CITY OF EDEN, N. C.

A special meeting of the City Council, City of Eden, was held on Wednesday, January 26, 2000 at 5:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor: Philip K. Price

John E. Grogan

(absent) Ronald L. Janney(absent) William W. Rorrer

Christine H. Myott Ronald H. Reynolds

Ronald H. Reynolds Garry Tudor

C. H. Gover

City Attorney: (absent) Charles Nooe City Clerk: (absent) Kim Scott

Staff Present: Sheralene Thompson

News Media: Reid Bauer, <u>The</u>

Daily News, Alex

DeGrand, Greensboro News

& Record

MEETING COVENED:

Mayor Price thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, especially the consultants from Charlotte and others from out of town.

Wentworth Sewer Line:

Mayor Price stated that the first order of business was to add one item to the agenda as requested by the City Attorney in regard to a sewer line right-of-way from Wentworth.

A motion was made by Council Member Grogan seconded by Council Member Tudor to add the above item to the agenda. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion. (This item was added to the end of the meeting).

Mayor Price stated that the first order of business was to welcome Kim Taylor and Ken Bullock. He introduced Joey Conner who was present for introductory comments.

Mr. Conner stated that since 1995 they have been working with two or three different park committees, the Master Plan Committee in 1995, then they developed the Park Committee to implement the park in 1998; and then several months ago they hired Woolpert to come in when the park went from 123 acres to 58 acres. He stated that they had to actually redo a sight plan for the opportunity to apply for the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund. He applauded Woolpert for an excellent job as have done all of this in approximately a month. Mr. Conner then turned the meeting over to Mr. Ken Bullock to explain the site plan, and upon the completion, he stated that Mr. Bullock, Mr. David Smith, Chairman of the Park Committee and himself would be willing to answer any questions.

Mayor Price extended a special welcome to the members of the Park Committee who were present and have worked so hard on this plan.

Ken Bullock explained that they had done a quick site analysis of the 58 acres as well as a sight suitability to tell them where the best areas of program are to build. Based upon this, they have developed a master plan of uses based upon the program that was given to them from the Recreation Department. They then developed a Phase I based upon a \$300,000 estimate. He explained that their estimates were put together based upon two phases, Phase I and Phase II. He stated that he did not want them to stagger when they saw Phase II at \$3.9 million. That is the portion of the park that would be left over and be built on some future date. Mr. Bullock stated that he assumed it would be built in 5-6 different phases as funds could be raised and as revenue generation processes come about. The actual site itself is broken into two major portions. One with the open field areas and one with the vegetated areas. He stated that they tried to work the development of the park out to minimize the cost as well as minimize the disturbance to the overall park because the area of the park that they are walking through is very, very attractive because it is not covered with underbrush.

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Mr. Bullock explained that there is a pathway that leads from the residential area as well as some access from the school area. In the lower portion of the sight they have found a natural spring area which is something that they want to stay away from. He commented that they know, from the previous report, that there was a wetlands area in there and they want to stay completely away from it so they do not have to do any mitigation. He stated that it was an expense they did not want to get into. He commented that any paths would have to be diverted away from this area. There was a reforestation at some past date and it is all pines at this time and when they did the core boring, they cut roads so they want to minimize the disturbance to the rest of the sight by using these corridors. They found some wet areas in this lower area of the sight as well as some storm damage which occurred when the hurricane came through several years ago and now the trees are starting to die and fall. They found some rock there. He stated that they also found that off of Edgewood Road and on Stadium Drive, they have some noise to deal with and they have some potential access points from Edgewood as well as the corner of Stadium Drive to give them some access from the school itself. He noted that the orange colored area on the map was some really steep slopes that they want to stay away from. There was some access from the industrial portion of the sight that gives some access into the park into the haul road that was used for the coreboarding.

He continued that there are utilities available on three portions of the site, water, electric, sewer. He stated that there was some cable and phone out there so ease of access for utilities are very good and very minimal. Mr. Bullock said that when they looked at the overall program of the site and how the site worked, they decided they wanted to break it down into three different use areas, moderate development, low development, and highly development. The highly developed they looked at the best as it was the flattest area and (required) the least amount of clearing. The next moderate development was the yellow colored area that would allow them to have minimal disturbance in the existing vegetation, but it was a good development area because the slopes are suitable. The areas that they wanted to stay away from were the wet areas, the downed trees area, the buffer behind the homes so they do not feel like they have a park at their back door. He continued that within the park itself, there was a vacant, abandoned foundation and a cemetery that they want to maintain attractive walls around, it has something neat for people to look at as they walk by and they want to maintain that. He stated that they also saw a nice gorge that they do not want to bring traffic in so they want to have a single entrance into the overall park.

Mr. Bullock explained that within the park master plan they had to think in terms of what they would do in the first phase, how they would develop the first phase then how they would get into the overall park plan. The program of the first phase, which is the Park Grant submittal, is a multi-purpose field, a shelter with restrooms, a walking trail, an access road and some parking. With that they developed the first part with a very large (65-75 year old willow oak) tree that is located out at the site in excellent shape. It is a good focal point and could become a good image for the park itself so they developed a traffic circle around it. They would have a split entrance road with an area in the middle for signage and also maintain a green space, it will be gated off. Then it would give them access off Edgewood Road and they have plenty of stack both ways if they have tournaments in the ball fields.

Mr. Bullock said that as they come in they immediately come into the central portion of the park for this half of the park which is a community center. It is a 5000 square foot community center that allows both senior facilities as well as classrooms and maybe some exercise areas. It is directly between the multi-purpose field, the walking trail that is around the multi-purpose field and the four field softball complex. Within the softball complex, they have a central pavilion which is a scores tower that has restrooms and concession buildings in it which allows them to be revenue generating. They also have a playground that is directly adjacent to the parking area, and they have a shelter that has toilets as well as the possibility for about 20-30 picnic tables. That is a revenue generator because the larger shelters is what brings in corporate donations and corporate rentals to have them for a day for use. So that is a high rate for rental. They also have the maintenance facility located in this corner since there is so much damage to the trees, they felt that they needed to reforest and rescreen the houses in this area of the park, so they put some heavy planting material and the maintenance facility which will allow it to be a very attractive, but it can be built while the rest of the park still has to be built and they have that for use of their maintenance.

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Mr. Bullock stated that they have two volleyball courts that are planned into this day use area. Along with this shelter is another smaller shelter and another shelter in that portion tied in with the parking. He explained that they could develop just that portion of the park with Phase I and possibly Phase II coming into it, and they would have a good revenue generation type park. He stated that they wanted to have other things that would help develop revenue in the park and help them to develop an overall park image. To keep them away from destroying too many trees, they wanted to stay to the corridor where they had the overall development for cutting the roads in for the coreborings. Directly adjacent to the field is one of those interactive water park, zero depth. This is a (fountain with) water jet, that comes down. In the evening the water is shut down and the water drains down into holding areas so there is no worry about anyone getting drowned because it is dry by evening. He explained that there seems to be more revenue from that and more family participation rather than people that just come to swim (in a swimming pool) and it could become a very good revenue generation. He stated they saw them in parks all over the United States, in the ones they work in. He explained that there would be a building with a changing area and toilets as well as an outdoor deck area for people to sit and enjoy the sun.

He stated that they had located a 350 seat amphitheater that is located in a little saddle on a portion of the site. The trees are maintained. They have a gravel access to get scenery in and service vehicles in. It is a covered stage area. The center portion of the amphitheater would be terraced green areas that would allow them to have lawn chairs, blankets on the ground or tables that people bring to watch concerts or any type of event. There are fixed seating on each side of the amphitheater. There is also another traffic circle in the back part with parking. In the center of the traffic area is a skateboard park. It is a very big item. It gets the kids into a specialized area. It allows them to have their own special area. The one thing that comes out of this research is they say always have ambulance and emergency vehicle access so they have a whole road all the way around them in case there is a problem. With that, they will have decorative half pipe ramps, knolls that they can go over, pipe rails, steps, ramps and it will be a good focal point and it could be easily maintained as well as supervised. With that space, they have a small plaza that works into another large playground in the far area of the park and some shelter areas that tie into the walking trails.

Mr. Bullock stated that when they talk about walking trails, they talk about two different types. In Phase I, they have a small walking trail around the multi-purpose field and when they develop the rest of the park, that can either be maintained or removed because what they have is a major 8 mile walking trail that is around the fields themselves. It is a major trail that allows the parents to come and walk after they are watching their children at the games. It is an exercise thing and it gives them a direct link to tie into the industrial park. Therefore, it allows them to have a link between this piece of property and if they should want to go more into the park over there at some future date they have a tie.

Mr. Bullock said that they are seeing that coming from the school, they have a parking area for 5-6 vehicles. That is for people who want to come in and walk through the park. They also have a walking area here that they have been told they want to make handicap accessible all the way through, so it would be a paved surface all the way through the park to tie into this walking area and to get to each of the facilities. There is also a walking trail area that ties from the neighborhood up on the hill and ties into all this space. This would be done in existing corridors that are already established by people that walk in the area so they do not have to take out any trees, therefore, it minimizes cost.

Mr. Bullock stated that in talking about Phase I, it is the portion in the front, the roadway, the access area, the parking lot would only go to this area. It would be graveled road at this time, as gravel is put down before the asphalt on top of it so they will already have that down. The multipurpose field not included any goals and any potential improvements on the field. They would have a walking trail, a shelter with toilet building and one playground that is located in this area. They are going to maintain the tree area and then they will have some gates that come into the park itself.

Mr. Bullock stated that the first Phase, based upon the grant, will cost \$300,174 that fits in with the grant. Again, on Phase II, all they did was lumped all the other areas into Phase II. There

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will be a lot more Phases if they recommend it. The rest of the park will be \$3.968 million. He added that was a pretty good price for all the facilities they were going to get with a total park development of \$4.26 million. He then opened up the floor for questions.

Council Member Tudor stated when Mr. Bullock made the presentation to the Parks Committee, he had made a statement about, today, when communities are looking to attract industries, how such facilities are important. He asked Mr. Bullock to restate that information.

Mr. Bullock stated that they work on parks and recreation projects all over the United States, in fact Woolpert is one of the leaders in recreation design and they are pretty much known for that around the United States. One of the things that they find with development with recreation facilities as well as parks and interior and exterior recreation is one of the biggest draws for industry to locate in an area is to have suitable recreation. One of those things is the major softball complex. Most of the people that work in the larger corporations or larger factory area all play softball and they like to have some place to have competition and play, places for kids to go and play soccer, the water park areas, and the rollerblade areas as well as skate board areas. This is draw to bring industry into the area and it is really a good benefit for recreation.

Council Member Tudor stated that Mr. Bullock had mentioned that the zero depth water park was a good revenue generator, asking if people pay to use?

Mr. Bullock stated that it is \$3.50, \$4.50, \$5.00 a day to get into it, plus there are concessions that are sold from it, in addition to them renting a shelter for a family to picnic out there. It is one of those things that continues. He stated that they have found that swimming pools are going by the wayside. They are a headache to maintain, they age very quickly, there are water quality problems. With the interactive water park, they are very interesting. He suggested if they have not seen one of them to watch Nickolodean. They have some interesting aspects of what that water park could look like. They could be as small as \$100,000 or even go up to \$2 million. It is really something that draws people.

Mr. Thomas asked not to get specific, but in a park like that, do they have treated water like a swimming pool.

Mr. Bullock, yes, that the Health Department requires that.

Mayor Price stated that he thought that Mr. Conner had mentioned that this is the coming thing today, that swimming pools are about a thing of the past.

Council Member Gover stated in the \$300,000 that was the grant money for now. He asked what he visualized in this other \$3.6 million in grants.

Mr. Bullock stated that there was ISTEA monies out there and they are changing the policy on them all the time. There is more PARTF, PARTF is more apt to give more money when they find out they (city) has done good on the first money. They are seeing that there is going to be more and more money in the PARTF so the grants could go up as high as a quarter million, as high as a half a million. So, if they do it a piece at a time, then they could build the whole thing out of PARTF.

Mr. Thomas asked if that was also some loan money as well.

Mr. Bullock stated yes. He continued that if they develop something like the revenue portions which are the water area and maybe the amphitheater, they could sell bonds on that and have payback, because they would have to have a payback worked out for the bond system and it would take care of itself.

Council Member Grogan asked what topography was concerning the amphitheater.

Mr. Bullock stated that there would be a little draw through there. There would be normal, movie-theatre type seating, not the steep stadium-type seating. It is more of a terraced area, 10 to 1 slopes, to sit around and still see through but not to be seeing everyone's head.

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Ms. Myott asked if the seats would be natural, round seating.

Mr. Bullock stated that it would be a natural bowl (seating), similar to what they have there (in the Council Chamber), but they see the terraces coming down and being terraced so that one could come in and sit on a terrace, a little slope and pull blankets and set up tables, but there also has to be some type of seating for accessibly challenged.

Mayor Price asked if Mr. Bullock had any thoughts on security in an area like this.

Mr. Bullock stated that lighting is a big thing. He commented that he and Mr. Conner had talked pretty extensively about lighting. He stated that he did not think they wanted to go into specialized decorative lighting as it is a very expensive cost. If they lease the lights, they take care of them, when they get old they replace them. They replace the bulbs in them. He stated that they will have to have it lit especially if they are going to have access to the school system all over the park.

Mayor Price asked, since they were in the south, if any of these places would have winter ice skating.

Mr. Bullock stated that there is a possibility. He said that the multi-purpose field could be worked into that. They have done that. It is graded as such that they have a small bowl and they put the rings around it and just flood it. There is a way to skim it.

Council Member Gover asked if they had a timetable on the first Phase I.

Mr. Conner stated that for Phase I, the grant is due the 31st (of January 2000) which is Monday. They have a couple of cycles. In July they will come in and grant some of the money that the state has received. Approximately \$6.5 million is what they will have this year. They will give out approximately 60% of the grants in July, and then they will have another cycle later, maybe, in August or September when the money starts coming back in and have a second grant period. He stated that if Eden were lucky enough they would fall into one of those grant periods. From there they have two years to build it. From speaking with Kathy White, regional consultant and going to all the different things they have had, if Eden receives the grant, they automatically send a check for \$150,000 at that time and from there they would start building it.

Council Member Gover asked if under that type of grant, there does not have to be a matching at that moment?

Mr. Connor replied no, they have two years to finish it using the money they have, and must have it completed in two year.

Council Member Tudor stated that Mr. Connor had pointed out earlier when they were talking that there would be some aspects of this park that the city's Parks & Recreation Department's people and city's employees could build such as the sand volleyball courts and things like that. He said that this will help them proceed with the development of the park without having to go out and hire construction, he asked if that was correct.

Mr. Connor said that, plus, they use some of the Dan River crews that come in from Caswell County, some of the inmates, they use often and that is something that they were talking about earlier, that they could go ahead and actually get those crews working on the natural paths. As far as horseshoe courts and things like that, it is very minimal costs.

Mr. Bullock stated that the cost that they included were as bid costs. Mr. Conner wanted to know what the total would be. When you build something that is part of the match, too.

Council Member Tudor asked if Mr.Connor could share any knowledge of how any communities generate money with a softball complex. He stated that it was a popular sport in this century, in this part of the country.

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Mr. Connor stated that it was about a year ago when they started all of this, he had called Burlington Parks & Recreation Department who have major tournaments, world tournaments as well as a lot of small tournaments. Tournaments these days are basically like USSSA, NSA, ASA. There are so many different organizations that have softball and once they get on the scale of that and actually start having tournaments, they could actually have tournaments just about every weekend. In speaking with the people from Burlington, he asked how much their city generates in a year bringing money in as far as the city making money. He was told that the city itself does not make any money, but it brought money into the economy. They estimate \$5 to \$6 million a year and, of course, they have large tournaments. As far as the money, they get entry fees in, pay the umpires, and eat concessions, but they also spend the night at the motels, they eat at Burger King, McDonald's, they go to Walmart.

Council Member Tudor asked if they had a tourism tax on the motel/hotel rooms if that could be earmarked for a project the city has.

Mr. Connor stated that he did not know, he had heard of it, but could not say if it was legal.

Council Member Grogan stated that you do have a room tax within the county and the city probably could put a tax, but it would make our city non-competitive with other places in the county because there would be two taxes, one for the county and one for the city. The thing that they could look at is talking to the county about a proration of fees coming from Eden from the room rents here, see what those are, and see if those could not be prorated back. He stated that he was not familiar with all the legalities, but it would certainly be worth investigating.

Mayor Price stated that for those who may not be from Eden and who grew up much later that it is not a fairy tale about having world championship slow-speed softball around here.

Mr. Connor stated that many years ago, they used to have Howard's Furniture come in and teams from Texas and Georgia. He recalled one tournament called the Big-8 at the Draper Ball Park or Mill Avenue Ball Park. Of course, they brought in teams from all over the United States. At that time, Mill Avenue was a nice ballpark. Mr. Doug Gentry was very high up in the Howard's Furniture scale, and he was very good friends with them and also helped. He also mentioned Mr. Mert Warren and others. The Mill Avenue field is a 300 foot field which is regulation. The DeHart field is 250 feet and it is not regulation and added the ball parks are another Phase down the road.

Council Member Tudor asked if any that they would build would be regulation to which Mr. Conner replied, absolutely.

Council Member Tudor mentioned that there were other parks in the city that they would wish to maintain, and there might be one park that they would sell. He asked if there were any figures or if Mr. Connor had any idea of what they spend to maintain the one park that they might sell and what it might cost them to maintain, how comparable expenses might be.

Mr. Connor commented that the park that they have now which is located on Highway 14 they were actually maintaining somewhere between 30-40 acres. He noted that the topography is up and down. They have two ponds to trim around so they use probably 4-5 workers, they have part-timers during the summer that they pull in, they spend about 1.5 or 2 days on that facility alone. He stated that he would expect that down there (new park) they are looking at 8-10 acres to maintain, flat topography and when they designed it, hopefully, the John Deere's 935, or whatever mowing apparatus they have, can go in and very minimal trimming, and probably do it in less than a day because they are looking at 10 acres now (new park) versus 30-40 up there.

Council Member Gover asked about the future electrical and water connections as they only have a three-quarter inch line coming in this phase.

Mr. Bullock stated that they provided service just to that specific restrooms. He pointed out on Phase II or the next portion of the park, they have quite an area to put a sewer line collection system in as well as a major fire system in.

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Council Member Gover asked if the connections were going opposite from where these lines will be coming, and asked where the main. . .

Mr. Bullock stated that they probably would. They would be tying in to some of the perimeter lines. He stated they did not know because they have not designed them yet, but they anticipate they will come and tie past where the houses are. Close to where the lines are coming out now. It could be that they tie both of those into the same system.

Council Member Gover noted that they did not have that much in for sanitary and electric.

Mr. Bullock replied it was very minimal that they would have to have to get in there, any street lighting would be taken care of by the cost of the power company.

Mr. Connor stated that there would be no overhead lighting as everything would be underground. That is the way things are going and in order to get any grant money especially with the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund, all electrical has to be underground.

Council Member Grogan stated that back in 1998 a lot of water had gone down the river, but a motion was made at the City Council meeting by himself and seconded by Council Member Price that the city allocate \$50,000 and along with that to do it on a 10 year program whereby the Parks Director could apply for grants from the state and monies would be used toward developing the park. He continued that the motion passed. After that period of time, things happened, and when the park was split, there was a unanimous vote by the sitting City Council to support the completion of the remaining land for a city park. Two sitting members now, who were not there then, but that was a unanimous vote by the City Council Members, couple (Council Members) of which are not here tonight, but they voted to do that.

Council Member Grogan stated that he would like to reiterate his motion of June 4th, 1998, that City Council allocate \$50,000 over a 10 year program and allow the Park Director to apply for grants from the state and allow the money to be used for the park. He continued that in doing so that they were never going to please everyone in this town with any action that they do. They were going to make some people happy and some people incensed, but he thought they needed to do something positive and they have said many times, which he stated thought there was a strong possibility, they have industry, merchants, civic clubs that have interest and have shown interest, but they have set back and waited for the City Council to find out what they were going to do. If they were going to support this park. He stated that you can sit and say "where is \$4 million coming from" as it might be \$8 (million), it might be \$2 (million), as they do not know. This city works off of a budget of \$20 million and they are looking at water and sewer rates, but there is a water and sewer fund. This is a recreation fund and he would like to make that motion.

Mayor Price asked Council Member Grogan if his motion included approving the Parks & Recreation Trust Funds approval for this year to which Council Member Grogan replied, yes, and he would like to reiterate that. That motion was passed not by the seating City Council, the group back in November or December, the motion was made and passed to do that.

Council Member Myott seconded the motion.

Council Member Gover stated that this was the best and the only meeting that he had seen and he has been on the park committee since day one, and he had asked for this type of meeting. It is a good meeting, and he added that he did not oppose the park. He worked with the City Manager today on money; he (City Manager) assured him of the money and he had no qualm with that.

Mayor Price asked if there was any discussion. He asked Mr. Connor if the motion included everything he needed to have.

Mr. Connor stated that it would also be nice if the Council could approve the site plan, the Woolpert site plan. He stated that they had one for Derek Church Williams many years ago, but this is a new 58 acre version.

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Council Member Gover asked about approving the Master Plan and then this to which Mr. Conner replied in theory, was all they were doing, approving the master plan.

Council Member Grogan stated he would include that in his motion to include the master plan in theory and Phase I in fact.

All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion.

Mayor Price thanked the member of the parks committee for "hanging in there."

Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Conner if he also needed an approval from the Council for the grant application certification. Mr. Conner replied the certification application, absolutely.

A motion was made by Council Member Myott seconded by Council Member Grogan to approve the grant application and the certification. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion.

Easement: (Approved by the Council earlier in the meeting).

Mayor Price read the following easement into the minutes.

Whereas, Rockingham County has current plans to install sewer line or lines connecting a service area in or near Wentworth to the City of Eden wastewater treatment facilities in accordance with an agreement entered into between the County and the City of Eden and dated January 12, 1998;

Whereas, the City of Eden is the owner of a certain tract of land lying on the east side of Mebane bridge Road (SR 1964) and northern edge of the Dan River over which it is necessary to construct a proposed sewer line in order to conveniently connect the County sewer collection system with the City of Eden wastewater treatment facilities;

And Whereas, the County has requested the City of Eden to grant unto the County certain temporary and permanent easements for the construction and maintenance said and sewer line or lines;

And Whereas, the City of Eden, in order to facilitate the implementation of the County's sewer project and its existing contract with the County, has agreed to grant the requested easements.

Now, Therefore, in consideration of the premises and other valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the City of Eden as Grantor does hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto Rockingham County as Grantee, its successors and assigns, a thirty foot permanent and perpetual easement (twenty feet to the west side of and ten feet to the east side of the "centerline" which delineates the location of the proposed sewer line or lines), and an additional twenty foot temporary construction easement (extending forty feet to the west of and perpendicular to said "centerline"), said easement lying or running over, across, and upon the land of the City of Eden (identified as Tax Parcel 7989-00-12-6200-00, and described in Deed Book 653 at Page 183) for the construction and maintenance of sanitary sewer line or lines, which easement are more particularly described as follows:

A motion was made by Council Member Grogan seconded by Council Member Reynolds for approval of the easement without any further reading. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion.

Council Member Gover asked for the width again to which Council Member Grogan replied 30 feet.

Mayor Price explained that this was down at Mebane Bridge Road, it had to go out a little farther at a different location than had originally been proposed.

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Mr. Thomas stated that the Council had originally approved it but because it went on a different location they had to redo it.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Council Member Grogan seconded by Council Member Reynolds to adjourn. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion.

Acknowledgement from City Clerk:

A special "thanks" to Ms. Sheralene Thompson for attending the meeting in the absence of the City Clerk.

	Respectfully submitted,
ATTEST:	Kim J. Scott City Clerk
Philip K. Price Mayor	