



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Council Session

Item G2

Approving Minutes of December 11, 2007 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

December 11, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Study Session of the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska was conducted in the Community Meeting Room of City Hall, 100 East First Street, on December 11, 2007. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on December 5, 2007.

Mayor Margaret Hornady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Councilmember's Brown, Haase, Nickerson, Gericke, Carney, Gilbert, Ramsey, Niemann, and Meyer. Councilmember Zapata was absent. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Jeff Pederson, City Clerk RaNae Edwards, Assistant City Attorney Wes Nespor and Finance Director David Springer.

INVOCATION was given by Pastor Mike Reiners, Peace Lutheran Church, 4018 Zola Lane followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

MAYOR COMMUNICATION: Mayor Hornady explained this meeting was a Study Session and immediately following this meeting a Special Meeting would take place.

Presentation of Proposed Arboretum for Stolley Park. Steve Paustian, Park and Recreation Director reported that in 1981 the Heritage Zoo was constructed and operated for approximately 20 years at Stolley Park. In late 2001 a committee formulated a re-use plan and was adopted by City Council. Recommendations were to construct a themed playground, refurbish the train and train tracks, erect a community picnic shelter, develop an arboretum and construct an outdoor refrigerated ice rink.

Mr. Paustian stated to date, the themed playground had been constructed, the train and train tracks had been refurbished and a community picnic shelter had been erected. The next phase of the re-use plan was to develop an arboretum. Over the past three years, funding for the arboretum had been requested through the budget process but funding had not been approved or allocated.

Staff felt an ongoing maintenance commitment by the City would be necessary. To properly maintain the arboretum, one additional full-time person and two seasonal staff would be required at a labor cost of approximately \$55,000 annually including benefits. Also mentioned was that volunteer labor would be critical to the upkeep of the beds.

Mr. Paustian commented that the committee was willing to undertake the challenge of raising capital funds if Council was willing to support the arboretum by funding maintenance and long term care.

Herb Worthington, 4262 Pennsylvania Avenue spoke in support.

Mr. Paustian stated the original cost from the study was \$870,000. With the volunteer work and capital campaign funding it was thought the cost would be approximately \$400,000.

Discussion was held concerning the cost of additional employees and ongoing maintenance cost and upkeep. Mr. Paustian stated the arboretum could be done in phases as money came in. Comments were made regarding the volunteer work done by the community with the Kid's Kingdom and were encouraged that the community would step forward and make the arboretum a success.

It was the consensus of the council to move forward with this project.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk