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ATTACHMENT 1

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
306 NORTH COLUMBIA STREET
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA 27516

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

March 16, 2005

(919) 968-2714
FAX 919-969-2063

Moses Carey, Jr., Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners
200 South Cameron Street
Post Office Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Dear Moses:

At its March 7 meeting, the Council unanimously adopted a resolution authorizing me to send correspondence to the Chair of the County Board of Commissioners, requesting that Orange County provide \$16,000 to increase the Orange County-Chapel Hill Special Olympics Recreation Specialist's position to full-time status.

As you may know Special Olympics is an athletic-based program for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The program is administered by a State office, with local offices representing counties throughout the State. The Town's Parks and Recreation Department houses the Orange County-Chapel Hill Special Olympics program, which serves all of Orange County.

The Town currently dedicates approximately \$40,000 for the Special Olympics program, including personnel, supplies, and training. The Town's community-based therapeutic recreation program, separate from Special Olympics, provides a spectrum of cultural and hobby class activities for individuals with disabilities. By policy, the Special Olympics program cannot charge user fees for participation.

The Parks and Recreation Department maintains participant demographics for the Special Olympics program. During the current fiscal year the Orange County-Chapel Hill Special Olympics program has served more than 225 athletes, with the assistance of over 100 volunteers. Overall demographics of Chapel Hill-Orange County Special Olympics in the school-based and community-based program participants are as follows:

- Chapel Hill 60%
- Carrboro 15%
- Unincorporated Orange County 21%
- Other 4%

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We believe that our program is a model for the potential of not only Special Olympics programs but indeed, all public parks and recreation activities. The program offers recreation services to those with multiple and severe challenges. We serve those with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, severe health and physical disabilities, poverty-related concerns, transportation barriers, and behavioral problems. The Special Olympics program meets the needs of pre-schoolers through seniors living in retirement homes. We believe the Chapel Hill-Orange County Special Olympics program supports full programming options for a population of adults and children who need significant structure, supervision, and support.

We encourage you to consider this request during budget discussions. The Special Olympics program is the social and leisure lifeline for many of our most vulnerable citizens.

We would be pleased to provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Kevin C. Foy
Mayor