



MINUTES
STAFF/CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2005, 3:00 P. M.
CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM
245 E. BONITA AVE.

PRESENT:

Mayor Curtis W. Morris
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Templeman
Councilmember Denis Bertone
Councilmember John Ebiner
Councilmember Sandy McHenry

City Manager Michaelis
City Clerk Rios
Assistant City Manager Duran
Community Development Director Stevens
Public Works Director Patel
Parks and Recreation Director Bruns

Captain James Curtis, San Dimas Sheriff's Station

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

a) City Manager Michaelis reported that handouts summarizing the changes to the Sycamore Canyon Equestrian Center Lease Agreement that would affect boarders would be posted at the Ranch on Wednesday, November 2, 2005 and distributed at the Equestrian Commission meeting this evening. He stated that the Lease Agreement would be prepared in final form for the City Council's consideration at their meeting on Tuesday, November 8, 2005, and, if approved, become effective on December 1, 2005. Mr. Michaelis responded to Council's questions that the Adairs have agreed to the negotiated changes.

b) City Manager Michaelis outlined the format for the Retreat and stated that on Thursday, November 3, 2005, Planning Manager Hensley would report on the Walker House and Gary Enderle would make his presentation on the Military Monument.

Councilmember McHenry stated he would need to leave at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 3, 2005.

3. STUDY SESSION

A. REPORT ON 2004-05 BUDGET RESULTS – DESIGNATE 2004-05 FUND BALANCES

City Manager Michaelis provided a summary financial report of the past fiscal year. He stated that general fund revenues exceeded budget and expenditures were under budget. Recommendations were presented to allocate surplus revenue for specific and general purposes and to allocate general fund

money to other funds to strengthen their ability to complete projects – funds such as infrastructure, Park Development and Equipment Replacement.

Staff responded to Council's questions concerning the various funds and end balances; predicted surplus for 2005-06; reserves; and stated that landscaping needs have tripled, while revenue remains at approximately one-third of the cost.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested placing an article in the Pioneer to make residents aware of the landscaping needs, escalating maintenance costs, and low revenue from Measure Z.

Director Bruns reported that once excess funds are drawn within two years, the maintenance grant for Horsethief Canyon Park would be reduced to an annual allotment of approximately \$45,000 instead of \$92,000.

City Manager Michaelis explained the deficit balances in some funds and stated that grant money would be coming in. He mentioned that the auditors determined that the Agency must spend surplus funds held in Fund 34-Housing and he asked for suggestions.

Councilmembers discussed various ways to spend the surplus money such as on the City's Mobile Home Park; purchasing property to expand the Golf Course; Club House expansion to meet ADA requirements; installing an irrigation system at the Golf Course; recharging water, and vehicle purchase.

City Manager Michaelis continued the report and recommended applying surplus revenue of \$3,193,322 as follows: \$400,000 to Community Park Fund 20; \$750,000 to Infrastructure Fund 12; \$350,000 to Equipment Reserve-Replacement Fund 70; and \$1,693,322 to General Fund Reserve.

It was moved by Councilmember Bertone, seconded by Councilmember Ebiner, to apply the surplus funds as recommended by the City Manager.

Councilmembers further discussed setting aside reserves for open space acquisition, pocket lighting program, and other project priorities.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. REVIEW AND CONFIRM STAFF PROJECT REPORTING SYSTEM

City Manager Michaelis reviewed a recommended means to keep the Council informed regarding projects and issues of interest, including an example of a format for a report and a listing of suggested projects to be submitted to the City Council on a monthly basis. Staff requested feedback and confirmation on topics Council would like covered with regular status reports.

Councilmember McHenry left at 4:03 p.m. and returned at 4:05 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman mentioned that he would prefer a project be completed than receive a monthly verbal report that would take staff time to prepare. He thought it would be helpful to provide summary information online with password access.

Councilmember McHenry suggested utilizing a project management software program in which staff could periodically update an existing entry.

Council expressed concern about staff's time and stated that if the list becomes burdensome, staff could streamline and prioritize.

Assistant City Manager Duran stated that there is no direct access to the City's system from an outside source; however, he will look into linking Council in a secure manner.

C. REPORT ON CITY PROJECTS

1) CANYON CENTER

Community Development Director Stevens reported that he and City Manager Michaelis met with the new owners of the Canyon Center, officially known as VCH San Dimas Company, LLC, at which time they presented pictures of a proposed plan to build 70 2,200 square foot, two-story houses on 3,500 square foot lots, and senior cottages to deal with the affordable component, with no perimeter landscaping. Director Stevens stated he made it clear to the new owners that plans would not be reviewed until a strategy acceptable to the City was presented to deal with conditions of the existing property.

Council discussed the price of the property, demolition of a building, maintenance issues, density of the plan, cost per unit, and corner landscaping.

Director Stevens stated that fences are needed as part of the demolition process and staff would work with the owners to get to approval of an acceptable plan. He replied to Councilmember McHenry that VCH owns everything in the center with the exception of one strip of property; however, they must provide those tenants with parking.

In response to Council, Director Stevens reported that Mr. Alvarez had requested a copy of the Housing Element. Director Stevens stated the housing requirement applies to residential and triggers agency requirement for low to moderate housing. He said the best way to address this issue is to craft a specific plan in such a way it addresses every conceivable bonus under applicable state law.

Councilmember Bertone left at 4:43 p.m. and returned at 4:45 p.m.

2) GLADSTONE STREET – SLOPE DESIGN STANDARDS

Community Development Director Stevens requested postponement of this issue.

RECESS

Mayor Morris called for a recess at 4:57 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 5:21 p.m.

3) ARE WE THERE YET? STATUS REPORT AND UPDATE

Parks and Recreation:

Parks and Recreation Director Bruns reported on her four focus areas: 1) Request Partner Landscaping software has been used since September to process all landscaping requests. She said of 41 requests, 31 have been completed within an average of eight days.

Councilmember McHenry mentioned that City Arborist Deborah Day would be an asset at DPRB meetings and suggested attendance. Community Development Director suggested that she could be available as a resource when needed.

Director Bruns continued reporting on 2) RecWare software – all facilities have been loaded onto the program to facilitate the communication between staff; and staff is currently working to add the SportsPlex, to set up parameters and take registration. 3) The Registration process has been streamlined. Returning registrants do not need to complete the entire form, they need only sign the release form, which includes class information. 4) Staff is working with volunteers for community involvement and awareness. Due to volunteerism a menu of enhanced activities and events has been created and there is a large base of support from the community which has doubled staff.

Director Bruns mentioned that she meets monthly with her staff to foster communications in an effort to deliver better service. She said one employee suggested issuing business cards to Facilities and Park Maintenance crews.

It was the consensus of the City Council that business cards are not expensive and would boost employee morale. Blank business card masters could be ordered with department telephone number, email and fax.

Public Works:

Public Works Director Patel praised the Request Partner program that enables staff to provide excellent customer service. He mentioned that he is experiencing difficulty in recruitment to fill vacant positions for Public Works Inspector and Plans Examiner. He stated that the Plans Examiner title may be misleading and he would like to recruit under a more appropriate designation. In response to Council, Mr. Patel stated he contracts with RKA for plans check and utilizes 7-8 consultants off-site.

Director Patel reported that a demonstration would be provided on Thursday, November 3 on the efficient use of PC Tablets by Building & Safety, which is helping Inspectors be more productive in the field.

In response to Council, Director Patel stated that the use of the PC Tablets requires 2.5 days of training.

He reported that they are also using a book especially designed for code administration that is helping provide better service to residents.

Planning:

Community Development Director Stevens identified four objectives: 1) To facilitate inter-departmental communication, he has re-established monthly staff meetings, inviting County Agencies to participate - the Sheriff's Department, Health Department, and Fire Department, as well as Building and Business Licenses. He stated that staff is looking to formalize procedures in handling of various matters at the counter or questions asked by citizens.

2) Director Stevens stated that staff is focusing on enhancing records management. They have created meeting notes for a high percentage of counter contacts summarizing the occurrence and will focus if follow up is necessary by letter or other form.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Director Stevens said wireless notebooks are budgeted and would be utilized by code enforcement; they await completion of Building and Safety's trial period.

Director Stevens stated that staff would start on the photo catalog illustrating development within the next 90 days. Staffing has been an issue.

Director Stevens said if the Request Partner system works for others, he is looking to implement a specific code enforcement module, as well as project tracking software to be more internally consistent. He said staff does not yet have time to spend on hand out improvements. Director Stevens reported a significant reduction in the time it takes to process plan checks - smaller projects could take 1-4 days;

more complicated projects would take a longer period of time. The focus is to expeditiously move the project forward.

Director Stevens further reported that staff has been successful in utilizing an internal wireless paging system for long DPRB agendas. Rather than have 14 applicants arrive at 8:30 a.m., advance arrangements are made to contact applicants 15 minutes before their item is estimated to be heard.

He stated that preliminary work has been conducted on the Tree Evaluation Ordinance and the Public Visibility Ordinance. Staff is committed to getting these to the City Council within 90 days.

Director Stevens concluded by stating that staff is updating the policy manual, creating a formal document for an informal interpretation of the policy.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested putting a different employee in charge of a meeting to give them leadership and to get a different spin and creativity.

In response to Councilmember McHenry, Assistant Manager Duran reported experiencing a difficult time replacing former Associate Planner Joe Vacca. He stated that the recruitment closes Friday and would probably have to be extended. He said four applications have been submitted.

Administration:

Assistant City Manager Duran reported two objectives: 1) improve staff's attitude to instill in them a more problem solving, customer oriented approach; 2) evaluation of process and procedures to make sure employees understand the importance of consistency. He held a department meeting with staff to reinforce objectives and will meet with each individual employee to identify specific goals for each. He said that over the years the City has implemented a lot of technology and although initial training was provided, staff needs to provide ongoing training to ensure software is utilized to maximum potential. He reported that a voluntary informal roundtable discussion on managing email would be conducted with the intent of sharing information among employees and employing forthcoming suggestions.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman reminded that all email messages become public record.

Councilmember McHenry suggested providing training on how to handle a hostile confrontation and when to notify the Sheriff's Station. Assistant Manager Duran replied that he is looking at programs provided by JPA to implement proper protocol.

In response to Mayor Morris, Assistant Manager Duran stated the seed has been planted for employees to think about ideas. He added that staff has streamlined personnel action forms in an effort to save time.

City Manager Michaelis stated his role is to keep the focus moving forward. He will take advantage of meeting with all employees during a safety meeting within the next several weeks.

Councilmember McHenry left at 6:07 p.m. and returned at 6:08 p.m.

City Manager Michaelis continued that he would like to solicit feedback at each counter, as well as random contacts with not only residents, but vendors, contractors, everyone that conducts business at city hall.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested sending all directors on field trips throughout the city in an effort to be visible and helpful to citizens.

City Manager Michaelis stated he would provide a detailed report at a future meeting.

San Dimas Sheriff's Station:

Jim Curtis, Captain, San Dimas Sheriff's Department, stated that customer service is an ongoing program. Sergeants and Lieutenants monitor incoming calls to ensure quality of service and that inquiries are followed up with the employee and concerned citizen. He thanked the City Council for the second Motor Officer and said a trained Deputy transferred in from West Hollywood. He added that to make the community safer by reducing traffic collisions, his office is taking a serious look at areas with a propensity for traffic collisions.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested it would be helpful to upgrade the radar trailer to generate reports. He recently read an article in the paper about how serious the fire season is and he said as part of our public safety program, he would like to have Fire Department representation at the public meetings.

City Manager Michaelis stated the Fire Department presented a verbal report at a recent Public Safety Commission meeting. He will invite them to present monthly reports at City Council meetings.

Councilmember McHenry requested reports on paramedic issues.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Captain Curtis reported that over 1800 parking citations were issued in the last four months.

Assistant Manager Duran reported developing an educational flier that explains overnight parking restrictions and requirements. When an officer cites a vehicle, a flier is included.

Councilmember McHenry stated that landlords should be placed on notice and before a plan for an apartment complex is approved, there should be adequate parking spaces to accommodate the number of bedrooms for each unit.

Assistant Manager Duran mentioned that requiring the Canyon Apartment landlord to sign off on every permit verifying everyone is listed on the lease has cut down the number of requests for overnight parking permits.

In response to Councilmember Bertone, Assistant Manager Duran stated that requiring a person to park in front of their own home is recommended on the application, but did not know how it would be enforced.

Councilmember McHenry suggested hiring an eight-hour per day maintenance worker, serving the first four hours as traffic enforcer and the second four hours in Public Works or Parks and Recreation maintenance.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Assistant Manager Duran stated that Deputy Rodriguez scrutinizes inspections and identifies how many parking spaces are on the property, whether or not the property has a two car garage and driveway space that must be utilized before a parking permit could be issued.

In response to Council, Captain Curtis reported that one parking control officer was hired on an overtime basis. He stated it is difficult for one officer to patrol all areas of the city in one night.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Captain Curtis stated that there has been a noticeable decrease in tagging. In the last month, six individuals were identified and arrested; one individual was arrested at San Dimas High School. Captain Curtis is in the process of communicating with outside stations. He stated that the Community Action Team has done an outstanding job and Deputy Thomas is doing an outstanding job at the schools.

At a request by Mayor Pro Tem Templeman to recognize Deputy Thomas' efforts, Councilmember McHenry stated that recognition to Deputy Thomas may impact his ability to move.

Mayor Morris stated that the community appreciates the Sheriff's Department. He said it is effective in the community watch programs to know we are being proactive.

Captain Curtis said eradication of graffiti is important to the Council and community, and is considered a high priority issue by the Deputies.

4) CITY HALL SPACE UTILIZATION

Assistant City Manager Duran reported that late Spring 2005, a consultant/Base Planner was hired to identify and better utilize existing space and to come up with short and long term plans. First a space analysis was conducted, each department head was interviewed to identify staff's current and future needs, work flow, group and common work areas. A report was received one month later. It was realized there are not many ways to better utilize existing space without moving counters and walls. Also provided were some storage suggestions; however, there is not the ability to create new offices for work areas. He stated that follow up discussions were scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.

In response to Council, Mr. Duran replied that within the envelope of city hall, they are looking to move walls and counters, but are still short approximately 3,000 square feet.

Councilmember McHenry suggested moving non-counter staff to the city yard or utilizing a portable trailer in the east parking lot as a temporary solution. He thought it was not cost effective to rearrange the interior of the city hall building to gain a little bit of space. He was opposed to losing the spacious, open lobby space.

In response to Council, Director Stevens stated that going ten feet north would offer approximately 600 square feet. He said any way you get more space for employees, work or storage space is at the expense of the current public space within the city hall envelope. The second thing is to look at some ways to notch out portions of the building and ask if it is a cost effective mid-term solution. The next step is to look at a creative long term solution - maybe use of the community building, constructing a new building, or creating new City Council chambers. One space to consider is the upper level of the Plaza.

City Manager Michaelis stressed the necessity of looking at short, mid and long term plans and consider remote sites.

Council discussed moving of personnel, storage, and some departments to better utilize space in the existing footprint by moving upward or outward, to the community building, or on interim a portable trailer. Mayor Pro Tem Templeman felt operations would be disconnected if departments were divided.

In response to Mayor Morris, Director Stevens stated that in theory, with a combination of plans, they could come up with 3,000 square feet of additional space.

4. ORAL COMMUNICAITONS

- a. Members of the Audience

None

b. Staff Members

None

c. Councilmembers

None

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m. to November 3, 2005, 4:30 p.m.

Mayor of the City of San Dimas

ATTEST:

City Clerk