

The Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission of Pembroke is proud to share in the Tenth Anniversary Celebration of THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE. Congratulations and best wishes for continued success.

Happy Birthday, Carolina Indian Voice!

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Housing Authority Boosts Federal C D Applications

"The presence of an active and healthy Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission has played an important part in this administration's ability to obtain almost a million dollars in federal Community Development (CD) funds," says Pembroke Mayor James A. (Pete) Jacobs.

"By the time I took office in December, 1979, the major building projects for the large housing developments were over. But that didn't mean the end of the benefits to the Town."

Jacobs explains that in applying for Community Development monies the inclusion of public housing areas guarantees some extra consideration. "Applications are normally rated on a point system. By having good public housing, we have been awarded bonus points that have helped push

our applications over the top," says Jacobs.

Already completed is a \$719,000 grant for housing rehabilitation, street improvements and water and sewer work in the northwest section of Pembroke. "The fact that this area included Strickland Heights made all the difference," according to Jacobs.

Just recently awarded and slated to begin this spring is a \$220,000 grant for similar improvements in the area of Pine Street Extension, an area which includes Locklear Court. "Pine Street Extension is in terrible condition," says Jacobs, "and the street paving project will be a major improvement for the Town, as will the housing rehabilitation."

Plans are already underway for future Community Development applications which will also benefit



JAMES A. "PETE" JACOBS

from the bonus points awarded due to the presence of public housing.

According to the Mayor, other indirect benefits to Pembroke can be traced to the existence of the Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission. A number of funding issues are based on population and the housing developments have unquestionably helped increase Pembroke's population. Other tax contributions to the Town, such as those derived from Intangible Taxes and beer and wine sales, have also increased with the addition of public housing.

"These things make a difference in what a local government can provide and become especially important when the economy is tight as it is now," explains Mayor Jacobs.

"I think the Housing Authority is a great asset to the Town. It has made life much more comfortable and pleasing to a great number of people, especially the elderly. In the early 70s we had a lot of people reaching retirement age and this coupled with a move from tenant farming to commercial farming left a lot of people without the traditional opportunities for homes."

"The need was there. We saw the need and responded. I've always been a supporter of public housing--as a citizen, as a Town Councilman and as a Commissioner."

Lee E. Neville
Commissioner

"One could wish that a Housing Authority--any housing authority--wouldn't be needed in today's world, but it is and since it is, I feel it's important for the citizens living in the area to be willing to serve in what ever capacity they can to make it the very best it can be. Too many times I hear criticisms about public housing and other public programs. Maybe some people do take advantage of these public dollars and yet I know so many who really need them. If it weren't for the Housing Authority, where would they be? That's where my whole perspective comes from."

"I enjoy serving on the Board and having input in an effort to let the housing program continue to be the outstanding organization it always has been. It has a long history of being able to carry out its objectives and purposes."

Wesley Revels
Commissioner



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Dedication Is Board Feature

On June 11, 1969, the first Board of Commissioners of the Pembroke Housing Authority was appointed by the Town of Pembroke. Membership on that first Board probably depended more on determination and faith than on any real certainty of success. Nonetheless, success was to be theirs and to follow every subsequent board through the next thirteen and a half years.

The roll of Commissioners over the years includes some of Pembroke's most dedicated citizens. Dedication is a definite requirement since the job includes no pay, no benefits other than personal satisfaction, and a lot of long hours. Pembroke's gratitude has been earned by all of the following.

Original Board of Commissioners

James Pearson
William L. Oxendine
Clarence F. (Ted) Locklear
W.J. Strickland
the late Howard Thatcher

Other Former Board Members

Reggie Strickland
the late Andrew Carl Lowry
Paul Brooks
Mack Chance
Nicky Locklear
Beatrice Bethea
Gerald Borland
Tryon Lowry
the late Riley Locklear, Jr.
Stacy Locklear

Current Board Members
Larry T. Roberts, Chairman
Clarence F. Locklear, Vice Chmn.
Maggie J. Oxendine
Lee E. Neville
Wesley Revels

Locklear, Oxendine Hold Unique Positions on Housing Board

Two current members of the Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission Board are Clarence F. (Ted) Locklear and Mrs. Maggie J. Oxendine. Each holds an unique distinction with the Board. Locklear is the only Commissioner to have served continuously since the Board's inception in June of 1969. Mrs. Oxendine is the only woman currently appointed Commissioner.

In 1969 when the first Housing Authority Board was appointed under then Mayor Earlie Maynor, there was no office, no Director and no hard plan for the future. There was, however, a supportive Town government and five eager, new Commissioners ready to learn and anxious to help Pembroke find its way to some federal housing opportunities. Locklear considers himself lucky to have been one of the original five.

"I've seen the Housing Authority develop from nothing," he says. "I've watched it grow and seen the positive financial effect it's had on the town. It has truly enabled people to have good housing, some for the first time, and that has been the greatest pleasure for me."

As each new housing development came into being, Locklear and other Board members not only watched with pride but took active steps to see that each was made as attractive as possible and then kept that way. Locklear says that he has seen how some housing projects in other towns and cities are allowed to run down and look shabby. "Our housing adds to the appearance of the town," he says, "and that's important to us. We're very much

concerned that our homes look neat and are kept up well."

Although additional, new housing is not expected in the near future, Locklear feels that the Board will continue to be busy maintaining the quality of the homes and services now in place. "And remember we're also involved in Redevelopment," he reminds. "There isn't much federal money right now but we'll be seeking what money we can."

Locklear is as excited about his work as a Commissioner today as he was in 1969 when it was all new to him and the Town. That same quality of excited concern is one of the links that binds all the Commission members, according to Mrs. Oxendine.

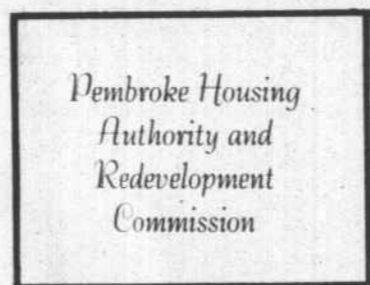
Although the only woman on the Board, Mrs. Oxendine describes herself as "one of the boys" when it comes to the work they do.

"I think we're doing a great and important job," she says. "It is a good feeling to help people. I talk with some of the residents and with people who want to become residents. They feel good about our housing."

Mrs. Oxendine says that she had a lot to learn about public housing and federal programs when she joined the Board, but that through workshops and training sessions she has had excellent opportunities to grow as a Commissioner. At least part of the credit for the successful operations of the Board belongs to "the best Director and staff we could ever hope to have," says Mrs. Oxendine. "They're exceptionally understanding and will really go the second mile."

CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS

- June 23, 1969 Pembroke Housing Authority incorporated under the Housing Authorities Law of the State of North Carolina
- September 25, 1972 Clinton L. Thomas, Jr. named Executive Director
- August 30, 1973 First housing site, named Dial Terrace in honor of Councilman Sam Dial, released for occupancy. Forty-three units available. HUD Area Director Richard Barnwell and Henry Ward Oxendine, former N.C. State Representative, were guest speakers for the official dedication ceremony.
- November 30, 1973 Housing Authority reincorporated as The Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission of Pembroke
- June 18, 1974 Board of Commissioners adopted Affirmative Action and Manpower and Economic Development Plan to ensure a better chance for local contractors to participate in the construction of any future housing developments
- August 1, 1974 Second housing site, named Maynor Manor in honor of former Mayor Earlie B. Maynor, was dedicated and its 27 units released for occupancy. Richard Barnwell guest speaker for dedication
- April 9, 1975 Phillip James Kirk, Jr., Chief of Staff under Gov. James Holshouser, guest speaker for ground breaking ceremony for Locklear Court, 30 units, and Chavis Park, 41 units. Housing sites three and four named in honor of Rev. Clarence Locklear and Rev. Zimmie Chavis.
- August 1, 1975 Pembroke Housing Authority announced receipt of grant to enable provision of in-house social services program
- August 1, 1976 Locklear Court and Chavis Park occupied
- September 2, 1976 Third and fourth housing sites (Locklear Court and Chavis Park) dedicated with guest speakers Dr. Larnie G. Horton, Sr., Special Assistant to Governor for Minority Affairs, and Richard Barnwell.
- August 23, 1978 Housing Authority announced establishment of a nutrition site for 45 senior citizens at Maynor Manor, by contract with Lumber River Council of Governments
- July 16, 1979 Clinton L. Thomas, Jr. Day Care Center opened, capacity to serve 90 children
- September 1, 1979 Fifth housing site, named Strickland Heights in honor of former Mayor Reggie Strickland, opened for occupancy. One hundred units available.
- November 30, 1979 Dedication ceremony for Strickland Heights and Clinton L. Thomas, Jr. Day Care Center. Former N.C. State Senator Sam R. Noble guest speaker
- July 1, 1981 Housing Authority received approval to establish a permanent position for Tenant Services
- October 28, 1981 Housing Authority announced establishment of Chronic Disease Screening Clinic at Maynor Manor, by contract with Robeson County Health Department
- December 8, 1982 Board of Commissioners approved purchase of maintenance building of 4,050 square feet to be remodeled as central maintenance and storage building.



ANDREW C. LOWRY

Andrew Lowry Served With Distinction

In June of 1981 the Pembroke Housing Authority and redevelopment Commission lost a Board member who is remembered by staff as "one of the most generous, unselfish and caring individuals you could ever meet."

Andrew Carl Lowry had served as a Commissioner since June 1972, first as a Board member, then as vice-chairman and from 1978 until his death as chairman.

"He was the type of man that really got involved without any hint of some selfish motive hidden in the background," recalls staff. "He was totally supportive of everyone having a chance for as nice a home as he had."

A former Town Councilman, Lowry was a public school teacher for 17 years, a devoted member of Bear Swamp Baptist Church and a charter member of the Pembroke Men's Chorus.

Lowry is survived not only by his family--his widow, Mrs. Vivian Lowry and their five children--but by a legacy of generous service that will long be remembered by the Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission, its Board, staff and the tenants who knew him.

We've come a long way...

CIV and Housing Authority: A Decade of Service to Pembroke



CLINTON L. THOMAS, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"If we were in a position to think about something new any time soon, it would definitely be special housing for the elderly, perhaps a mid-rise or garden complex. But right now there is practically no money available from the federal government."

"Our main objective now is to strengthen our management operations and, of course, one of my biggest dreams is to reinstitute some of our social services programs. Our own social workers, working full time, did more to help our residents than any other service we offer," says Thomas.

At present the Housing Authority is compensating for the lack of in-house social work funds by contracting with the Robeson County Department of Social Services for outreach services. "They do a wonderful job, but they have other obligations and I know our own units could be a full time job."

One of the special rewards of in-house social services, he remembers, is assisting young families in locating private homes of their own. "We've had a lot of cases in which a family will live with us for awhile, say four or five years, and use that time to save toward a home of their own. All they need is a little time and a little assistance. This is really a most gratifying part of our work."

Thomas also sees a need to place additional emphasis on recreational activities and facilities for the children in the housing developments. "We have about an acre adjacent to Strickland Heights for development of a recreational area," he points out. "And there's additional property at Dial Terrace we could use for a mini park."

A big part of any Director's job is keeping an eye open for funding opportunities, says Thomas. With recreation in mind he'll be watching new developments in the policies of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, HUD (U.S. Housing and Urban Development) Modernization Funds and the N.C. Commission for Indian Affairs as well as other potential support sources.

"I think everybody realizes that the Housing Authority is one of the greatest assets to our Town. We've made a lot of people more comfortable than they would have been otherwise. I've lived in a few cold houses myself. I remember."

"I'm also proud of the way our housing looks and the way it's run. Compared to other housing programs, I'd say we rate as one of the best. It's been very rewarding and challenging to serve on the Board of Commissioners."

Larry T. Roberts
Board Chairman

From his earliest days as Executive Director, Thomas has looked forward to the day when the Redevelopment side of the agency could step forward and assist the Town in refurbishing the central business district. A lot of quiet progress has been made over the years even while the major, visible improvements have had to be moved to a back burner.

Ten years ago Pembroke had no regulatory ordinances governing Town growth. In 1973 a Town Planning Board was formed and, in conjunction with a Land Development Plan, a complete set of zoning ordinances was developed. By virtue of this plan and the work of the Planning Board the Town has been able to reach out one mile beyond its corporate limits.

"This is important to the Town," says Thomas. "We haven't forgotten any of our dreams for the business area, but there hasn't been any money available and in the meantime we've done all that has been possible." Thomas feels that one potential funding source might become available if the Reagan administration decides to launch into some new form of public works programs.

Thomas, who clearly prefers to look ahead rather than at past accomplishments, nonetheless warms to several efforts of special significance during the past decade. A matter of special pride was the passage by the Board of Commissioners of an Affirmative

Action Program designed to help local contractors win more of the contracts related to the building of the housing projects and thereby keeping millions of dollars in the Pembroke community.

"I'm really proud of that," says Thomas. "We had some excellent local contractors and many more people who wanted to learn, but all too often the larger businesses from outside the area had an edge that our smaller concerns couldn't meet. Through the Affirmative Action Plan we were able to help keep more of the business here at home. It's even more rewarding to know that some of the businesses and workers have continued to do well on their own ever since."

Another source of pride for Thomas is the one program he's simultaneously most excited about and most shy about: the Clinton L. Thomas, Jr. Day Care Center. The day care center was his idea and the product of his considerable lobbying efforts with HUD officials, licensure boards and other regulatory bodies. However, it came as a surprise when the Board of Commissioners voted to name the facility in his honor. When asked about the center, he customarily hurries to share the credit with any and all who participated in its development.

Designed for as many as 90 to 95 children, the day care center occupies about 9,500 square feet and is divided into three light and cheerful classrooms, a large kitchen, a laundry room and a general purpose meeting-play-dining room. Outdoor recreational equipment round out the facilities which are available to the children of public housing residents and non-residents. A day care staff of six oversees all operations.

"We have tried in every way possible to make our public housing as attractive and responsive to tenants and public as it can be," says Thomas.

Meeting social needs as well as housing needs is undoubtedly part of the reason that public housing in Pembroke has avoided the stigma that it's earned in other cities across the nation. "It makes me feel good when new people moving into the community, people with above average incomes, come to us looking for housing," says Thomas. "They're usually amazed to learn that this is subsidized housing."

Avoiding the negative impact of the 'project' image has been the result of careful planning and hard work by the Board, the Town officials, citizens and the housing staff, says Thomas.

Thomas finds it difficult not to talk about the support that the Housing Authority and Redevelopment Commission has received over the years from the various Town administrations. Beginning with the

administration of former Mayor Earlie B. Maynor and continuing through the present, Thomas feels that the elected officials have been far sighted and often courageous in their planning efforts.

"We could never have made the kind of progress we have without this kind of backing," says the Director.

"I think one of the things I'm most personally grateful for during the last 10 and a half years is the opportunity that the Town and the Board have given me to learn and grow as an administrator. I wasn't kidding when I said that I didn't know a lot about public housing when I took the job. It was a relatively new field for many of us and it took some faith on the part of the Board to let me get my bearings."

Thomas spent a lot of time in those early years attending seminars, workshops and training institutes in order to obtain certification as a public housing administrator. He attended special classes at the Housing Management Institute in Norfolk, at the University of Georgia and Winston-Salem State. Just as much time was spent pouring through federal guidelines and working with HUD officials.

"Persistence. That's probably what helped me most," reflects Thomas. "My own persistence and that of the Town and Board. But, you know, I wouldn't have missed a minute of it."