

# City of Hope

P. O. Box 667 .Hope, Arkansas 7 1802-0667 .(870) 777-6701 .Fax (870) 722-2579

April 18, 2006

The Honorable Susan M. Collins, Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security And Governmental Affairs  
United State Senate  
Washington, DC 205 10-6250

Dear Senator Collins:

I send you greetings from Hope, Arkansas.

Thank you and your committee for extending the opportunity to testify at the field hearing to be held in Hope, Arkansas this Friday, April 21, 2006.

I look forward to the opportunity of meeting you and having you visit our community. I also look forward to testifying before your committee. A copy of my testimony is attached for your review.

Sincerely,

Dennis Ramsey  
Mayor

April 18, 2006

Prior to Hurricane Katrina striking the gulf coast, several hundred people evacuated to Hope, Arkansas. When it became evident the devastation to the coast region would be significant, as a community we came to the realization that the stay for many of the evacuees would be prolonged. Our community, as many others across our state, began a grass roots effort to become a source of strength both emotionally and financially for these guest. Funds were raised and distributed; lodging provided; twice daily meals served; job fares held; and friendships extended. All was done with no concern for repayment from the victims or governmental entities. It united us as a community and introduced us to many new friends many with whom we still correspond. Of course this continued with Hurricane Rita weeks later.

On or about Saturday, September 24, 2005, I received a phone call from a Mr. Robert Hoban, who identified himself as a representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA. He stated that FEMA had let or was in the process of letting contracts to purchase upwards of twenty thousand (20,000) manufactured homes (i.e. mobile homes). The staging and distribution point for these homes was to be Red River Army Depot at Hooks Texas. However, much of RRAD contained trees and other vegetation, so the cost of clearing and preparing this land to stage these units would be excessive. On this day he and other individuals had visited our airport property and thought that it would be ideal to store several thousand mobile homes temporarily. Mr. Hoban wanted to know how much acreage, and *if* the City of Hope would lease the property to FEMA and also the possibility of closing the runways.

I told Mr.Hoban as Mayor, I did not have that authority to make that decision and there were several issues that would have to resolved including:

1. Approval of the Federal Aviation Authority
2. Our visiting with the Arkansas Aeronautics Agency
3. Consulting with our Airport Advisory Board and pilots
4. Approval by a vote of the Hope City Board of Directors
- Closing all runways was not an option as preservation as Airport Functions was of primary importance

I contacted our City Manager, Catherine Cook, and told her of my conversation.

On Monday, September 26, 2005, I received a call from a representative of the Government Services Administration, Ms. Dorothy Keisler, I believe. She wanted to fax a lease for the City to consider. I told her essentially the same conversation I had had with Mr. Hoban and that it would be premature as I had no authority to negotiate a lease, but that I felt confident the City would do all it could to accommodate the request.

The City Manager began contacting our airport engineers, FAA, Arkansas Aeronautics, City Board members, and local airport groups. We also had on going conversations with FEMA representatives. We informed them we had approximately 453 acres. Per their calculations, they would place approximately 13,000 mobile homes on the site. We informed them of the soil conditions present at the airport. This is an old army airport built in 1941 with three runways; two of which are still active. The third one has been closed permanently. The airport was constructed on what was then very fertile farmland. We informed FEMA that, when wet, this soil became very 'spongy', and during periods rain ingress and egress would be very limited, i.e. become stuck in the mud. No one ever inferred that the mobile homes would begin to 'sink in the mud.'

On Tuesday October 4, 2005, Mr. Robert Hoban, FEMA representative, addressed the Hope City Board of Directors, and requested leasing 453.5 acres of airport property for two years with an option to renew for two additional one-year periods. The reason the two options is that when the units are recovered from the Gulf area by FEMA, they will be returned to Hope for minor refurbishing. The Board recommended a lease price of \$25,000.00 per month. A copy of the pertinent minutes of the meeting is attached (exhibit A).

On October 7, 2005, the lease with the Government Services Administration for the benefit of FEMA was signed. (Exhibit B) A map of the leased area is attached (Exhibit C).

During the week of October 9, 2005, mobile homes began arriving at the Hope Airport.

On October 21, 2005 at a special called City Board meeting, Mr. Hoban again addressed the City Board. He stated there were approximately four hundred mobile homes housed at the airport on available runway space. He stated that FEMA was interested in placing a geotech fabric and gravel (called 'crush and run') in 50 acre parcels to stage additional mobile homes. The board agreed to the proposal. (Exhibit D)

By November 1, 2005 there were approximately 1500 units at the airport; but no crush and run had been laid except for the road on the south end of the property.

Mr. Hoban subsequently stated that FEMA desired to develop 170 acres and possibly up to 290 total acres with a Geotech fabric and four to six inches of SB-2/Class 7 crushed stone applied over the fabric. At the meeting on local FEMA personnel stated the amount would only include about 97 acres (Exhibit E). GSA amended this to the original 170 acres and the Board at the April 4, 2006 meeting passed this. The board along added another amendment that the crosswind runway, #4-22, is to be reopened as soon as possible; and that as it is cleared no additional units would be placed on this runway. FEMA would still have use of the closed permanently closed runway (Exhibits F & G). A map is enclosed showing the acreage to be prepared. This work is currently under construction.

To my knowledge, the maximum number of mobile homes staged at the airport property was 10,777. Currently the number is approximately 10,000.

FEMA has on several occasions told representatives of the City, as well as members of the House and Senate of the United States Congress, the real possibility that this site may become a permanent staging area for FEMA.

The local FEMA representatives as well as Mr. Hoban have been very cooperative and responsive to our questions and concerns when voiced and have responded to them promptly.

**CITY OF HOPE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
7:00 PM., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2005  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

The City Board of Directors met at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 4, 2005, with the following present:

Catherine Cook, City Manager  
Carol Almond, City Clerk  
Joe Short, City Attorney

Directors: Dennis Ramsey, Mayor David Johnson, Vice-Mayor  
Doodle Franklin, absent  
Willie Walker, absent  
Bucky Sharpe  
Don Still  
Don Hall

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order. Director Don Still opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes of the September 20, 2005 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Don Hall, seconded by Don still. Motion carried with all present voting "Aye."

FEMA Representative Robert Hoban was present to ask the Board for permission to lease part of the Airport property. The reason for this request is that FEMA has purchased mobile homes for the disaster victims from this year's hurricanes. At the moment 18,000 16x80 mobile homes and travel trailers are ready to be sent to the Gulf coast but appropriate infrastructure is not yet available in the effected regions for these homes. FEMA has been utilizing space in Texarkana but the cost is becoming prohibitive due to the size of the operation. FEMA plans to keep the travel trailers in Texarkana and bring the mobile homes to Hope, if the Board is agreeable. Also, when the time comes to recover the trailers, FEMA will need a centralized location for the recovery process.

Mrs. Cook explained that two options for the lease are available. The first is to lease the area south of AMKO, the closed runway, and area south of the closed runway. The other alternative is to temporarily shut down runway 22-4 and all the property mentioned in the first option. FEMA is proposing a two-year lease with a two-year option to renew.

STANDARD FORM 2  
FEBRUARY 1965 EDITION  
GENERAL SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION  
FPR (41 CFR) 1-16.601  
SF2 FEMA HAC 9 28 05

**U.S. GOVERNMENT  
LEASE FOR REAL PROPERTY**

DATE OF LEASE  
October 5, 2005

LEASE NO. FEMA-1603-HOPE-AR-LAND#1

THIS LEASE, made and entered into this date by and between City of Hope, Arkansas

whose address is P. O. Box 667  
Hope, AR 71801-0667

and whose interest in the property hereinafter described is that of Owner

hereinafter called the Lessor, and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, hereinafter called the Government:

WITNESSETH: The parties hereto for the consideration hereinafter mentioned, covenant and agree as follows:

1. The Lessor hereby leases to the Government the following described premises (the "Property"):

A part of the Hope Municipal Airport located in Sections 10, 11, 14, and 15 Township 12, South, Range 25 West, containing 453.5 acres and more particularly described as on Exhibit A.

to be used for such purposes as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA"), and for those additional purposes by those agencies and entities described in the attached Rider and in accordance with terms as reflected in attached Rider.

2. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said premises with their appurtenances for the term OF Twenty Four (24) MONTHS beginning on October 10, 2005 through October 9, 2007 with option to extend two years in one-year increments subject to termination and renewal rights as may be hereinafter set forth.

3. The Government shall pay the Lessor annual rent of \$300,000.00 at the rate of \$25,000.00 per month in arrears.

Rent for a lesser period shall be prorated. Rent payments shall be made by FEMA, payable to:

**City of Hope Airport Fund, P. O. Box 667, Hope, AR 71802-0667**

4. The Government may terminate this lease at any time after twelve (24) months following the effective date of the lease by giving at least sixty (60) days notice in writing to the Lessor and no rental shall accrue after the effective date of termination. Said notice shall be computed commencing with the day after the date of mailing.

5. This lease may be renewed at the option of the Government, for the following terms and at the following rentals:

Two one-year renewal options are included with rates to be negotiated at the time of implementation.

provided notice be given in writing to the Lessor at least sixty (60) days before the end of the original lease term or any renewal term; all other terms and conditions of this lease shall remain the same during any renewal term. Said notice shall be computed commencing with the day after the date of mailing.

6. The following are attached and made a part hereof:
- a. Lease Rider consisting of paragraphs 1 through \_\_,
  - b. GSA Form 3517B, General Clauses, and
  - c. GSA Form 3518, Representations and Certifications.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto subscribed their names as of the date first above written.

LESSOR

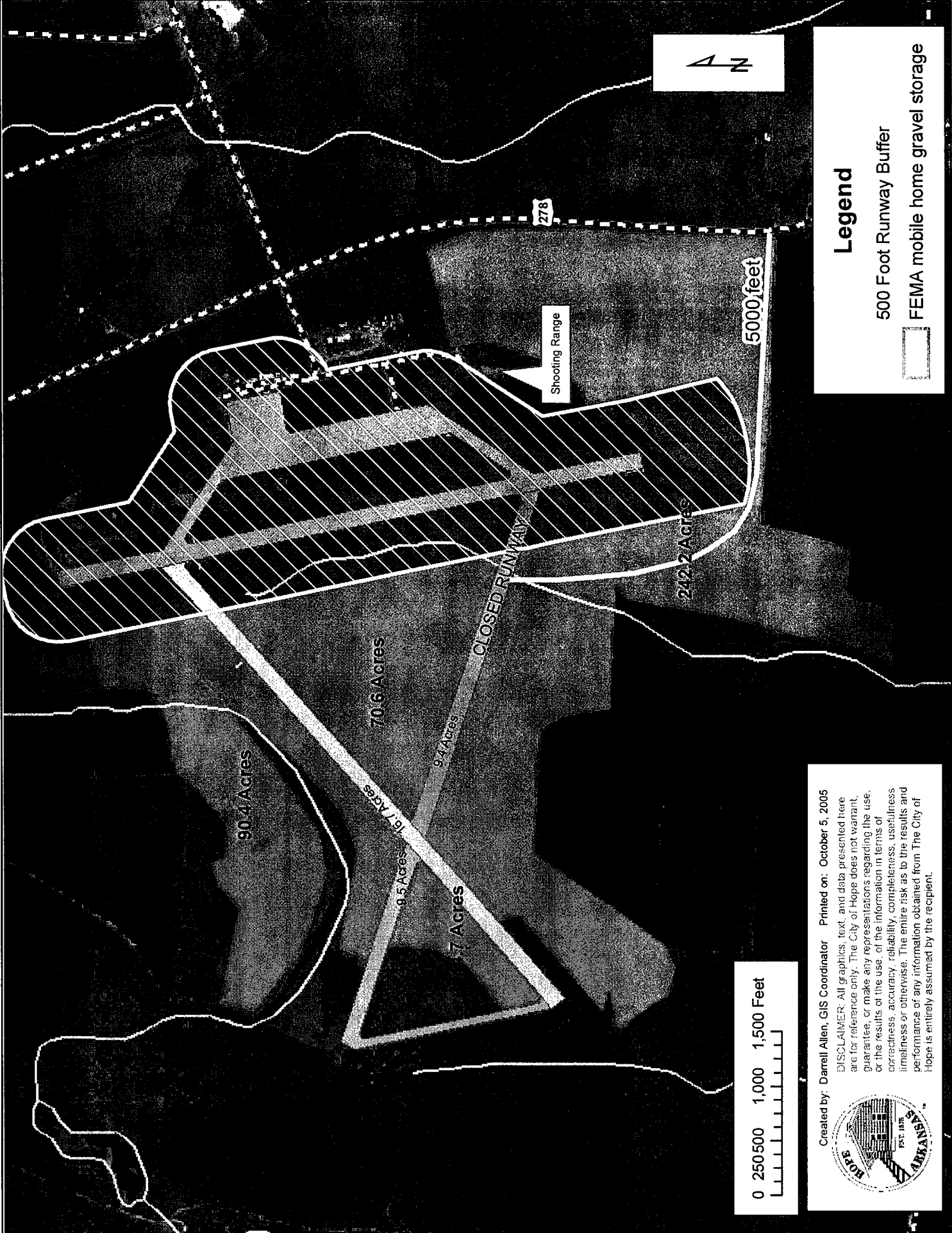
BY \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

IN PRESENCE OF:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Address)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA      GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

BY \_\_\_\_\_ Contracting Officer  
(Signature) (Official title)



42

278

Shooting Range

5000 feet

242.2 ACRES

70.6 ACRES

90.4 ACRES

9.4 ACRES

7 ACRES

9.5 ACRES

167 ACRES

CLOSED RUNWAY

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 Feet

**Legend**

500 Foot Runway Buffer

FEMA mobile home gravel storage

Created by: Darrell Allen, GIS Coordinator Printed on: October 5, 2005  
 DISCLAIMER: All graphics, text, and data presented here are for reference only. The City of Hope does not warrant, guarantee, or make any representations regarding the use, or the results of the use, of the information in terms of correctness, accuracy, reliability, completeness, usefulness, timeliness or otherwise. The entire risk as to the results and performance of any information obtained from The City of Hope is entirely assumed by the recipient.







**CITY OF HOPE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
12:00 P.M., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2005  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

The City Board of Directors met at 12:00 p.m., Friday, October 21, 2005, with the following present:

Catherine Cook, City Manager  
Carol Almond, City Clerk  
Joe Short, City Attorney, absent

Directors: Dennis Ramsey, Mayor  
David Johnson, Vice-Mayor  
Doodle Franklin  
Willie Walker, absent  
Bucky Sharpe  
Don Still  
Don Hall

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order.

Robert Hoban was present to update the Board on the operations undertaken by FEMA at the Airport. Mr. Hoban told the Board that to date 400 trailers were warehoused at the Airport on the available runway space. Mr. Hoban said that FEMA was now interested in placing crush and run as well as geotech fabric on the areas around the runways in order to stage additional homes on the leased property.

Mr. Haban said they would develop approximately 50-acre parcels of the property at a time. He asked permission from the to begin the crush and run operations.

David Johnson made a motion to grant permission to FEMA to move forward with this plan, seconded by Don Hall. Motion carried with everyone present voting "Aye."

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

**CITY OF HOPE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
7:00 P.M., TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2006  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

The City Board of Directors met at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 21, 2006, with the following present:

Catherine Cook, City Manager  
Joe Short, City Attorney  
Carol Almond, City Clerk

Directors: Dennis Ramsey, Mayor  
David Johnson, Vice-Mayor  
Doodle Franklin  
Willie Walker  
Bucky Sharpe  
Don Still  
Don Hall

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order. Director Don Still opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes of the March 7 and March 9, 2006 meetings were reviewed and approved on a motion by Don Hall, seconded by Bucky Sharpe. All present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

FEMA requested an amendment of the lease at the Hope Municipal Airport that will allow them the possibility of graveling 170 acres of the leased property.

After some discussion, Joe Short recommended that the amended lease include language stating that as the closed portion of the runway is freed up no additional trailers will be placed in that area.

Bucky Sharpe made a motion to amend the lease as discussed, seconded by Don Hall. All present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

In August 2005, the Board authorized the staff to have Huff Construction tear down condemned property located at 521 S. Walnut. The property had been severely damaged in a fire in late 2003. In September of 2005 the Board of Directors agreed to allow property owners, Alvis and Larry

Conway, an additional six-month period of time to repair or remove the property. No work has been completed to date.

After some discussion about the issue with Ms. Conway, Doodle Franklin made a motion to authorize staff to hire Huff to tear down the structure, seconded by Don Still. All present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Earlier this month the Parks Department published advertisements for bids in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette on three items: K Park Field Improvements, K Park Lighting, and Soccer Park Lighting. No bids were received on the K Park field improvements and it was agreed to extend the bid date by addendum to March 30, 2006.

Paul Henley detailed the results of the bids on the lighting.

K Park Lighting:

Pilgreen Electrical Service	\$42,900
Electrique Corporation	49,900

Paul Henley recommended not accepting these bids. Instead he recommended the fixtures and wire should be bid out and the Park and Hope Water & Light install the lighting.

The Board agreed with his recommendation.

Soccer Park Lighting:

Pilgreen Electrical Service	\$ 189,900
Electrical Corporation	287,600

Paul Henley recommended that the low bid be accepted from Pilgreen with modifications. The City of Hope will do some of the manual labor involved to help reduce the total bid to \$166,845.

David Johnson made a motion to accept the modified low bid of \$166,845 from Pilgreen Electrical Service, seconded by Don Hall. All present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

At the Board meeting on February 21, 2006 the proposed property maintenance code was placed on first reading, to allow further public comment and also because some of the Board members had to be absent from the meeting.

The Board placed the proposed ordinance on second reading.

Joe Short read the proposed ordinance.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1473**

**"AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PROPERTY MAINTENANCE, RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPERTY OWNERS, OPERATORS AND TENANTS AND PRESCRIBING CERTAIN REMEDIES FOR VIOLATIONS"**

Doodle Franklin made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by David Johnson. Roll was called and all answered "Aye." Motion carried. Don Still made a motion to pass the ordinance, seconded by Willie Walker. Roll was called and all present answered "Aye." Motion carried.

Ms. Cook announced that garbage bags are to be passed out on Wednesday, March 22, 2006 on the South side of town and Wednesday, March 29, 2006 on the North side of town.

Ms. Cook also told everyone the street program for 2006 was in the process of being compiled.

Ms. Cook asked the Board to consider allowing Mr. Gene Robinson to hook up to the city sewer system without pre-annexing. Ms. Cook explained that normally she would not approach the Board for this type of request but Mr. Robinson had work with the City during the Black Branch Interceptor Program and had cooperated fully as the sewer lines had been placed across his property.

Doodle Franklin made a motion to allow Mr. Robinson to hook up to the City sewer without pre-annexing, seconded by David Johnson. All present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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Dennis Ramsey, Mayor

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Carol Almond, City Clerk

<b>GENERAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC BUILDING SERVICE SUPPLEMENTAL LEASE AGREEMENT</b>	SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT NO. 1	DATE April 5, 2006
	TO LEASE NO: GS-07B-15858	

ADDRESS OF PREMISES: Hope Municipal Airport  
153 Airport Road, Hope, AR 71802

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this date by and between City of Hope, Arkansas  
whose address is P. O. Box 667  
Hope, AR 71802-0667  
hereinafter called the Lessor and UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, hereafter call the Government  
WHEREAS, the parties hereto desire to amend the above lease.

**NOW THEREFORE**, These parties for the consideration hereinafter mentioned covenant and agree that the said Lease is amended, effective April 5, 2006, as follows:

The Government will provide improvements as reflected in exhibit A.  
The Lessor hereby waives and forever relinquishes any right to make a claim against the Government for waste, damages, or restoration arising from or related to alterations as reflected in Exhibit A by the Government during the term of this lease or any extensions. Alterations will be contracted by the Government. At the Government's sole discretion, any improvements as reflected in Exhibit A will become the property of the Lessor and upon vacating the lease, the Government is not required to restore the property to the condition before the improvements as reflected in Exhibit A are installed.

All other items and conditions of the lease shall remain force and effect.  
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties subscribed there names as of the above date.

LESSOR:

BY \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Title)

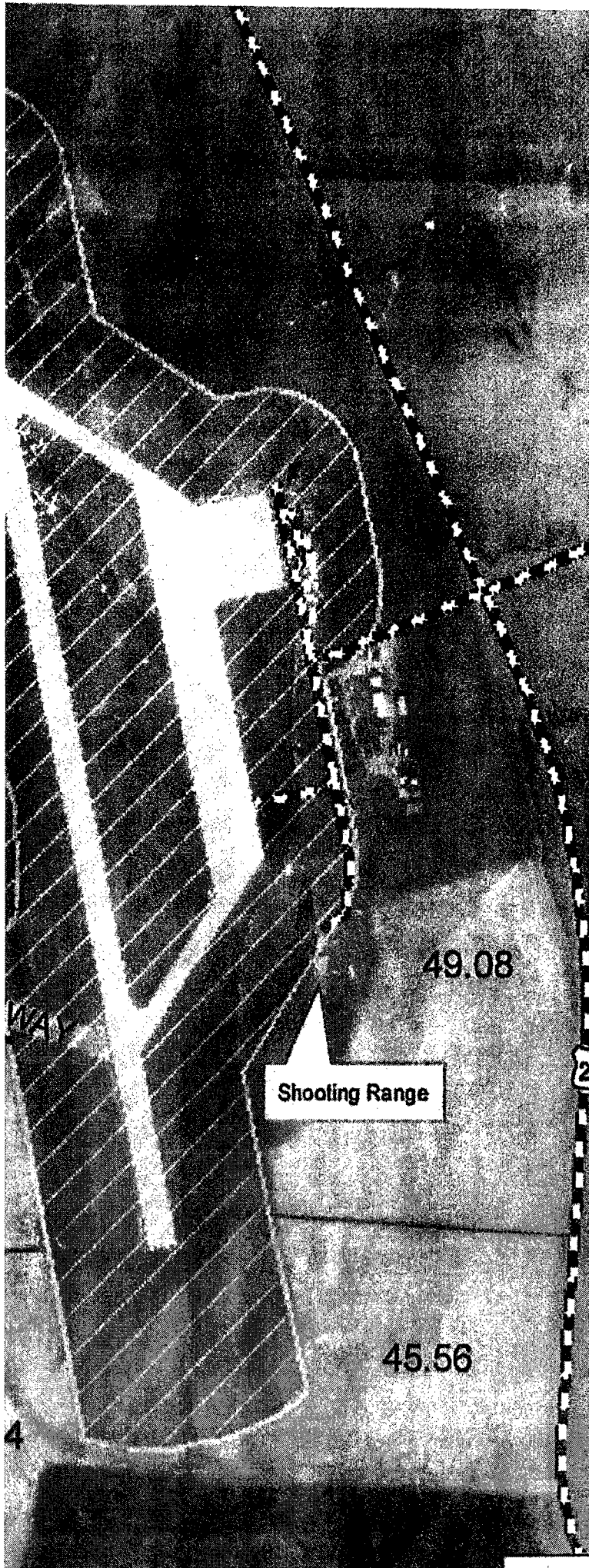
IN PRESENCE OF

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Title)

UNITED STATE OF AMERICA

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

CONTRACTING OFFICER  
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Official Title)



## BIOGRAPHY OF MAYOR DENNIS RAMSEY

Mayor Dennis Ramsey was first elected to the Board of Directors of the City of Hope Arkansas in 1978 and has continuously served as Mayor since 1993. Mayor Ramsey is President of Summit Bank of Hope. In addition to his duties as Mayor, Mr. Ramsey also serves on the Hope Advertising & Tourism Promotion Commission and the Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation.