



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, March 04, 2003

Council Session

Item G4

Approving Minutes of February 22, 2003 City Council Special Study Session (Retreat)

The Minutes of February 22, 2003 City Council Special Study Session (Retreat) are submitted for approval. See attached MINUTES.

Staff Contact: R

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION (RETREAT)

February 22, 2002

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Study Session (Retreat) of the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska was conducted at Camp Augustine, 6574 South Locust Street, on February 22, 2002. Notice of the meeting was given in the Grand Island Independent on February 17, 2002.

Mayor Jay Vavricek called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. The following members were present: Councilmembers Pielstick, Meyer, Seifert, Larson, Hornady, Whitesides, Haase, Pauly, Walker and Nickerson. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Marlan Ferguson, City Clerk RaNae Edwards, Public Works Director Steve Riehle, City Attorney Doug Walker, Community Projects Director Cindy Johnson, Finance Director David Springer, Police Chief Kyle Hetrick and Utilities Director Gary Mader.

OPENING COMMENTS:

City Administrator Marlan Ferguson welcomed the council and directors. Each councilmember introduced themselves and told why they ran for office.

Mayor Vavricek emphasized the importance of communication, vision of the council and positive leadership. Priorities are: jobs, job incentives, public safety, strong code compliance, efficiency in budgeting, communication, and shared vision building. Mayor Vavricek spoke about the last 80 days in office with regards to communication, economic development and administration issues.

REVIEW OF GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

City Administrator Marlan Ferguson reviewed the 2001-2002 Council Goals:

1. Implement a half-cent city sales tax
2. Continue efforts to support fundraising for the Heartland Events Center
3. Solve Grand Island's odor issue
4. Enhance communication between City government, elected officials and the public
5. Establish long-term plans for community infrastructure, growth and development
6. Address the Health Department's building needs
7. Consider community-policing program
8. Set Zoo Reuse Plan in motion – beginning with a theme playground and train

Discussion was held concerning the accomplishments and ongoing work being done on those goals.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Finance Director David Springer presented an overview of the City's financial condition and stated that the City of Grand Island was in excellent financial shape compared to other cities in the state of Nebraska, but now was the time to watch spending. Sales tax receipts were reviewed with a record high for February.

Revenues and expenditures were discussed. Mr. Springer stated there was no new debt last year and suggested that new items in the future be paid for in cash. Capital spending was mentioned as a concern for the Finance Department.

Line item committed projects for 2003 in the amount of \$3,867,500 and planned projects in the amount of \$1,580,000 were reviewed along with future year's expenses. Mr. Springer stated that if items were to be added, something needed to be taken out of the budget.

REVIEW OF ONGOING EFFORTS:

City Administrator Marlan Ferguson reviewed ongoing efforts with regards to sales tax, multicultural needs, business improvement districts, economic development, code compliance and annexation.

The sales tax issue was discussed with regards to the May 2004 election. Discussed was infrastructure, such as water, sewer and street improvement districts, sidewalks, public safety, etc.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Police Chief Kyle Hetrick presented a power point presentation with regards to ongoing programs within the Police Department. Reviewed were bicycle patrol, traffic enforcement unit, community service officers, school resource officers, honor guard, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), canine unit (proposed), community policing, technology, and public safety center.

LUNCH WITH HALL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

The following Hall County Board Supervisors were present for the Joint City/County Special Study Session: Robert Rye, Jim Eriksen, Pamela Lancaster, Bud Jeffries, Bob Humiston, Scott Arnold and Marla Connelly County Clerk.

HEARTLAND EVENTS CENTER UPDATE:

Hugh Miner presented an update on the Heartland Events Center. Money raised was currently at \$19.25 million. Costs included: building \$21.5 million, equipment \$2,637,500 and other fees \$862,500 for a total of \$25 million. Not included in this price was \$10 million in infrastructure which would be provided by Fonner Park.

HOMELAND SECURITY:

City Administrator Marlan Feguson and Police Chief Kyle Hetrick updated the City Council and County Board on Homeland Security with regards to smallpox and bio-terrorism.

PUBLIC SAFETY CENTER (JAIL)/JOINT PROJECTS:

County Board Chair Pam Lancaster updated both Boards on the public safety center (jail) issue. Bonding would more than likely have to take place. Construction of the facility would take approximately 5 to 7 years to complete. Avenues other than bonding were being looked at to cover the \$20 million project, such as a private/public jail with a lease purchase agreement. Location of the jail was discussed. Approximately 50 to 75 acres of land would be required. Several options were being looked at, but no decision had been made.

Cindy Johnson, Community Projects Director updated the Boards on GITV Channel 56. Discussion was had regarding the problems of the transmitter and the tower. An alternate site for the tower was recommended by the Emergency Management Director. Approximately \$40,000 was needed for a new transmitter. The City will keep the County informed on developments with the tower and transmitter.

Police Chief Kyle Hetrick reviewed the Spillman Mobile Data project. Discussed were the hold ups, grant money, and problems associated with this project. Mr. Hetrick reported that the Spillman software had been up and running since December 5, 2001.

William Bennett, representing Abacus Business System presented a power point presentation with regards to the Spillman software. Mentioned were grants available through Homeland Security. Discussion was had with regards to when this system would be up and running. It was hoped to have these units in all patrol cars by April 1, 2003.

MAJOR COUNTY PROJECTS:

Pam Lancaster, Chair of the Hall County Board of Supervisors reviewed the following Major County Projects: total county road plan, which included a master transportation plan; Assessor plan to work on Board of Equalization protests; information technology; and the Central District Health Department's new building.

UTILITIES UPDATE:

Utilities Director Gary Mader updated the Council on utility generation, economic impact and water conservation/Platte River issues. Baseload capacity was discussed with regards to OPPD, Hastings MNPP, and NPPD.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE:

Cindy Johnson, Community Projects Director updated the Council on the Business Improvement Districts. Discussed were assessments, budgets, business recruitment and retention. Mentioned were BID #3 and #4 eventually merging to work on events and a possible new business district along 2nd Street. Ms. Johnson stated that the life of business improvement districts were generally 5 to 10 years. Updated were Community Redevelopment Authority activities.

CAPP EXTENSION OF SERVICE:

Public Works Director Steve Riehle updated the Council for the city services to CAAP Energy Park. Discussion was held with regards to sewer and water outside the city limits. It was mentioned that typically the City does not extend sewer and water beyond the city limits without annexing the area.

WRAP UP AND FURTHER DIRECTION OF COUNCIL:

Mayor Vavricek asked for suggestions. Councilmember Walker commented on the possibility of having other sessions like these that could be held throughout the year. Mayor Vavricek commented on having a mini-retreat down the road in May. Also mentioned were communications efforts such as the web-site.

Senior Councilmember Seifert discussed past retreats and projects as they relate to the progress of Grand Island and its reputation. Mr. Seifert suggested that we have no new priorities, but take care of the ones we have been working on. Mentioned was long-term planning such as: public safety, community growth and needs, and keeping an eye on the future while taking care of today.

Discussion was held on joint ventures and communication with the County.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk