

MINUTES FROM A PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT PROPOSED ABANDONED MANUFACTURED HOME ORDINANCE FOR WARREN COUNTY HELD BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN THE WARREN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM # 202 ON APRIL 2, 2008 AT 6:45 PM.

The Public Hearing was called to order by Vice-Chairman Ulysses S. Ross. Other Commissioners present: William "Bill" Davis, Ernest Fleming, and Barry Richardson. Commissioner absent: Chairman Clinton G. Alston. Also in attendance: Linda T. Jones, County Manager.

Notice of public hearing was read by the Clerk to the Board followed by Citizen Comments:

Susan Deschenes of Wildwood Point Subdivision spoke in favor of adopting the ordinance: Warren County is in competition with surrounding areas. Countywide appearance bears on attracting industry. Thanked Board for their consideration. A mobile home in the Wildwood Point area has been condemned but there are no measures to enforce condemnation.

On motion of Commissioner Fleming, which was second by Commissioner Davis the public hearing was adjourned at 6:52 pm.

Angelena Kearney-Dunlap
Angelena Kearney-Dunlap, Clerk

MINUTES FROM A PUBLIC HEARING TO ESTABLISH A WARREN COUNTY ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX HELD BY THE BOARD OF WARREN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN THE WARREN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM # 202 ON APRIL 2, 2008 AT 7:00 PM.

The Public Hearing was called to order by Vice-Chairman Ulysses S. Ross. Other Commissioners present: William "Bill" Davis, Ernest Fleming, and Barry M. Richardson. Commissioner absent: Clinton G. Alston. Also in attendance: Linda T. Jones, County Manager.

Notice of public hearing was read by the Clerk to the Board.

John Church, Director of Economic Development speaking on behalf of the Economic Development Commission, gave a brief overview and benefit of the proposed tax; people benefiting from tax would assist in funding. Ordinance will be in place when hotel and/or motel locate into the county.

Question from Commissioner Davis: Would there be tax on lake properties?

Answer from John Church: None of the surrounding counties are doing it. Review Room Occupancy Tax to see if other lake area counties have implemented same; review policy for Bed & Breakfast establishments.

Linda Jones, County Manager stated, tax status is determined if a facility is required to submit sales taxes to the Department of Revenue. A Tourism Authority would need to be formed to administer funds if tax is implemented.

Della Batts, Littleton Observer: Questioned the percentage of increase in tourism for the past year.

Question was raised concerning the cost factor of promoting the tax and the feasibility of obtaining money from another source.

Citizen Comments were as follows:

John Lenkey: is the tax locked in, not diverted? Owns a home and rents it so it will not be subject to vandalism, rent collected helps afford tax and maintenance charges.

Answer: state law dictates how Room Occupancy Tax is used; would affect only those properties subject to sales tax.

Carol Weigel: bought a house for investment purposes; rented on a weekly basis. There is no incentive for vacationers to choose Warren County because other counties have lower taxes or none at all. Speaker stated she would choose to get out of the rental business and vote to take investment elsewhere. There are plenty of other houses for vacationers to choose from. County may lose investments by taking this action.

Gerald Lampley: a Wake County resident, built home in Pasture Gate for personal use. Last year began to rent out house to cover maintenance and taxes. With 2008 Revaluation he anticipates a tax increase and expects tax to double; nothing seems to be revenue neutral. He will probably need to rent property in order to pay taxes; makes it difficult to keep property. Room Occupancy Tax should be rejected or made specific for hotel/motel, exclude individual houses.

Richard E Courser: each year his business has increased, he's made investments in facility which was purchased for less than one million and is now valued over five (5) million. To get out of paying tax, he must rent a unit for more than three (3) months at a time. Business is seasonal, from January through March business does not make enough to pay one month's electric bill. Tourism is not an incentive, because units are usually filled with repeat customers from Myrtle Beach and Virginia Beach. \$10,000 is spent annually for advertising, Room Occupancy Tax would add a cost of \$15,000 to \$16,000. If implemented, everyone should share in the cost, one should not be exempt and another bear the cost.

John Boyle: Representing Lake Gaston Association spoke in strong opposition of implementing a Room Occupancy Tax. (Statement on file in Clerk to the Board's office.)

Public Hearing was adjourned on motion of Commissioner Richardson, which was seconded by Commissioner Davis at 7:33 pm.

Angelena Kearney-Dunlap
Angelena Kearney-Dunlap, Clerk