

City of Hays
City Commission
Work Session Notes
February 5, 2009

Present: Barbara Wasinger, Christopher Channell, Allan Lytton, Troy Hickman, John Bird, Toby Dougherty

Absent: Ron Mellick

Hays Recreation Commission/City of Hays Joint Meeting

Roger Bixenman and Joe Spangler, representing the Hays Recreation Commission, and Jeff Boyle, Parks Department Director, updated the City Commissioners on two issues pertaining to parks and recreation. The Hays Recreation Commission manages recreational programs on City owned property.

Mr. Boyle updated the Commissioners on the irrigation improvements to Speier Ballfield. A timer has been installed that will automatically turn on the sprinkler system during the night.

The Parks Director also informed the Commissioners that it has been federally mandated that a certain type of grate be installed over drain covers and the difficulty he is having in finding the appropriate grate.

Mr. Spangler stated, at this time, there are not any grates available for outdoor pools. There are about 20 grates in City-owned pools.

City Manager Toby Dougherty stated that the Commissioners will have to authorize that funds out of the Pool Reserve be spent to contract with an engineer to tell us what it will take to comply with this law.

Mr. Bixenman stated that Representative Jerry Moran has been contacted and will meet with a committee from Kansas Park and Recreation Association to discuss this issue.

Mr. Boyle discussed costs associated with heating the water at the Hays Aquatic Park. Discussion was held about heating the water in May, June, and

July, the time period during which swimming lessons are held, and not heat the water during August and September.

The City Manager stated the Sports Complex Committee is still being put together. Notification of a request for proposals was put out this week by the State for construction of the Sports Complex.

Proposals for the Use of the Former Army Reserve Center

A. Hays Family Activity Center: Dr. Jeffrey Lowe, DDS, presented a proposal to use the former Army Reserve Center facility for a Hays Family Activity Center, which he described as a family activity center where people of all ages can come together and are welcome to participate in physical and mental activities and challenges. Special emphasis would be put on having family members from young to old spending time together, growing, sharing, laughing, loving and learning in a safe and comfortable environment. There is a great need for the youth of our community to have somewhere they can go for constructive social and physical interaction.

B. First Call for Help-Ellis County Chapter of the American Red Cross: First Call for Help of Ellis County and the local chapter of the American Red Cross jointly submitted a proposal for use of the former Army Reserve Center facility. The two organizations would like to mutually use the facility for offices, storage, a training site for Red Cross classes, and as an emergency shelter for community members who become homeless as well as a shelter in times of disaster.

C. North Central Kansas Technical College (NCKTC): Clark Coco, president of North Central Kansas Technical College, presented a proposal to use the former Army Reserve Center facility for additional classroom space to provide educational programs and services. NCKTC offers associate degree, certificate and other vocational programs, customized training to businesses, industries, governmental agencies and professional organizations. Additionally, NCKTC works with area Unified School Districts to provide educational opportunities for high school students to enhance and facilitate student learning and career training.

City Manager Dougherty stated that further discussion on the use of the former Army Reserve facility will be held at a future work session and each entity that presented a proposal will be notified of the date

2009 CVB Vehicle Purchase

During the 2008 budgeting process, the Convention and Visitors Bureau requested the purchase of a department vehicle. It was decided to purchase a Prius, a hybrid vehicle that would be helpful in keeping the cost of operation down. With the purchase of the Prius, the department will be able to reduce travel and training expenses. The vehicle will be used to attend statewide meetings, sales trips, bid presentations, trade show attendance, brochure distribution and various other department travel.

Funds in the amount of \$24,000 were budgeted for the Prius, however, the actual cost is \$25,970. CVB Director Jana Jordan requested to use funds from the CVB contingency line item to make up the purchasing price short fall.

This item will be on the February 10, 2009 Commission meeting agenda for further discussion and approval.

Airport Activities and Accomplishments Since Incorporated into Public Works

In August 2008, the airport operations became a division within the Public Works Department. Brenda Herrman, Director of Public Works/Airport Manager reviewed the progress that has been made in the last five months. She identified staff members that have been assigned to manage the Airport operation and commented that she is proud of the great job they have done.

Ms. Herrman stated that she will be meeting with Great Lakes personnel to discuss our concerns about the existing flight schedule and see if anything can be done to change that schedule.

Ms. Herrman informed the Commissioners that the Federal Aviation Administration has now decided to submit the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) truck rather than the ARFF building in Phase A of the grant process;

therefore the ARFF truck grant application needs to be submitted by February 10, 2009. The ARFF building will then be considered in Phase B.

The Commissioners voiced no objection to Ms. Herrman signing the grant application.

Resolution to Support Next 10-Year Transportation Program

The Commissioners will be requested to approve a resolution at the February 10, 2009 Commission meeting in support of the next 10-year transportation program.

Update on City Staff Planning Retreat

The City Manager stated the annual staff planning retreat was held January 16-17, 2009. A lot of the discussion was about the economy. The 2009 and 2010 Budgets were reviewed and items in the Budgets were identified that could be cut, modified or postponed.

City Manager Dougherty commented that for 2009, the outlook is pretty good. It is hoped that there will be an excess carry-over in 2009 of \$844,000 in the General Fund. This is a pre-audit number and is in large part due to monies that were budgeted but not spent, and that sales tax income was budgeted at a 3% increase and close to 7% was realized. There should not be any problems in user-generated funds, like the Water and Sewer Fund. The levy funds for 2009 appear to be keeping pace with what is expected. There could be problems in 2010 depending on the economy.

The City Manager stated that things the City has done the past 6-7 years, such as streamlining operations, building reserves, and setting appropriate fees in the enterprise funds, puts the City in a position to ride out a storm. What staff is planning to present to the Commission for the 2010 Budget is a budget that in the General Fund has a zero percent expenditure increase. Only critical projects will be considered. It is planned to present a budget that has no mill levy increase. Staff will constantly monitor the situation and may recommend cuts in the future.

Chairperson Wasinger stated it is a testament to previous Commissions, as well as the previous City Manager, who had the foresight to set aside money each year in case the economy went into a downslide. She appreciates that staff has identified areas that can be cut ahead of time if it becomes necessary to rein in spending.

Commissioner Hickman commented that thanks also need to be given to voters who believed in the sales tax plan.

Discussion of Possible Stimulus Package

The City Manager discussed City projects that could be considered if the City receives any stimulus funding. The Lincoln Tunnel Rehabilitation Project is the most shovel ready project the City has. Other projects that could be ready to go in a short amount of time are street reconstruction projects, a new fire station, the demolition of the old grain elevator, and the Smoky Well Field Expansion Project.

Other Items for Discussion

Commissioner Channell reported that a chunk of concrete out of the median is lying in the roadway near Mopar Rd.

The work session was adjourned.

Submitted by: _____

City Clerk