



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF SAN DIMAS**  
**COUNCIL – STAFF RETREAT SESSION**  
**NOVEMBER 15, 2008 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM**  
**CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**

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**PRESENT:**

Mayor Curtis W. Morris  
Mayor Pro Tem Emmett Badar  
Councilmember Denis Bertone  
Councilmember John Ebner  
Councilmember Jeff Templeman  
City Manager Blaine Michaelis  
City Attorney J. Kenneth Brown  
City Clerk Ina Rios  
Assistant City Manager of Community Development Larry Stevens  
Assistant City Manager Ken Duran  
Director of Development Services Dan Coleman  
Director of Public Works Krishna Patel  
Director of Parks and Recreation Theresa Bruns

Captain Joe Hartshorne, San Dimas Sheriff's Station

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

- 1. Disaster Planning/response** – after action report on the city's participation in the Great Southern California ShakeOut event November 13. Provide city council training.

Assistant City Manager Duran reported on the Great Southern California Shakeout Earthquake drill that took place on Thursday, November 13, 2008. An earthquake was simulated and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated. City staff was deployed to the EOC to participate in table top exercises, and provide status reports and damage assessment to County personnel. Staff also launched a public education campaign on emergency preparedness.

A Powerpoint presentation was provided to the City Council on their role and responsibilities as a Councilmember in emergency situations and staff responded to Council's questions regarding their role; the CAT will join the City's team, and paper trail will be documented. Mr. Duran stated that the County is working on an inter-operability plan and sometime next year will ask cities to enter into an agreement requiring financial participation.

- 2. City's 50<sup>th</sup> celebration – planning activity** – receive report and provide any desired direction or feedback.

Director of Parks and Recreation Bruns provided a report on the meetings held by the City of San Dimas 50th Anniversary Committee. She reported that the theme chosen is **San Dimas - 50 years, 1960-2010 An Excellent Adventure** and she said a logo would be developed to be included on all print material and commemorative items. Director Bruns said the

Committee was divided into six subcommittees and she highlighted their ideas and discussions, and said staff will bring back the Committee's recommendations for Council's approval. Ms. Bruns solicited City Council discussion and consensus regarding direction for the currently propose events or ideas for other events; direction for city beautification; input about the selection of a logo; and expectation regarding funding and city support - budget versus cost recovery.

Director Bruns responded to Council's questions that they are progressing on the assumption that the courtyard will not be available for the birthday barbecue. The City Council discussed alternate sites for the birthday barbecue and suggested staff contact the Fire Department for the fireworks.

For the beautification program, Councilmember Templeman suggested staff work with Waste Management to bring in roll-off bins for residents' use. Assistant City Manager Stevens reported that the only funding source is the CDBG program, however, staff is limited in terms of sites for bins. The City Council thought it would be a good idea, independent of the City's 50th birthday celebration, to provide an ongoing program to benefit residents.

The City Council was supportive of subsidizing community-wide activities such as the birthday barbecue but suggested ticketed events remain the same. Mayor Morris suggested the auditors be consulted if the City would be handling funds collected for events.

**3. Walker House activity** – receive reports and provide any desired direction on the following matters:

- **Building renovation status**

City Manager Michaelis provided a progress report on the Walker House activity and expenses, and said the project is surging toward completion by the end of December. He responded to Council's questions and said Craig Hensley would remain through the end of November. Councilmember Templeman expressed concern with qualifications of maintenance crews in the care of an historic building.

- **Historic Tax Credit process and status**

City Manager Michaelis reported that agreement with the Tax Credit investor partner, Sherwin Williams Paint Company, is in final form. He reviewed the process through the State and Department of Interior for final approval and said the State review has expressed concern that the 1970's addition to the building may not qualify as an historic renovation and may not be eligible for historic tax credits. He provided a cost estimate for the 1970's addition.

- **Community Groups Use Agreement - outline of agreement provisions**

City Manager Michaelis said as the building nears completion, staff will be meeting with Saffron, the Festival, Historical Society, and Rodeo organizations to establish Use Agreements for the Walker House. He highlighted the suggested points for the agreements which will be brought back in the near future for the City Council's approval and said a 12-month complete review of the uses and agreements of the Walker House will be conducted.

Councilmember Ebner did not want use of the building limited to activities or to when the restaurant is open. City Manager Michaelis expressed concern providing open access to the remote building and stated that the restaurant would be primary; however, there may be a need to have city staff present.

City Council felt it would be more cost effective for the city to provide insurance coverage for the building and contents, and suggested staff secure appropriate documentation to meet the Joint Powers Insurance Authority protective contract.

Mr. Michaelis responded to Council's questions regarding the risk in moving furniture into the building, city schedule for use of outdoor patio, and he said the Festival of Arts is welcome to use the dining area for their show.

- **Walker House Foundation – intent and outline**

City Manager Michaelis presented a draft Articles of Incorporation to set up the structure of the Foundation. He said the process can benefit from some broad policy direction, specifically with the intent purpose and activity of the Foundation. He added that the recommendation is for an 11-member board comprised of the City Council and City Manager, with five public members appointed by a majority of the city representatives, and the city will maintain control.

Councilmember Bertone suggested that each Councilmember appoint one person to the Board. Mayor Morris thought the Articles of Incorporation should include that contributions should be made not in money but in service. He felt money was not as important as support of the building and contributions in service.

- **Decorating and furnishing plan for the building - timetable**

City Manager Michaelis said an interior decorator is assisting with the selection of appropriate furnishing and fixtures for the restaurant, meeting rooms and hallways. . He added that funds have been budgeted and some initial purchases have been made. He said the suggested approach is to ask the tenants to make their furniture selections from the "catalog of historically compatible" furniture at their cost.

- **Opening event(s) and activities**

City Manager Michaelis suggested opening the Walker House building as soon as it is ready with minimal furnishings and the capacity to welcome the public. The restaurant use will have the capability to prepare food for events as early as February and their specific opening date could be March or April. He said the schedule for community groups to move in is unknown at this time. The Festival of Arts is contemplating using the building for their Spring Show late April and city staff will assist and cooperate in any way.

The City Council suggested varying activities; recruiting volunteers as docents; and hosting the City Council/Staff Spring Retreat at the Walker House. Mayor Morris said Mr. Stevens suggested as part of the tour a slide show of the construction of the Walker House.

## **RECESS**

Mayor Morris recessed the meeting at 10:16 a.m. and reconvened at 10:23 a.m.

#### **4. Financial presentations for the following:**

- **Results of the 07-08 audit**

City Manager Michaelis said the completed 2007-08 financial audit indicated an increase from the previous year.

- **Sales tax update and report – 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter if available**

City Manager Michaelis provided a Power Point presentation on the auspicious 2008-2009 General Fund budget and presented information on the City's ability to respond to economic issues and challenges.

- **Budget adjustments from the 'project hold list' and COPS expenditures.**

City Manager Michaelis reviewed the Project Hold list and recommended moving forward with updating the City aerials at a cost of \$30,000; and completing the tennis and basketball court resurfacing at a cost of \$18,000.

Assistant City Manager Duran reported on the COPS fund balance and expenditures and recommended increasing the amount available for directed patrol to \$40,000; purchasing a license plate reader vehicle and graffiti enforcement equipment, and transferring \$25,000 of the probation contract and \$75,000 of School Resource Officer from the general fund.

Captain Hartshorne responded to questions regarding the radio car Lic plate reader.

It was moved by Councilmember Bertone, seconded by Councilmember Templeman, to approve staff's recommendations as stated. The motion carried 5.0.

- **Redevelopment Fiscal Capacity Study – present results; note trends and forecasts**

City Manager Michaelis reviewed initial findings of the study prepared by HdL to assess the fiscal capacity of the Redevelopment Agency.

Mr. Michaelis responded to Council's questions regarding the expiration of the three components and stated that the three components of the project area may continue to collect tax increments ten years after the expiration of their portion of the plan to pay existing debt. He added that the 1997 Amendment Area is set to expire by November 2032 and will continue to receive tax increment for 15 years. He said if blight continues to exist, the City Council can justify extending the time subject to findings and conditions.

Mr. Michaelis reviewed tax sharing obligations; amendment of project areas; gross revenues under limitations, and recommended paying cash for the city hall building and maintaining the option to sell Certificates of Participation.

**5. Selected city project update** (provided in written form – one paragraph per project – discussion as desired)

- Use of artificial turf in the city

Staff reported that the City Council had requested an evaluation of the possible use of artificial turf. Staff highlighted advantages and disadvantages and would discourage the use as an appropriate material for residential front yards and for commercial/industrial landscaping plans.

Councilmember Templeman preferred to address this issue at this time rather than to wait until an application is received.

Councilmember Bertone expressed opposition to artificial turf.

Assistant City Manager of Community Development Stevens stated there is no regulation for artificial turf and a landscape plan is not required. He added there have been no requests in San Dimas for artificial turf in any landscape plans requiring city approval. He mentioned that the likelihood of the issue coming up is not critical.

Plastic bags

AB 2058, the Plastic Bag Litter Reduction Act bill died in legislation and the County of Los Angeles adopted a voluntary program regarding the disposal of plastic bags at stores in unincorporated areas. Their objective is to reach a disposal reduction goal of 30% by 2010 and 65% by 2013 and if not achieved by voluntary compliance, they will consider an outright ban on the use of plastic bags. Staff will continue to track their progress and any new legislation that may be introduced next year.

Shopping carts

Staff has implemented a strategy of voluntary compliance to deal with the issue of abandoned shopping carts. Due to the City's efforts, Ross and Target have taken measures to prevent carts from being removed from the premises. Staff recommended continuation of the current program for the present and consider a more aggressive approach as part of a more comprehensive evaluation of overall code compliance.

Parents responsible for juvenile's graffiti

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted a new graffiti enforcement program in September, 2008 in an effort to recoup unpaid costs through liens or special assessments against the property of the graffiti offender or their parent/guardian. Many of the elements in the new County ordinance are already available in State law and City staff and the local Sheriff's Department staff do not feel it is necessary to adopt any additional measures similar to the County ordinance at this time.

Staff indicated that Caltrans and cell site property owners are contacted when their property is tagged.

Damaging trees in park and ride lot

There are 12 California Pepper trees located in the downtown park and ride lot which are damaging asphalt and curbs. The Public Works Department has repaired the hardscape, but is requesting removal and replacement of these trees. The Parks and Recreation Department concurs with the removal request and recommended a phased removal and replacement over a three year period. Staff provided a list of recommended trees.

Fund raising for park projects

The Parks and Recreation Commission met on October 7 to discuss possible funding sources for park capital improvement projects and requested Council input regarding the possibility of solicitation for sponsorship or exploration of other resources for capital projects.

Mayor Morris said the City should provide city services and he felt park projects were an important part of our community that should be funded from city revenue.

Staff stated that when a tree was planted or a bench donated in honor of someone, a plaque has not been permitted.

The City Council did not have a problem pursuing donations and allowing small plaques on benches, however, expressed concern with placing plaques on every sponsored tree.

- Tools for addressing foreclosure properties

The Federal American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008 includes the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to buy abandoned and foreclosed homes and properties; however, will not provide funding to the City of San Dimas because of the low ratio of foreclosures.

Staff reviewed SB1137 which changed foreclosures laws until January 2013 for vacant residential properties including requiring maintenance by the new owner and authorizing cities to impose a fine up to \$1,000. The City of San Dimas already has ordinances addressing these issues.

- Community planning process for Vista Verde open space including needs assessment – other open space projects

The RMC has allocated funds for the community planning process and has requested the City to provide in-kind staff support. A consultant will be commissioned to prepare a constraints analysis which will lead to a land use plan for the open space uses. Staff has prepared an RFP to seek assistance in analyzing recreation needs/desires for the community. Any Tzu Chi involvement will rely on whatever agreement or letter evolves from the ongoing discussion.

- Traffic cameras use for traffic not public safety

As part of the County-wide management system, video cameras were installed at some intersections in the city to provide a real time visual monitoring of traffic conditions. A question was posed if the cameras could be of use to public safety issues such as surveillance, security, or assistance with investigations. After review with the Sheriff's Department, staff determined that there are other public safety tools that would be more effective and recommended use of cameras solely for their intended traffic monitoring purpose.

- Bonita – Eucla; Bonita – Cataract development

1) Staff had nothing new to report on the Bonita/Eucla corner property and will soon prepare a summary to see if a cooperative project can come forward.

2) Councilmember Ebner stated he owns property in the vicinity of Bonita/Cataract and he left the conference room at 12:51 p.m.

Assistant City Manager Stevens reported that the Bonita/Cataract property is having difficulty confirming a viable development option and suggested that the Council consider an interim or temporary use of the property. Interest in a BMX bike track continues as a possibility, with an idea to expand Pioneer Park to the north or to provide additional landscaping to the berm. A proposal was received by staff to determine if a moderate to high density residential development on the Bonita property would be approved in exchange for the dedication of foothill property as open space.

The City Council was not interested in a property exchange.

After further discussion on possibly having a BMX bike track, staff was directed to continue research and make sure the bike elements co-exist with basketball and tennis uses. Mayor Morris suggested irrigation and ground cover to the berm.

Councilmember Ebiner returned at 12:57 p.m.

- Recreation Vehicle parking review process

Staff was directed to survey other cities and conduct a study of alternative standards to allow RV parking within front yards. Staff was directed to suspend enforcement of RV parking in front yards until a completed study was presented to Council. Staff reported that some surrounding cities have implemented adjustments to their enforcement provisions and after the first of the year staff will be evaluating the affect of those changes. Staff recommended waiting for the results of their investigation to see what issues they resolve and what issues were created with the changes.

It was the consensus of the City Council to wait for results of the surrounding cities study, then enforce on the basis of complaints.

- Code Enforcement program analysis and recommendations

One of the projects placed on the six-month budget hold list is an audit of the Code Enforcement program to look for ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Staff anticipates being able to move forward with this effort in the spring of 2009.

- Legislative update – land use

Assistant City Manager Stevens provided a Powerpoint review of AB2280, AB 2069, AB1358 and SB372, and said the four bills are the only substantive measures that passed and were signed by the Governor.

## **6. Downtown Planning Process – comments and observations; next steps**

Assistant City Manager Stevens reported that approximately 70 persons attended the first community workshop. The consultant is tabulating and recording the break-out group discussions and the opinion responses on the alternative development ideas presented. The next steps are to hold a series of meetings with the owners/businesses on a block-by-block basis to determine interest levels in development alternatives and comments on possible choices, after which a draft specific plan will be prepared for the next community workshop. After feedback is obtained, public hearings will be scheduled for the Planning Commission and City Council to adopt a new specific plan and make related zone changes.

Mayor Morris stated that the presentation was not specific to San Dimas and he felt the merchants would like to see a shorter range vision that does not include rebuilding all the structures. He mentioned the potential for housing on the second floor of the Johnstone Building; however, residents are overwhelmingly against a three-story building.

Mr. Stevens responded to Councilmember Ebiner that there will be some rezoning in some areas and that some downtown merchants would have the opportunity to remodel the façade and upper floor. He said he would like to end with a plan that requires property owners to work together to build synergy.

Mr. Stevens stated that minute action was adopted designating a specific site for the Goldline Station and he would like Council to confirm that site is appropriate, or if they would be willing to consider the Packing House which would be more beneficial to the downtown in terms of potential traffic impact.

Councilmember Bertone stated that a station site could be designated and if necessary changed at a later date.

Staff will craft a plan that does not commit any specific parcels.

Councilmember Templeman opposed use of the packing house for a Goldline Station. He felt traffic circulation would be difficult during a train crossing.

Mayor Morris stated that train stations are destinations and do not create opportunity for downtown areas.

Mr. Stevens said a report will be brought for City Council's review and approval in December and will include parking parameters.

**7. Oral Communications** – Members of the audience. Anyone wishing to address the City Council on an item not on the agenda. No action or discussion shall be undertaken on any item not appearing on the posted agenda. Speakers may be subject to a time limit as may be determined by the chair.

There were no comments.

## **8. Adjournment**

Mayor Morris adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m. The next meeting of the City Council is November 25, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ina Rios, CMC, City Clerk