

The meeting was called to order by the Hon. Jerry D. Roseberry, Mayor and the invocation by Lynn Pace.

Pledge of allegiance

A motion was made by Eady, seconded by Pace to accept the Agenda for the August 3, 2015 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting. The vote was 6 in favor and 0 opposed. The motion was approved. Attachment A

HONORARY COUNCILMEMBER

Mayor Roseberry announced Susan Ballard as the Honorary Councilmember for August as appointed by Councilmember David Eady. Mayor Roseberry presented her with a Proclamation as appreciation for her participation. Attachment B

A motion was made by Davis, seconded by Pace to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting and the Executive Session July 6, 2015. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.
Attachment C

A motion was made by Eady, seconded by Davis to approve the Minutes of the July 20, Public Hearing and Work Session. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved. Attachment D

A motion was made by Pace, seconded by Eady to accept the minutes of the Oxford Planning Commission Meeting from April 14, 2015. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.
Attachment E

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS/PETITIONS

Chairman Mike Ready gave an update on the demolition of the house at 608 Emory Street belonging to Oxford College. There was some abatement that had to be done prior to the demolition. At the time they asked for the demolition permit they asked for it to be ground cover. Ready said they were reminded of the request for the zoning change of their limitations on rebuilding a house or offices. They were reminded it would revert back to the original set-backs for construction since the house is no longer there. Chairman Mike Ready said there has been some dialogue concerning the organic farm in that they have not been able to come up with an appropriate fence. They are reviewing it.

CITIZENS COMMENTS/CONCERNS

Terri Fullerton, 4-H County Extension Agent presented a certificate to the City of Oxford and council on behalf of

Newton County 4-H in support for the past year 2014—2015. Terry expressed that the city has provided a meeting place which has lent a great sense of importance for the members to meet in an actual council chamber setting. The design of the facility is more accessible for the disabled. Terri thanked the council for their continued support.

Judy Greer announced that Mrs. Nancy Murdy fell and broke her hip Saturday night. She is in Newton General Hospital. She had a successful surgery today and is doing well.

Mayor Roseberry announced the Newton County boys All Star baseball team has progressed to the Dixie World Series. We are always proud to see our youth participate and grow in community activities.

City Manager Bob Schwartz gave an update of activity around the college campus. One item was the raised table pedestrian crossing at Hamill Street stating the majority of the work should be completed by weeks end with the remainder of work that will be done during the fall semester. DOT has approved the work for the rectangular flashing beacon. The materials have been ordered and our Utility department will coordinate with the college and DOT on the installation. The work at the Emory Street side of Hamill steps over the line onto DOT right-of-way. The engineer for the college has sent a request for encroachment to DOT for the location where the bollards will be installed. They are waiting for the approval of the request by DOT.

Mayor's Reports

None

Customer Security Deposit Refund

City Clerk Lauran Willis reported that we have reviewed the customer accounts and have found 44 customers who meet the qualifications for a refund of their security deposit as adopted by council in December 2010. The total amount to be refunded of \$7,515.00 includes all customers who have had service the last five years in good standing. We recommend a motion to approve the refund for these 44 customers and authorize City Clerk Lauran Willis to transfer the funds from the Customer Deposit Checking account to the General Fund account for distribution of the credit to the utility billing. Attachment F

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Windham to authorize City Clerk Lauran Willis to apply the security deposit to be distributed to the 44 customers and transfer the funds in the amount of \$7,515.00 from the Customer Deposit Cash account to the General fund operating account for distribution to the utility billing. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Review of Electric Rates

City Manager Bob Schwartz said the committee is working on various ideas but have not concluded on a plan that will work best for all citizens. Councilmember George Holt said this is a tremendous undertaking to come up with a method where we can adjust rates not only for certain groups such as those with disabilities or those on fixed incomes but something that will work for all customers based on the different modules in the utility rate and billing system. He said the committee is still reviewing options and will have a new report by the work session on August 17th.

Council Retreat for 2015

City Manager Bob Schwartz said we need to select a date for the annual Council Retreat. He recommended a

Thursday or Friday in November after the November 3rd election to give the opportunity to any newly elected officials to attend. Suggested dates were November 12, 13, 19 and 20th. Everyone was in favor of Friday, November 13th. City Manager Bob Schwartz will try and schedule the meeting site at the college.

Salary Plan

City Manager Bob Schwartz informed council that the annual budget for FY2016 included a 3% across the board salary increase. Schwartz recommended a motion to adopt the revised pay plan in accordance with the FY2016 Operating Budget effective July 2, 2015. Attachment G

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Windham to amend the pay plan to include the 3% across the board salary increase for all employees retroactive to July 2, 2015. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

INVOICE APPROVAL

INVOICES OVER \$1,000.00

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
ROUTINE MONTHLY BILLS PAID		
City of Covington	Quarterly Sewer Charges 3/31/2015 – 6/30/2015	10218.00
City of Oxford	Monthly Utility Billing of City owned properties July	2292.22
Humana	Employee Health Insurance (August)	6138.29
Newton County BOC	Cornish Creek Water Fund June 2015	15227.00
Newton County Water & Sewer	Services from 5/28-6/29	5268.53
Southeastern Power Administration	SEPA energy cost June 2015	3098.60
PURCHASES/CONTRACT LABOR		
AllStar Alarms & Sound	Repair & Replace 4 Security Camera's	1295.00
Clerk of Superior Court	Retainer for Emory Street Property	107,600.00
David Strickland, P.C.	Legal Services (April)	1912.86
David Strickland, P.C.	Legal Services (June)	2152.86
Kauffman Tire/Georgia	Replace Ball Joints, 4 tires, brake svc, rotors, alignment on Dodge Pickup truck	1880.18
Oxford Historical Cemetery Found	Sale of Cemetery Lot W-7 4graves	2000.00
Oxford Historical Cemetery Found	Sale of Cemetery Lot X-22 4graves	2000.00
Perimeter Copier	New Copy Machine for Police Department	1800.00
Qader Baig & Associates, LLC	Court Solicitor January – June 2015	2000.00
APPROVED CONTRACTS		
Ace Kimble Services, Inc.	Pour 40x32 pad 6" thick with 4000 psi commercial grade concrete	6685.00
Enviroprobe, LLC	Demolition & Disposal of 101 Longstreet Circle	17500.00
Jordan Engineering	Whatcoat St. Base Map Survey data collection	2090.00
Scarborough Tree	Tree Removal Oak Tree on Moore St & Cindy Court blown down during the storm.	2400.00

A motion was made by Holt, seconded by Pace to approve payment of the invoices. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Pace to adjourn the regular session and go into an Executive Session at 7:37pm. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Eady to leave the Executive Session at 7:50pm. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Windham, seconded by Eady to adjourn 7:50pm. The vote was 6 in favor with 0 opposed. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted;

Lauran Willis
City Clerk

Attachments:

- A. Agenda for August 3, 2015
- B. Honorary Councilmember for August
- C. Minutes Regular Session July 6, 2015
- D. Minutes Work Session and Public Hearing July 20, 2015
- E. Oxford Planning Commission Minutes April 14, 2015
- F. Customer Security Deposit Refunds
- G. Salary Plan

Trees, Parks, Recreation Board (TPR) – City of Oxford, GA
Minutes of Meeting June 9, 2015
Courtroom, Oxford City Hall

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ready at 5:00pm.

Attendance – present

Members – Cheryl Ready, LaTrelle Oliver, Hulon Clemons, Andrea O'Toole, Anderson Wright
City Manager Bob Schwartz
Georgia Forester Seth Hawkins
Mayor Jerry Roseberry

Approval of Minutes for meeting of April 14, 2015

Motion to approve made by Andrea; seconded by Hulon

Yes @4 – Cheryl Ready, LaTrelle Oliver, Hulon Clemons, Andrea O'Toole, Anderson Wright.

No @0. Motion carried.

Reports

A. Parks


1. Mayor Roseberry presented Council's proposal to create a park for small children and families on City-owned property bordered by Emory, Asbury, Collingsworth, and Watson. Currently City owns five of the seven lots. See maps attached to official minutes.
2. Jody Reid (absent) – George Street Park: The rail fences need regular monitoring and repair. Mike and Cheryl Ready will seal the kiosk, which has been power washed by staff.
3. Anderson Wright – Mitchell Street Park: The young trees are thriving; however, seedlings to replace lost ones will not be replanted/ flagged until fall/winter. Recent storms caused a large limb to fall, which has been removed. Bob will report to Jody re: clean-up of downed branches in right-of-way across the street.
4. Arbor Day, 2016 Committee – Seth Hawkins: He will contact Joan Scales (GFC) re: inviting Tim Womack to present his tree-care program, Trail of Trees, on February 13 or 20. Cheryl will stay in touch with Kendra Mayfield (Oxford College) re: this joint city-college event.
5. Emory Street Revitalization Plan – Committee: Cheryl has not yet had contact with homeowner Grace Phillips. Andrea's research re: Georgia ReLeaf Program – applications must be submitted by August 1, 2015.
6. Trash cans at trail entrances: Discussion of the need and possible solutions.

Status of Work Plan, 2015 – Beryl Budd (absent). Discussion of project activities for May-July: Unknown if City Arborist met with College tree committee. Seth will contact Beryl to offer help as needed with inspections and maintenance recommendations. Cheryl urged members to bring their copies of Work Plan to each meeting to avoid reprinting of multiple copies.

Status of Watering and Pruning Projects – new trees on Emory Street (City Utility Project) are being watered regularly as required when rain is insufficient. Pruning needs: dead limbs in old tree on south side of Clark (mid-block) and on south side of Pierce. Rights-of-way encroachment on Fletcher and Wesley have been reduced, but further work is required; TPR volunteers will work on selective hand pruning, beginning at 8:00, Saturday morning, June 27.

Adjournment – The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:20pm. Next Meeting – August 11, 2015

LaTrelle Oliver, Secretary

To: All gathered for City Council Meeting
From: LaTrelle Oliver
Re: Thoughts on Oxford's future 
Date: 9/8/2015

My early morning eyes focused on this Oxford t-shirt as I scanned *my early morning wardrobe options*. It reads, "History Comes Alive, Oxford Georgia." I bet Dr. Bond Fleming flipped his lid when he saw it at the Sunday, June 18th, 2000 rededication of once-again-restored Old Church: someone had failed to include the date, a fault he deplored.

But what a timely affirmation, this message from our ever-receding past, as Council continues to identify and consider image and opportunity for this fragile yet deep-rooted place!

Here are several familiar components that have been identified as worthy affirmations for our current time: the college, historic buildings, tree canopy, trails, parks, parking, grants, and the ever-ephemeral town center. I propose yet another piece: a bona fide edifice in close proximity to iconic Old Church – a reception and history center, with personnel for housing, collecting, and communicating Oxford's Story, Then and Now (OSTAN) – a place where citizens and visitors can meet briefly or at length to discover, explore, document, contribute to, and celebrate their milestones, their treasures, their curiosities about other people and themselves. A public-private arrangement would be worth considering.

City Hall houses offices required for sustaining our municipality. The Turner Building houses equipment for maintaining our infrastructure. The Whatcoat Street Building houses a tenant. Old Church (though owned by the city and serviced meagerly by a now diminishing historical society) houses nothing except the crucial life-enhancing qualities of awe, wonder, and a sense of heritage. None of these city holdings operates as a bona fide community center.

Our current population is aging, though a few young families are appearing. The housing stock is aging, along with its single occupancy. Conveniences are meager or non-existent, with only on-duty staff of City Hall and police force available to assist and inform, while also tending their prescribed functions.

If marketing The City is a serious intention, we could and should consider the implications and benefits of this slogan: **Oxford, Georgia – Where History Comes Alive.**

LETTER: Spirit of collaboration lives on in Newton County

[Want daily summaries and Breaking News alerts?](#)

By Jerry Roseberry

Tuesday, September 8, 2015

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The Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia recently published a report entitled Local Governments and School Systems Partnering for Better Communities. That report, distributed statewide, includes case studies of successful collaboration from around the state with several references to the Newton County Collaborative and The Center for Community Preservation. This is a must-read for leaders and others concerned about the future of their community. It can be downloaded from the UGA website: www.cviog.uga.edu/publications/cgs/.

UGA's Public Service and Outreach program joined with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government in introducing the report. The introduction states, "We hope that through this research Georgia leaders can overcome some of the legal, structural, and systemic hurdles that hinder collaboration, allowing them to create opportunities to improve their own organizations and communities through new partnerships and new approaches to leadership."

Newton County was chosen for this study because of several factors. A decade ago it was one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation and almost as rapidly became one of the most stressed counties in America. Read the UGA report about what took place in Newton County and how those that placed the future of their community ahead of their personal goals stepped forward and provided true leadership.

Agreements were not always unanimous and adjustments were needed as everyone learned what did or did not work. But the key was the willingness to listen and work at making collaboration a reality. That spirit lives today as elected and appointed officials meet with citizen leaders on a regular basis to discuss concerns and plans for the future.

Jerry Roseberry

Mayor

City of Oxford

Chairman

Newton County Tomorrow