

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF BRANSON, MISSOURI, MARCH 8, 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 March 8, 2004 at 9:05 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Schaefer presiding, with Dick Gass, Stan Barker, Beverly Martin, Ron Huff, David Edie, and Jack Purvis present.

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 Schaefer 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 three people signed up to address the Board.

John Logan, 227 East Lakeshore Drive, Branson, was the first speaker to address the Board. Mr. Logan said the citizens of this community have asked something of the Board, they have signed a petition and said, 'please do not allow the expansion of alcohol in theaters.' The courteous thing to do would be to respond to those people by saying 'yes or no'. Mr. Logan indicated he had heard the objection from the Board, which was that Mr. Wichmer says it would be unconstitutional to have an 'alcohol resolution', and after talking with about seven local attorneys he could assure the Board that it is not illegal to have an alcohol resolution. A simple resolution, non-binding, that is all the people are asking. Mr. Logan stated he was asking again tonight, not because he wants to be a pest, but because this is very important to him and the community. Branson is a family vacation area, if we ever lose the family vacation area image, we have lost a tremendous amount. Once again, please place on your regular agenda, a resolution and either pass it or defeat it, the people deserve an answer. Mr. Dody suggested that the City Clerk pull the records and the tapes regarding what the City Attorney said, and have Mr. Logan come down and listen to them so we can clarify exactly what the City Attorney actually said. Mr. Logan agreed that he would do this. JOHN LOGAN

Mr. Logan then said he had one other thing to discuss. It was a little problem, but it was a wee bit of a burr under his saddle, so he wrote a little ditty that reflects something about it. It is about mountain folks, that some sneeringly call them "hillbillies". Those hard working, ingenious folk, looked down upon by some newcomers, those urbanites from concrete, utopias. He then read his poem regarding "mountain folks".

Chuck Pennel, 353 Quincy Drive, Kirbyville, Missouri addressed the Board indicating that before he spoke on his subject, he wanted to say that he believes that some of the Board members look at him as a pest, and he wished that they didn't because that is not his intent. This is an important issue to him, and he is here again PENNEL

on the same issue and that is the expansion of liquor in the theaters. It has been ten months since the issue came up, and it was not only him and John Logan but a number of others, and there were 800 names on the petition. Mr. Pennel said he felt it is important and still feels it is important after listening to the presentation from the Chamber, and Mr. Kalahar. He asked again for the Board to pass a resolution. We have something here of value and we need to protect that image because people are coming here because of what we have. Mr. Pennel asked again for the Board to consider in their regular meeting or writing a letter and sending it to Senator Childers, and Representative Woods, asking them to work on a bill that would give municipalities an opportunity to have stricter rules so that something like this could be addressed by a municipality. A resolution would make such a statement, but I ask you to consider a letter.

Alderman Huff responded to Mr. Pennel by saying, Taney County **HUFF**
has absolutely no laws or regulations controlling the sale and consumption
of alcohol in the County. Yet Mr. Pennel comes to the Board week after week wanting
them to do something about the control of alcohol in our own City. The County also does
not have any controls to protect the citizens from pornography, adult entertainment, nude
dancing, all of those unsavory, inappropriate activities and Branson has established
regulations that are the maximum allowed by law. Mr. Huff stated, he didn't understand
why Mr. Pennel doesn't clean up the county before coming and beating on the Board week
after week about alcohol.

The last speaker to address the Board was Mike Britton, Kirbyville, **MIKE**
Missouri. Mr. Britton thanked the Board for hearing him as he was not a **BRITTON**
resident of Branson and did not own property inside the City limits of Branson.
Mr. Britton indicated that he really enjoyed hearing Tom Kalahar's presentation and was
overwhelmed that he agreed so much with a man that he had never met before. Mr.
Kalahar did an excellent job, and he would just like to expound a little bit on what was say
because it corresponds with what he was wanting to say. My family came to Taney County
in 1818, and through the generations the mountain folks learned they needed to help other
mountain folks, and that it pays to be a good neighbor. They learned to take care of each
other because you never knew when you would need a neighbor to take care of you,
indicated Mr. Britton. I think it would be difficult for anyone here to break down beside
the road without someone stopping and offering to help them. We have an interest here in
our community, and everybody that has moved here has been accepted. Mr. Britton said
he had heard that a comment was made from the Board, that it was about time for Branson
to lose the "hillbilly image", and that he did not have the words to tell the Board how that
has sadden him. If you look at the charts presented tonight, the highest points of our
visitation was when we had our greatest hillbilly image. If it is at all possible, don't lose
our hillbilly image. We care what happens to this community and believe it or not, we care
what the Branson Council does. A lot of people in Branson want to read these cartoons.
You are under the microscope and believe it or not ten miles from here, the attitude about
Branson is far different than the image that you think it appears to be. "I am here in
kindness to tell you that I am proud to be a member of this community whether I live in
Branson or not. I am proud to be a hillbilly, and I am proud to have the image where I am
not ashamed to stop and help you if you breakdown beside the road. I am not ashamed to
say 'welcome' to every good neighbor we see, and I hope that we never lose that image,
stated Mr. Britton."

Alderman Gass stated he had not said anything about hillbillies at the Board, and did not recall any of his colleagues saying it, and asked Mr. Britton to go back to whom he heard it and say that Mr. Gass had not heard it said and did not use that kind of talk. GASS

Alderwoman Martin indicated that she felt that she was the victim. But she never said the word "hillbilly". No way, no shape nor form was the name "hillbilly" used. She stated, she loves this area and would never, ever be disrespectful for any of its roots and what it stands for and the people that live here because she is one of them. If it is out there that Alderwoman Martin said "hillbilly", please set the record straight that she never said that and never would. MARTIN

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Alderman Huff 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 Schaefer entertained a motion to adjourn. Alderman Barker made the motion, seconded by Alderman Huff. Voting aye: Gass, Barker, Martin, Huff, Edie, and Purvis. Nays: none. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.