

**MINUTES OF THE OKALOOSA COUNTY
LEAGUE OF CITIES
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2001**

CALL TO ORDER:

President John Thomas called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. at Cinco Bayou Town Hall.

THOSE PRESENT:

Councilwoman Sara Carroll – Cinco Bayou (Secretary/Treasurer)
Councilwoman Brenda Bush – Crestview
Councilwoman Fay Miller – Laurel Hill (Vice-President)
Mayor Ken Beaird – Destin
Mayor Glenda Glover – Fort Walton Beach
Mayor Gary Combs – Shalimar
Mayor John Thomas – Mary Esther (President)
Commissioner Heyward Strong – Valparaiso
Commissioner Shirley Ransom – Okaloosa County
Col. Jimmie Smith – Eglin Air Force Base

ABSENT:

Councilman Al Swihart – Niceville

MINUTES:

None

TREASURER'S REPORT:

As of October 1, 2001 reported a balance of \$3,075.57 after paying \$57.19 for a trophy plaque for Jerry Melvin. Treasurer's report was filed for audit.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

One-Cent Sales Tax. Mayor Thomas said that the cities were being criticized for not pushing the one-cent sales tax enough, and he thanked Mayor Combs for his article in the Shalimar Newsletter. Sara Carroll said that on Monday after work and on Tuesday before work they are asking elected officials to stand out and hold plaquards for people to read saying "Go Vote". Comm. Shirley Ransom said that one of the strongest opponents to the sales tax is Mike Francisco, who ran for Congress, and that he is deliberately misrepresenting the facts. She added that the taxes would be used for security and infrastructure needs, not wants, and whether the tax passes or fails, the needs remain. She also said that Mike Francisco is against sales tax or any tax in an effort to halt growth. Comm. Heyward Strong reviewed the question/answer sheet that was provided by Mike Chesser. Comm. Ransom said that the County budget was \$230 million and only \$30 million comes from property taxes. The rest of it comes from enterprise funds, which are used to fund those enterprises and are unusable for anything else. Comm. Strong asked President Thomas to ask all cities to have their representatives present at the next Pennies for Progress meeting so they could pick up their signs.

Mayor Glenda Glover said that Jerry Melvin had the 14th of November set up for the Cities to meet with the County to discuss needs. This was the day before the League of Cities Legislative Conference in Orlando, and wondered if the 13th would be okay instead. Comm. Strong suggests doing it after the conference, maybe on the 18th or 19th, so that the Florida Legislature could determine their priorities.

NEW BUSINESS:

District Reapportionment. Mayor Glover said that the citizens of Fort Walton Beach are concerned that Comm. Burkett will receive too much wealth due the cities in his district. He had Blue Water Bay, Rocky Bayou, Destin, and the Island. Mayor Glover felt that having the a commissioner that lived in Destin control the Island would be bad because he would not help with the problems created by the new Convention Center. She added that the commissioner in Fort Walton Beach would be better to have the Island in their district so they could solve any problems more readily. Comm. Ransom said that she will suggest that the Island go back to Fort Walton Beach, and that the proposed Plan I had already been voted on and did not pass. Plans 2, 3, and 4 were to be voted on, and Plan 5 was up for the coming meeting. Mayor Glover then asked how everyone felt about the redistricting. Mayor Combs felt that Shalimar shouldn't be split. Comm. Strong felt that Valpariso and Niceville should be together. Mayor Glover said that that again would give one commissioner too much wealth. Comm. Ransom said that she wants all commissioners to have some unincorporated areas, too. She said that the redistricting is on the agenda for the next Board Meeting on Tuesday at 8:30 a.m., and encouraged all Cities to have a representative present at next Thursday's meeting.

Comm. Strong said that the OLoC meets, discusses issues, and then each person goes back to their City, agendas the items, discusses them in public, and then has the Mayor sign the letters. He added that the Cities vote on the items, and that all the OLoC does is walk the letters through.

Col. Smith briefly discussed the Armed Forces Appreciation Day Parade and festivities.

Comm. Strong asked Comm. Ransom what was happening to Mr. Hutchinson. Comm. Ransom said that it was all in the hands of the Governor's legal staff at this point.

Mayor Ken Beard brought up the issue that there is not a public swimming pool facility in this County. Mayor Glover suggested writing a letter to the editor of the newspaper.

Mayor Thomas asked Comm. Ransom if she could let everyone know what time the redistricting would occur at the meeting. She said not right at this time, but could look at the agenda and get back with them. Comm. Strong asked Laura Houchens to make up a letter and distribute telling each City to pick up their signs, and have a plan for use on election day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS FROM CITIES:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Mayor John Thomas, President

John Thomas
Approved 12-6-01

