

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF BRANSON, MISSOURI, FEBRUARY 23, 2004**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Branson, Missouri, met in the Public Comments session in the Council Chambers of the City Hall on February 23, 2004 at 8:35 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Pro Tem Huff presiding, with Dick Gass, Stan Barker, Beverly Martin, David Edie, and Jack Purvis present. Mayor Lou Schaefer absent.

Also in attendance were: Administrator Terry Dody, Assistant Administrator Kevin Fought, City Attorney Dan Wichmer, Assistant City Attorney Russ Dempsey, and City Clerk Sandra Williams.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff called the Public Comments meeting to order and stated the Board would hear citizens that signed up to speak in the order of the first person signing the sheet, and there were two people signed up to address the Board.

John Logan, 227 East Lakeshore Drive, Branson, was the first speaker to address the Board. Mr. Logan stated he would first like to explain that he was an editorial cartoonist for 17 newspapers across this country. He does national issues for the daily papers and they are much easier to cartoon because he does not know the people personally. In Branson he has to do cartoons of an individual nature to keep the ideas fresh and rosy for the citizens to read. At any time my publisher can fire me, but to ask an editorial cartoonist to be kind, noble, and gentle is unfair. Editorial cartoonist have to be very succinct. I am hired to be controversial; to render public opinion; to create discussion within our community. The history of the dunce cap was introduced by a doctor in Dutchland many years ago. It is very proper attire. The dunce is in the formation of a pyramid. It is sharp at the top, wide at the bottom. The inventor believed if you pointed the point of the dunce cap towards the sky and the creator's knowledge would flow into your body. The dunce cap is not a derogatory piece of wearing apparel. Mayor Pro Tem Huff said, "it is in the United States", and Mr. Logan replied, no sir, if you will check the Harvard University study of 1963 they did a dissertation on that, sir. I put a special cartoonist note below the cartoon which said "the above cartoon may seem harsh however for many months speakers have appeared in Public Comment before the council on this subject". You seemed to ignore it. It has never been placed on the public agenda. I can understand where you all would be offended but I am offended by being ignored. I am offended apologizing to people, and they don't apologize back, and that has happened in these Council chambers. We must protect our community. Once again, I invite you all to call my publisher and call my editor. A cartoonist has to use visuals to get the point across. I will not dance the fairy light dance and it has to be told. Please, please, please – I think I left off here. Make a statement against the expansion of alcohol in our theatres. This is a family town. We are a family vacation area and by allowing the expansion of alcohol it will destroy this community. That can hurt us as much as new business can help us. Stop the expansion of alcohol in our theatres. I will not apologize for being an editorial cartoonist. Thank you very much.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff stated. “Mr. Logan, I don’t understand what you and Mr. Pennel, don’t get about this. We have all told you what our personal view is about serving alcohol in theatres. We have already spoken. We have told you what our legal position is. If you are expecting a resolution to come out of this Council you are not going to get it because a resolution would not be consistent with established liquor control laws by the State of Missouri. It is just not going to happen. What is it you don’t get? What else do you want? You can answer at the next meeting.” HUFF

Chuck Pennel, 353 Quincy, Kirbyville addressed the Board indicating he had two items to discuss, and one would be short. Mr. Pennel stated, he appreciated Alderman Purvis’ statement and his taking a stand on this issue. Once again, he asked the Board to make a motion passing a resolution regarding liquor in theaters. He indicated he had gone all the way to the attorney general and the advice that the City Attorney gave the Board is not correct. Mayor Pro Tem Huff stated, a resolution would not change the law and in his opinion has the potential of alienating thousands of visitors who might come to Branson. Mr. Pennell replied that he didn’t understand either because you say it has the potential of alienating the people. But you have done this with the gambling, and he doesn’t understand the difference. A great percent of the population gamble and you have come out for years against it, and you did it again last year. Why did you take a chance of alienating your gambling customers by saying you are against it. If the liquor issue is going to alienate people you have certainly done it with the gambling. The reasoning is what I don’t understand. You are taking a stand of a social practice by doing it with gambling. PENNEL

Mr. Pennel stated his second issue is that he would like permission to speak to the Board in Executive Session about the real estate proposal on his property.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff indicated that the real estate negotiations are not being handled by the City at this point. They are being handled by HCW as their representatives, and Mr. Pennell would have to deal with HCW.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff stated, that concluded the Public Comments section and entertained a motion to adjourn to Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Alderman Gass moved to go into closed Executive Session pursuant to Section 610.021.1 RSMo for litigation, 610.021.2 for real estate and 610.021.3 for personnel. The motion was seconded by Alderman Purvis. Voting aye: Gass, Barker, Martin, Huff, Edie, and Purvis. Nays: none. Motion carried.

ADJOURN:

Mayor Pro Tem Huff entertained a motion to adjourn. Alderman Barker made the motion, seconded by Alderman Gass. Voting aye: Gass, Barker, Martin, Huff, Edie, and Purvis. Nays: none. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.