



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

Council Session

Item G2

Approving Minutes of May 19, 2009 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

May 19, 2009

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 May 19, 2009. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on May 16, 2009.

Mayor Margaret Hornady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Councilmember's were present: Gericke, Nickerson, Ramsey, Dugan, Haase, Gilbert, Niemann, and Meyer. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Jeff Pederson, Deputy City Clerk Paul Briseno, City Attorney Dale Shotkoski, Public Works Director Steve Riehle, and Finance Director David Springer.

INVOCATION was given by Mayor Margaret Hornady followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Presentation and Discussion of Master Plan for Veterans Home Athletic Complex Jeff Pederson City Administrator began the presentation with an overview of how the need and timeline for the Fonner Park Athletic Field relocation was established as well as an overview of LB 224. An overview of Grand Island's certification amounts and deadlines was also given.

Steve Paustian, Parks and Recreation Director gave an overview of the current Fonner Park Athletic Complex and amenities. A Web Park Athletic Complex presentation was given as the site will become a future extension of the cemetery in 810 years. A cost estimate of \$1,537,454 was presented for replacement for the Fonner Park Athletic Complex Facility. An additional 4th ball field would add \$120,000 to the cost.

An overview of the architect's master plan for the Veterans Athletic Complex was presented. The overview included a proposed timeline for Phase I which could start summer 2009 and potentially made available for the fall 2010 or summer 2011 pending circumstances.

Jeff Pederson concluded the presentation with an overview of financing options as it relates to the development of the site. Options for funding included expanding permitted use of the new occupation tax beyond the city owned building at Fonner Park to include a specified amount for the proposed athletic complex. It was noted that the additional amount of \$1.5 million would extend the period of time necessary for the tax by 1.5 – 2 years for phase I.

Council President Bob Meyer mentioned the original \$5 million request for the State Fair utilizing the occupational tax. Council President Meyer stated he would only support the funding of the project through the occupational tax if the entire project was created versus a phased in approach. Council President Meyer also stated the complex will be successful and a great thing for the Grand Island Community however a sunset is still required on the occupational tax for his support.

Councilmember Scott Dugan asked of the children's play areas and why seed was recommended versus sod. Steve Paustian stated that two play areas were noted on the master plan and seeding of the facility was recommended because the sod was currently owned by Fonner and would be necessary for State Fair parking. Other factors for seeding included timing, age of the grass, cost of

removal and relaying, physical process, and the requirement of a smooth surface. Councilmember Dugan concurred with Council President Meyer's statement of creating the additional fields and parking in one phase.

Councilmember Peg Gilbert recognized Council's commitment of \$5 million with a sunset clause in September 2008. It was further mentioned that Council was made aware in October 2008 of the site plan to utilize the current Fonner Park Athletic Complex creating an unexpected cost after the occupational tax was passed.

Councilmember Kirk Ramsey agreed with Council President Meyer and viewed the project as an opportunity to meet a community need.

Councilmember Chuck Haase mentioned the Web Athletic Complex must relocate to the proposed Veterans Athletic Complex and would further support the addition of the facilities.

Councilmember John Gericke stated the fields are a community need. Councilmember Gericke asked where the remaining State Fair funding would come. Ken Gnad of 1610 Gretchen Ave and Cindy Johnson of 4140 Elmwood Drive responded to the inquiry stating \$1,028,400 was raised to date by donations, Hall County \$500,000, Hall County Fair \$500,000, City of Grand Island \$5,000,000 for the city building and \$1,500,000 for the replacement of the Fonner Park Athletic Complex.

Councilmember Mitch Nickerson mentioned that the amount raised to date was good news. Councilmember Nickerson asked if only \$1.5 million cost for relocation is applicable toward the State Fair cost. Jeff Pederson stated that under LB 224 only \$1.5 million in expenses is allowable toward the State Fair relocation. Additional costs to the city would not count toward the \$8.5 million requirement. However, the occupational tax could be adjusted to meet the need of the entire Veterans Athletic Complex project.

Councilmember Gilbert asked of additional staffing requirements would be needed with the addition of the Veterans Athletic Complex. Steve Paustian noted an efficient parks program is currently in place and would suggest an FTE dedicated to this facility. More FTE's maybe required in the future once programs and use have been established. Councilmember Gilbert asked that the occupational tax sunset once the project is complete.

Councilmember Gericke stated he would like to complete the entire project rather than constructing only phase I.

Jeff Peterson said a cost estimate of additional facilities for the Veterans Athletic Complex will determined. Future action includes the preparing of the certification of \$1.5 million and amendment of the occupational tax.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Paul Briseno
Deputy City Clerk