

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting at City Hall, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M., on Monday, June 20, 2016. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: Chuck Sipple, Jim Rawlings, Julie Cain, Andrew Osman, James Azeltine and Debra Filla [teleconference participation]

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator Chief Dave Williams, Fire Department
Joe Johnson, Public Works Director Richard Coleman, Comm. Dev. Director
Chris Claxton, Parks & Recreation Dir. Brian Anderson, Parks Superintendent
April Bishop, Cultural Arts Coordinator Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk
Debra Harper, City Clerk

Others Present: Kevin Jeffries, President, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Economic Development, Leawood Chamber of Commerce
Karen Reimer, Chair, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Gary Swanson, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Brittany Lane, Freelance Reporter, Kansas City Star
Susan Grogan, Resident
Richard and Ellen Brown, Residents

Discuss Redevelopment of Property Located at 96th & Lee Boulevard

Mayor Dunn called the meeting to order, thanked all for their interest and introductions with affiliation were made. It was noted Mr. and Mrs. Brown reside behind the cell tower currently located on the property at 96th & Lee Boulevard.

Mr. Lambers stated tonight's meeting would be a continuation of discussion occurring at a Governing Body Work Session over one year ago. The goal of meeting would be to refocus on the topic and make commitments for improvements to the property for the next Capital Improvement Program [CIP] and Operating Budget. The current budget contains \$140,000, which is probably not a sufficient amount for potential Parks & Recreation projects, and no other funding is programmed at this time. The cell tower remains until 2019. Tower service providers [three; Sprint, T-Mobile and another] have been notified their leases will not be renewed. No feedback from the service providers has been received, but would be expected closer to the lease expiration date.

Funding for construction of a new fire station would be a debt-service payment exemption in the current Kansas property tax lid law. Until passage of the tax lid law, the proposed method of fire station construction funding had been from the County Public Sales Tax on a pay-as-you-go [PAYG] basis. It is now recommended to issue general obligation bonds for approximately \$4 Million to \$5 Million and use County Public Sales Tax to make debt payments. Temporary notes would be issued to finance the estimated 18-month construction, long-term debt issued after that and begin to use proceeds for payments in 2018 or 2019. The revenue stream is in place and would continue to grow; hope for pay-off in 10 years. The County Public Sales Tax is tracked separately and it could be decided at a future time to discontinue use of the County Public Sales Tax and use property tax for funding. Mayor Dunn reminded the County Public Sales Tax augmented the City sales tax for funding of the Justice Center.

Mr. Lambers stated he would be hesitant to combine funding for fire station construction and amenities under the County Public Sales Tax, because transparency and delineation are needed. Park improvements would not be a strain on revenue when general fund money can be used. Park improvements would be PAYG. Overall site planning could be justified and funded by the County Public Sales Tax, but it could not be used for any architectural park improvements. Mr. Coleman confirmed the property could be a single zone type, recreation, so the fire station would be on recreational property.

As presented at the Work Session on May 4, 2015, a concept plan had been developed to ensure the new fire station would fit and if the original City Hall needed to be moved. The concept plan does not require the relocation of City Hall.

A fire station would be rebuilt on the site and must be operable before existing Fire Station No. 1 is demolished. The location on the property for the new fire station and a prioritized listing of additional improvements the Governing Body would like to propose needs to be determined. A formal presentation of improvements could be presented at the Governing Body Work Session scheduled for July 5th, followed by Parks & Recreation Advisory Board discussion at their July meeting, before coming back before the Governing Body on July 18th. Once the Council is comfortable with a schedule of improvements, then incorporate into the next CIP and Operating Budget.

Mr. Lambers stated there is urgency to proceed with construction of a new fire station due to the deteriorating condition of the current fire station. An option would be to proceed immediately with the new fire station funded by debt-service and later add amenities funded by a 2017 Budget amendment. There is no estimate or budget for new fire station construction. The \$140,000 budgeted for amenities could be carried over to next year. Mayor Dunn pointed out the safety concern of having children playing in a construction site.

Ms. Claxton stated the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board had met to discuss and create a list of general suggestions for the open space, now temporary Community Garden plots, as follows:

- A. Fire-themed playground, larger than Brook Beatty which is for two to five year olds, but smaller than Gezer due to the footprint.
- B. A small shelter designed to the character of the area to include two picnic tables.
- C. Public art.
- D. A single restroom with sink, so visitors would not need to use the restroom in the fire station.
- E. Parking, not just for the park, but the property.
- F. Water misting feature, adjacent to the playground if budget and space allows. The cost of water and maintenance would need to be considered.

Highlights of discussion as follows:

- 1. If the original City Hall becomes a museum, it would be staffed and an indoor restroom is needed. The museum would be staffed for special events, with part-time hours clearly posted for weekends and perhaps some evening hours.
- 2. The City may hire a part-time museum curator and discussed staffing one or perhaps two additional park attendants.
- 3. The restroom in the original City Hall is located on the lower level and not ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] compliant. If the original City Hall is raised and reset on a concrete slab, a unisex family ADA-compliant restroom would need to be built.
- 4. The new restroom in City Hall plus the suggested single restroom with sink located on the property would provide two restrooms. Restroom construction is extremely expensive.
- 5. Placement of the original City Hall on slab would be part of the \$140,000 budget and its placement would remain very close to current location on the property.
- 6. Original City Hall would require seven parking spaces in close proximity to the building, one of the seven parking spaces being for handicap use.
- 7. Parking spaces to the south of the original City Hall will likely need to be removed or moved for efficiency.
- 8. No parking spaces should allow back-up into Lee Boulevard.
- 9. Parking spaces typically cost \$2,000 each.
- 10. Additional parking would be needed for the overall property based on use(s). It was questioned whether open shelters have the same parking space requirements as enclosed buildings. Parking and sidewalk requirements will be reviewed by staff.
- 11. Although the Police Department was located on the property for many years, a fire station would continue to be present and it may be best to maintain a fire theme for park amenities rather than a police theme or combination fire/police theme. The playground is no larger than the Gezer Park playground, so there may be insufficient room for two themes.
- 12. Themed playground equipment is more costly than basic equipment.
- 13. Fire-themed water features such as hydrants are available.

14. Playground was suggested to be located in the northeast corner of the property, away from the street. A playground located near a street would probably require barricades for child safety, similar to Brook Beatty Park.
15. Public art would be a separate budget line item and separate dollar amount from the \$140,000 budget. Suggestion was made for a fire truck and child art piece, but safety would be a concern if visitors try to climb the art piece.
16. Suggestion to retain the footprint or incorporate a portion of the existing fire station into a park shelter, or use some used building material for historic value. The building was a multi-use building for City services for two or three years. Structural integrity may impact whether a portion or any materials from the existing fire station could be used.
17. Temporary Community Garden is quite popular and if relocated to Ironwoods Park, a cost estimate for a water source is needed, as well as funding for the transition of gardens and the water source.
18. Mr. Lambers will check with the United States Postal Service to determine if the semi-circle “eyebrow” drive and postal drop box must remain.
19. An architect could review and provide several scenarios for placement of amenities.
20. The cell tower does not have a large footprint, but is a visual monstrosity.
21. Cell tower is owned by the City and removal would be at City’s expense. There is no estimate for removal cost at this time.
22. Cell tower service providers have not been asked if they wish to vacate early. City Attorney, Patty Bennett, will send a follow-up letter to the providers in this regard and verify they received information about lease cancellation in 2019.
23. Cell tower contracts require payments for early terminations; perhaps a price could be negotiated.
24. Cell tower service provider leases do not expire at the same time, but would expire about the same time construction of the new fire station ends.
25. The City does not use the cell tower for communication. As the tower is not high, it does not serve a large residential customer area. Signal-boosting technology and tower-type options have improved over the years.
26. Cell tower service providers will need time to research and go through time-consuming planning process if relocating; probably a total of two years. A “temperature check” by City Attorney Patty Bennett with the providers every six-months is needed to determine status.
27. Suggestion that public art is needed in north and south Leawood. There would be an opportunity for a joint effort of the Arts Council and the Historic Commission in regard to art displays within the original City Hall.
28. The new fire station is the first priority. The location and square footage of the new station needs to be determined, then improvements determined for the remaining balance of acreage.
29. A preliminary architectural/engineering review could determine placement of the new fire station and construction buffer, but with limited space to the north of the current fire station, the new station would need to be located in the southern third of the property with the cell tower.

30. The new fire station will be larger than the current fire station. Optimally, the new fire station's location would have been the same as the current fire station, but the existing station must remain in operation during construction.
31. Fire station construction has not been bid and there is no architectural cost estimate. Construction would be a traditional design-build. The engineering cost estimate for the fire station would be separate from the park improvements; two separate contracts.
32. The 1940's fire truck would be displayed in the new fire station and visible from the park.
33. One consultant would be used for fire station site determination and a second consultant used for park improvements.
34. Schematics, maps and scaled graphic representations of proposed amenities and parking were requested for use at the next meeting. Consultant could prepare visual aids for a fee of less than \$15,000, which can be contracted by signature authority of the City Administrator.
35. Residents within a nearby radius would be able to participate in the improvements process through Citizens Interact Meetings, required as part of the planning application.
36. Suggestions were made to make resident input part of consultant study and use online surveys.
37. There is the potential that residents may prefer green space rather than a playground.

Mayor Dunn stated she heard a consensus to hire a consultant for the fire station. Mr. Lambers stated this could be ready by the July 18th Governing Body Meeting.

Mayor Dunn inquired if the Work Session scheduled on Tuesday, July 5, for continued discussion was needed. Mr. Lambers stated he would like to have a Work Session to discuss and nail-down the park amenities. He stated Ms. Claxton could present information on playground equipment and shelter sizes, and a consultant for the park amenities can only be recruited after the Council comes to a consensus on a concept and the details shared with the park consultant. Mayor Dunn noted a consensus to hold the July 5th Work Session.

Councilmember Filla stated the portion of the \$140,000 budget not needed for site design could be used to provide signage for Self-Propelled Leawood bicycle friendly routes. Mr. Lambers advised this would be a separate topic for another meeting.

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned at 7:21 P.M.

Debra Harper, CMC, City Clerk

Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk