

Negotiations Underway To Open Fairhope Library

MARCH 16, 1964 FAIRHOPE COURIER

WHY HAS THE LIBRARY CLOSED?

(An Editorial)

Mrs. Roland P. Carr, our librarian, is recovering from a major operation. Our library assistant has resigned. Volunteers tried to keep the Library open and found it impossible. It has remained closed for lack of experienced help.

Such an emergency occurred because for a long time the library has been understaffed and inadequately supported financially.

The Fairhope Single Tax Corporation deserves the gratitude of all for establishing this fine library in Fairhope long before even Mobile established one. The Colony has supported the library ever since. The City of Fairhope cannot according to law support the Library because it is owned and operated by the Single Tax Colony which is a private corporation. However, the City does furnish free of charge a portion of the utilities.

The time has come when the Single Tax Colony simply cannot adequately support a first rate library for the growing Eastern Shore, nor should it be expected to do so. The time has come when the City of Fairhope and The Single Tax Colony must put into action some plan to provide really adequate, long-continuing, financial support for the Fairhope Library.

If you want the library open, talk or write to the officials of the City of Fairhope and the Single Tax Colony, urging them to continue their negotiations until a solution is reached which would make available the necessary financial assistance to reopen our library permanently.

A joint meeting was held last Monday night between a committee of the City of Fairhope and the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation for the purpose of devising ways and means to reopen the Fairhope Library.

This committee was composed of James Gaston, Jr., and Walter Poser for the city. Oliver Rockwell and Ralph Brown represented the Single Tax Corporation. They discussed the feasibility of the library being placed under municipal control.

Mr. Gaston and Mr. Poser state that in their opinion the city is willing and ready to assume this obligation.

The joint committee agreed on a resolution that would transfer the library from the Single Tax Colony to the City of Fairhope where public funds will be available to support it. However, before this can be legal three things must be done. (1) The City Council must approve the resolution. (2) The Fairhope Single Tax Council must approve the resolution, then (3) approval by the entire membership of the Single Tax Corporation by referendum. Single Tax Council meets tonight (Thursday) and the City Council meets next Monday night.

The resolution as adopted by the joint committee is as follows:

WHEREAS, Fairhope's library service was instituted by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation and has, for many years, been dependent for its financial support upon monthly appropriations of funds from the treasury of said Corporation, and

WHEREAS, at a meeting of members of said Corporation, a motion was adopted proposing that such action be taken as might be necessary to secure acceptance by the City of Fairhope of the obligation to provide Public Library Service, as so authorized by the Code of the State of Alabama, in order to provide such service with a broader and more adequate basis of support, and

WHEREAS, a joint committee composed of R. H. Brown and O. M. Rockwell, as representatives of the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation and J. E. Gaston, Jr., and Walter Poser, as representatives of

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Fairhope Library

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the City of Fairhope have suggested conditions as the basis for transfer to the City of the library facilities.

Now therefore be it resolved that:

In consideration of the City of Fairhope's acceptance of the responsibility to establish and maintain public library service in the City of Fairhope, subject to member approval at a referendum election to be held in the Colony office between the hours of two and six P. M. on the _____ day of _____, 1964, the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation, the Fairhope Library and Museum Association concurring, does hereby agree to transfer to the City of Fairhope, all items within the library building which are considered to be a part of or needed in the conduct of such library service, at no cost to the City.

And the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation does hereby agree to lease to the City of Fairhope, for an initial term of five (5) years its existing library building at no charge other than payment by the City to Fairhope Single Tax Corporation of the annual rental value of the land now occupied as the site of said building; and the further obligation of the City to pay all maintenance costs of the building, equipment and grounds and to maintain fire and extended co-

verage insurance on said building and equipment payable to the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation as its interest may appear. Said lease is to be made for library purposes only and may be terminated by the City should it provide its own building for occupancy by the library prior to the end of the initial term. And, in the event that no library building has been provided at the end of the five year term, then the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation does hereby agree to renew said lease for such extended term and upon such conditions as may be mutually agreed to, or, if the City so desires to sell the building to the City and issue to it the Corporation's regular 99 year lease to the land.

As a further consideration for the foregoing transfer the City is to agree that if and when a new library building is erected, a suitable plaque will be installed with wording as prescribed by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation giving it credit for the establishment of a library and maintenance thereof from the time said library was established until transferred to the City of Fairhope.