

Post Comments by City Manager John Gray  
from the August 13, 2012, City Council Meeting  
Tuesday, August 14, 2012 – 6:40 a.m. – WLXN Radio Station

City Council only holds one meeting in the month of July to allow for vacations so it has been a month since I was last here. It's good to be back. City Council took action on about a dozen items. Here are some of the highlights:

- **Lexington to Join High Point Transportation Organization**  
Transportation is an essential concern for any city or county. New roads, public transit that receives Federal and State funds are mandated to be planned at the local level in urban and rural areas. With the 2010 Census, Lexington is being reclassified and must join one of two urbanized transportation planning organizations, either the one based in Winston-Salem or the one in High Point. Lexington sits in a unique geographical position; where it has natural associations with the Winston-Salem transportation planning organization and the one in High Point which also includes Thomasville. We spent a great deal of staff time in research and analysis as this transportation planning process is the key to securing transportation improvements for a city or county. In the end, two factors were primary drivers in our staff recommendation to City Council that the City go with the High Point transportation planning organization: 1) High Point was already providing funding for Davidson County Transportation to begin fixed route bus service in Lexington with that service having begun less than a year ago. Winston-Salem does not have funding for small local bus route service because of its large population; and 2) Winston-Salem is more focused on the area northwest of Winston-Salem, not south towards Lexington, and does not envision staffing and other resources to assist Lexington. So at the moment, the High Point organization was seen as the best fit and was approved by City Council.
- **Rescue Squad to Acquire Former Fire Station No. 2**  
What happens to a former fire station when a City no longer needs it? Well in Lexington, the former Fire Station No. 2 on Cotton Grove Road will take on a new life continuing to serve the public under a deal approved by City Council last night. The City built and then occupied a new Fire Station No. 2 adjacent to the Davidson County Airport late in 2011. The City was approached by the Davidson County Rescue Squad to acquire the vacant building on Cotton Grove Road to deliver non-emergency ambulance transport services under contract with Davidson County. By contracting separately for non-emergency ambulance transporting of patients (i.e. from a nursing home to a hospital or vice-versa), Davidson County's trained paramedics are left free to deal with life and death medical emergency situations. The City Council has the authority to sell property for public purposes on more reasonable terms. The Rescue Squad will make a \$10,000 down payment and the City will forgo paying \$8,750 in annual grant payments to support the Rescue Squad for the next 12 years giving a total value to the City for the property of \$115,000. The Rescue Squad is responsible for all maintenance, taxes, etc. and will own the property in 12 years if it complies with contract terms. Good deal all around.
- **Lexington Housing Authority Contracts for Police Services**  
The Lexington Housing Authority (LHA) provides several hundred units of public housing for low income citizens in neighborhoods in East, West, and South Lexington. As with some businesses

needing additional security, the Lexington Police Department is oftentimes called upon to provide off-duty police officers for additional assistance beyond the basic level of service. This is the case with these three public housing neighborhoods in that they can be the target of illegal activity that undermines those residential areas. For several years now, the Lexington Police Department and the LHA Administration and Board of Directors have been working together to root out any element of illegal activity occurring in these neighborhoods. LHA contracts for two off-duty police officers, vehicles and equipment for 24 hours a week. The contract will cost LHA \$33,000 over an 11-month period. Our Police Chief credits this arrangement as one of the reasons the City's crime rate has dropped every year for almost the past 10 years.

- Curbside Rollout Recycling Pilot Program

Last night, City Council accepted a State grant of \$12,600 for the City to test, beginning in January 2013, a new automated rollout recycling program. The City will match the grant and purchase 500, 95-gallon rollout containers to automate the program. Currently, the City uses 18-gallon bins. Most people who recycle regularly will attest that their recycling has grown much larger than their garbage thus the need for the larger container and the need to automate. Four neighborhoods have been selected for the test. City and State will monitor the results to look to expand it to other neighborhoods.

- Finally, the new Lexington City Government Youth Council gets kicked-off this week in a dinner hosted by City Council just in time for the new school year.