

**CITY:** looks to bring Main St. in-house

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Sellers will also recommend to council the continued use of the Municipal Service District tax levy as a means of raising funds for implementing the Main Street program and making capital improvements related to economic development in the district. Such funds would be rerouted as of Jan. 1, 2012 because the city does not have a contract with MPI after Jan. 1, 2012.

If adopted, the new policy calls for appointment of a broad-based advisory board with staggered terms. The board would be charged with advising the city on economic-related actions for downtown and assist in implementing the Main Street program, for example the Moss Lake committee serves as advisor to the city's planning department.

A city staffer would serve on each of the four committees along with other appointees from downtown business, volunteers and the Main Street coordinator. Sellers suggests four committees so that interested parties can work closely with the main resource, city government, to improve and re-

vitalize downtown through the Main Street program.

City Council Tuesday will also be asked to adopt a resolution in support of the City of Kings Mountain's designation as a North Carolina Main Street community. The city has been recognized as a Main Street city by the office of Community Development within the state's Department of Commerce, home of Main Street staff and the N.C. Main Street program, for two years.

The resolution on the agenda assures Main Street staff that the city will meet staff resource requirements, continue Main Street reporting and faithfully implement the four points of the program - economic restructuring, organization, design and promotion.

"I want us to foster a public-private partnership oriented program that emphasizes cooperation, dialogue and sharing of resources," said Sellers. "We look forward to continued growth downtown with vested property owners and businesses as well as established downtown groups and volunteers."

**GROVER:** board concerned over sweeps, denies one, approves one

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businesses continue to operate on Main Street and similar businesses are operating in other areas of the county.

Grover residents Cobia Goforth, Jean Harry Francis, Sheriff's Deputy Roy Dyer and Bill Willis, both new councilmen, cited safety and the town's image in speaking against the issuing of conditional use permits to Heath and Johnson. Willis presented a petition signed by 122 people opposing the issuance of permits for video sweeps.

"Why are these businesses still operating in Grover when others are shut down in Cleveland County?" asked Francis.

"It's preposterous to give permits to these applicants," said Dyer.

Meantime, the town board has set a public hearing for Feb. 6 to consider a moratorium on the issuing of conditional use permits for video sweepstakes.

Currently, sweepstakes businesses pay an application fee of \$200 to the county and an annual \$4,000 privilege license fee to the Town of Grover.

The rules which govern the conditional use permit specify no criminal activity, no alcohol, no marquee signs, no tinted windows, no "sweepstakes" signs (only the name of the business), no banners, one "open" sign only, and "We need to see in your business," said

Board of Adjustment Chairman Cindy O'Brien, mayor pro tem.

O'Brien said a town business license must be purchased annually and after the July 15 deadline a 10 percent late fee is charged. Hours of operation are Monday-Thursday 9-12 and Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 a.m. Front of entrances of businesses must be clean, no exotic paint allowed, no locked doors and police must be able to enter at any time. The permit is valid in the name of the applicant only, who must reapply for a permit 30 days before expiration each year. Violation of the conditions means revocation of the permit and no reinstatement.

The addition to the rules that only one conditional use permit can be issued to one applicant per location prohibits Johnson from receiving a permit in his name to operate a second internet sweepstakes on Main Street.

Heath said he would comply with all the rules.

Board Secretary Kathy Ledford told business owners at the meeting, "If you don't follow every letter of the law, we'll shut you down."

Since state law is still up in the air about video sweepstakes the board questioned and did not accept changes in the rules suggested by Police Chief Eric Buff. Buff wanted the board to include in "black and white," as part of the conditional use permit, the names of

illegal games listed by NC General Statutes.

The fees charged to sweepstakes businesses came up for discussion led by former councilman Cobia Goforth and present councilman Bill Willis. Chairman O'Brien reminded that the former city council voted unanimously to approve the fees as "a deterrent," she said.

Goforth charged it was a "pay off to keep from a law suit" and councilman Willis apologized that his similar comments were not meant to offend.

"I think the old board should have had a work session before voting on the matter," he said.

Former councilman Goforth, who confirmed that he joined the former board in approving the fees, countered that the problem settled by negotiations should have been settled in Superior Court.

City Clerk Tricia Willis said she helped council research license fees charged by other cities to video sweepstakes businesses and reported those fees to the full board before it took action on setting the fee structure. Don Johnson said that similar businesses pay higher license fees in other towns.

Other members of the board of adjustment are Ron Skibo, Michael Allen, Eugene Early, vice-chairman, and Kathy Ledford.

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