



July 29, 2020

Lafayette County Board of Supervisors
300 North Lamar Boulevard
Oxford, Mississippi 38655

Dear President Roberts, Supervisor McLarty, Supervisor Rikard, Supervisor Gillespie, and Supervisor Larson:

We write to you as the City of Oxford's Board of Aldermen to seek your input on ownership issues related to the Confederate statue on the Oxford Square.

The City of Oxford recently has been approached by individuals and groups who suggest or claim that the City of Oxford owns either the statue, or the real property upon which the statue was placed. Those individuals and groups have demanded that the City research that potential ownership, and take a position on both the ownership, and on the continued placement of the statue on that property.

So far, the City only has focused on the issue of ownership of the parcel on which the statue sits, from the time the town of Oxford was chartered through the present. This Board has not reached a final conclusion as to ownership. The Board has made no decision or taken any vote on the ultimate disposition of the statue if the City were to determine that it owns the parcel. If the City decides that it has a role in any decision as to the placement of the statue, it would prefer to make such a decision only after discussions with the County Board of Supervisors, and other interested constituents.

Bart Robinson has tried to meet with your Board or members of your Board, but he has been unsuccessful in setting this meeting. The purpose of this letter is to propose a formal meeting with the Board of Supervisors, or less formally with a representative of the Board and the County's Administrator and attorney, to discuss the City's findings so far and to receive the County's input as to ownership issues. For our part, we would be glad to set an informal meeting with the Mayor, Bart Robinson, and the City attorney, or if the Board of Supervisors prefers to meet as a full body, we would arrange a properly noticed meeting with both Boards. If the meeting were held between both Boards, we believe the meeting should be held in executive session under applicable law.

This Board does not believe it can or should ignore calls from the LOU community for the City of Oxford's consideration of the issue of ownership. However, we believe that legal ownership is an issue that should be discussed with the County before a decision is made by the City, and before the City considers the follow-on question of location of the statue, if that consideration is appropriate. We hope that a meeting can be scheduled within the week, if possible, so our Boards may work together on this difficult and highly charged issue.

Respectfully,

Board of Aldermen
City of Oxford