

City of Hays
City Commission
Work Session Notes
April 19, 2012

Present: Troy Hickman, Kent Steward, Henry Schwaller IV, Ron Mellick, Barbara Wasinger, John Bird, Toby Dougherty

Acquisition of Luecke Land on Vineyard Road

The City of Hays owns approximately 48 acres of land east of Home Depot and south of 41st Street. This area is considered a nature area in that it contains wetland areas as well as numerous trees and native plants. The plan is to provide a nature trail through the area, including interpretive signs describing specific locations or items along the trail. Currently, there is not a suitable entrance into the tract of land. City staff proposed purchasing 1.6 acres of adjoining land which will be used for an entrance/exit as well as a small parking lot for the new park.

At the April 26, 2012 Commission meeting, the Commissioners will be requested to approve the purchase of 1.6 acres from the Luecke Family Trust at a cost of \$7,500.

Award of Bid for Sand Blasting and Painting of Water Plant Clarifier

At the April 26, 2012 Commission meeting, the Commissioners will be requested to approve the bid submitted by Genesis Environmental Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$59,502, for sandblasting and painting of the West Secondary Basin at the Water Treatment Plant.

King's Gate Park Improvements – Resolution to Establish Benefit District

Covenant Builders, Inc. has petitioned the City for park improvements within the King's Gate development north of 41st Street. When King's Gate Addition was platted in 2010, .66 acres was dedicated as green space and in lieu

of partial greenspace, approximately \$5,000 in cash was paid by the developer to be put in the Park Greenspace Development Fund to be used at a future date for the development of the park. 100% of the owners within the petition area have agreed to and signed the petition. The park will consist of playground equipment, a shelter, benches, a small basketball court and associated landscaping. The estimated cost for the improvements is \$75,000, which will be special assessed to the property owners in the benefit district. Once constructed to City approved standards, the park will be accepted by the City and all future maintenance for the park will be the City's responsibility.

Commissioner Schwaller stated that he does support establishment of this park; however, he does have some concerns. The Park Master Plan and Study that was done 10 years ago stated that the City has too many small parks that were not properly maintained as well as being difficult to maintain. Once the initial park improvements are made, there is not a funding mechanism to maintain the playground equipment, fix the shelter house, or do anything other than mow the grass. He is also concerned about the volume of traffic from nearby developments using the park, resulting in unhappy homeowners. Neighborhood parks are very important; the size of the park as well as the location is a big drawback. He is hopeful a larger park could eventually be built in some other location. He supports this but thinks the park policy should be changed so that situations like this do not happen again.

City Manager Toby Dougherty stated there are long-term plans for a park in the Golden Belt Estates 3rd Addition. It will be several years until that happens. City ordinances do not prohibit property owners petitioning for a special assessment benefit district to fund park improvements in their neighborhood. In the future, he feels that some minimum development standards should be put in place regulating neighborhood parks.

Chairperson Hickman stated he is a supporter of big community parks, not individual smaller parks. With the regulations as they are now, this park meets the criteria, but agreed that the park development policy should be reviewed and changed.

The Commissioners will be requested to approve a resolution authorizing the park improvements at the April 26, 2012 Commission meeting.

King's Gate Park Improvements – Engineering Services Agreement

At the April 26, 2012 Commission meeting, the Commissioners will be requested to approve an Engineering Services Agreement with Ruder Engineering & Surveying, in the amount of \$5,600, for engineering design, contractor solicitation, construction engineering, and warranty inspection related to park improvements in King's Gate.

Economic Development Policy

Discussion was held about City policy that provides property tax abatements for qualified projects that meet the economic development goals of the City of Hays. Several different matrixes were discussed with the final selection being a matrix that provides 25% to 100% abatements for 10 years for firms that meet varying minimum investment levels between \$500,000 and \$30,000,000 + and create new jobs ranging from 25 to 250 +.

The Commissioners will be requested to formally approve the revised matrix at the April 26, 2012 Commission meeting.

The work session was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by: _____

Doris Wing – City Clerk