

Minutes

DVD No. 428

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Public Meeting in the Council Chambers, 4800 Town Center Drive, 7:00 P.M. on Monday, November 12, 2018. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: Lisa Harrison, Jim Rawlings, Julie Cain, Andrew Osman, Debra Filla, Mary Larson, James Azeltine and Chuck Sipple

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator	Patty Bennett, City Attorney
Chief Dave Williams, Fire Department	Chief Troy Rettig, Police Department
Chris Claxton, Parks & Rec. Director	David Ley, Public Works Director
April Bishop, Cultural Arts Coordinator	Mark Tepesch, IS Specialist III
Ross Kurz, Information Services Director	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
Bruce Martin, 4430 W. 151st Terrace, Historic Commission Chair

- 1. Public Meeting for residents' comments on possible relocation of former City Hall Building, from 9615 Lee Boulevard, to be located adjacent to current City Hall at 4800 Town Center Drive**
- 2. Discussion and possible action by Governing Body**

Mayor Dunn opened the public meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. She welcome attendees and read the two purposes of the meeting from the agenda.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Councilmember Rawlings; seconded by Councilmember Larson. The motion was approved with a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Mayor Dunn asked for a moment of silence for the families and friends of the victims of the recent shootings in Thousand Oaks, California, and the ongoing California wildfires.

Mayor Dunn stated the City had received a number of electronic communications on the topic, all of which were distributed. The agenda meeting packet contains Historic Commission recommendations, and minutes from both Historic Commission meetings and Governing Body Work Sessions.

Mayor Dunn provided a brief background. At a prior public hearing a few months ago, residents had expressed a desire for a passive park and green space. At that meeting she had announced the new Fire Station would be located on the tract and the former City Hall would also remain, shifted to the north. This was the consensus of the Governing Body for many years. At the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session a few councilmembers, not a majority, brought forth an idea to relocate the former City Hall next to the current City Hall. There was unanimous support of a public meeting to hear from residents, and a "Special Call" Governing Body meeting was scheduled as a result.

Mayor Dunn stated 10 residents had signed in to speak and would be called upon in order of sign-in. Each speaker should keep their comments to two minutes.

Barbara Holzmark, 3016 W. 84th Street, stated she and her husband moved to Leawood in 1971 and raised three children in a home they eventually sold to a daughter. At that time she and her husband moved to The Cloisters in Leawood. She has been an active City volunteer. She is a current member of the Historic Commission and she strongly urges the Governing Body to keep a presence in north Leawood.

JoLynn Hobbs, 8309 Lee Boulevard, stated she was honored to represent and serve the 1,500 families of the Leawood Home Owners Association [HOA]. After she received notice of the public meeting, it was posted on the NextDoor social app and she requested feedback from residents on the possible relocation of original City Hall. Only one respondent felt there was no value to retaining the buildings. All other respondents felt the historic buildings should not be moved off-site. A majority of residents embrace the special character and charm of the buildings and recommend the original City Hall be relocated to the north on the site, and used as a museum, as recommended by the Historic Commission. Many respondents thought the existing Fire Station should be retained and reinvented into a unique rental meeting space or community center. She suggested there could be a patio area/courtyard walkway between the buildings for cohesion, with a fire-themed playground/passive park area located safely behind away from Lee Boulevard. She asked the City spare, protect and invest in the historic buildings for use by Leawood residents; they are a reminder of the service of those who came before. She thanked the Council for the opportunity to discuss these valued historic buildings and asked that Ward One and Ward Two residents be considered in this important decision.

John Dixon, 9919 High Drive, stated in review of the minutes from the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session, consideration of relocation was discussed, but no costs were known. Mayor Dunn stated at the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session the consensus on the Fire Station was to remove and build a shelter, perhaps with some of the components from the Fire Station. At that meeting two cost estimates were presented; one for conversion of the Fire Station to an open shelter with restroom for \$377,190 and one for restoring two-bays of the Fire Station for

meeting space or another use for \$408,861. Costs for relocation of the former City Hall were not discussed. There had been discussion of costs for a crawl space or full basement for the former City Hall; an elevator would be needed if the building was placed on a full basement. Mr. Dixon stated moving a building is very expensive, regardless of size, and he questioned the historical value of the old City Hall. Mayor Dunn confirmed to Mr. Dixon the building does not qualify for the National Historic Register. Mr. Dixon asked the Council to take this into consideration.

Dennis Merghetti, 9618 Lee Boulevard, stated he had lived across from the site for 42 years, and area of heavy traffic. He favored beautification of the area. After the previous public hearing, residents had thought the site would become a green space, which would be well-used by all generations. He favors leaving Old City Hall somewhere on the site, making a natural use/green space area similar to Brook Beatty Park, rather than having a space for meetings. He stated there had been no difficulties in finding space for meetings and use as a meeting space would be more of an inconvenience to residents, causing traffic congestion and being unsightly. Mayor Dunn offered the new Fire Station will have a meeting space open to the public located on the second floor and accessible by elevator, similar to space available at the Justice Center. Both Fire Chief Williams and Police Chief Rettig welcome such use.

Mark Anstoetter, 9614 Lee Boulevard, stated he was a neighbor to the north of Mr. Merghetti and his home of 20 years is closest to the existing Fire Station. Green space is desired, not the development of a destination use, meeting space or community center which may impact property values. His comments are consistent with Mr. Merghetti's. His home and those of the Merghetti and Leach families are located most adjacent, and they all hold the same opinion. He noted there are other residents who could not be present tonight due to weather. He questioned what would be done with the space by relocating the Fire Station. Mayor Dunn clarified with Mr. Anstoetter that he meant to state relocating the former City Hall.

Alice Hawk, 2841 W. 118th Terrace, stated she had served on the Historic Commission for many years and it has been the intent of the Commission since their first meeting to preserve the Old City Hall at its present location. Moving the building within the site would be acceptable. Integrity of the building would be lost if relocated; in that case the City might as well construct a new building. The Historic Commission hopes to have the building to house memorabilia, with many more items likely to be received during the redevelopment process.

Bruce North, 8025 Lee Boulevard in Leawood HOA, stated the former City Hall is a landmark, located dead center in north Leawood. Many drive by this historical anchor once or twice a day. To move the building would be disrespectful to the community. The building should remain where it is. There has been discussion for many years, going back and forth, on how to redevelop the property. What is missing is a concrete comprehensive plan on how to best use the property. Such a plan should be sought before any structure is moved and that plan be a result of discussion between the City and community on how to best use the property. As a community member, this is the first time he had received notice. He pointed out it is difficult to form an opinion when uninformed. Two-way conversation is needed before any decisions by the Council are made.

David Hazen, 2705 W. 141st Street, Highlands Ranch, stated he had worked in construction for his entire career and offered it would cost in excess of \$125,000 to as high as \$250,000 to relocate the former City Hall next to current City Hall. After the move, there would be cost to operate, insure and maintain the building. Future use as a museum and the structure's historical value are questionable. The building is 20% smaller than his three-car garage. There are other buildings in the City such as the Oscar Lee and Voight Home, and the Oxford School House the City relocated was 141 years, twice the age of the of the former City Hall. The former City Hall is about 65 years; younger than the City which is 70 years. He recommended to tear down and reclaim as much brick as possible, using recovered brick for planters, benches, small retaining walls and sidewalks with small plaques commemorating the source of reclaimed bricks from the first City Hall of Leawood, Kansas, circa 1953. He looks forwards to additional discussion about the uses of the existing Fire Station when that is appropriate.

Tim Fisher, 9641 Lee Boulevard, stated he had no comments.

Susan Grogan, 9619 Lee Boulevard, stated she lives very close to property south of the new Fire Station. She appreciates the public meeting, especially in consideration of the former City Hall. Advantages of relocating the former City Hall would be to ease the whole process moving forward and to provide increased space for a park. Disadvantages would be the loss of a beautiful historic building, it being gone from the neighborhood. From a previous public meeting, the resident summary was for a passive park with plenty of green space. She questioned if the residents' definition of passive matches the Council's definition. She stated she had recently visited I-Lan and Gezer Parks and noted their shelters and restrooms take up a significant amount of space, having a style would not fit. A park similar to Brook Beatty would be a better fit. She stated residents have safety concerns for children in regard to Lee Boulevard traffic, and the Council should consider lowering the speed limit in the future.

Drew Alingh, 9629 Lee Boulevard, expressed concern about functionality and viability in today's world. He stated it would be redundant to have a meeting space since there would be public meeting space in the new Fire Station. City Hall would take up space on a small plot of property and handcuffs the designer and Council on what to do on the site to maximize potential for residents. His children are excited about the possibility of a playground and he favored maximizing green space. In this regard, the function of the former City Hall would likely be a detriment. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to address the Governing Body.

Mayor Dunn thanked attendees for coming out on a cold evening to share remarks at this important meeting, and stated the meeting would move to Governing Body discussion.

Councilmember Harrison stated in her tabulation of public comments made tonight and received by electronic communications, there was no support for moving the building. However, there were many attendees present who had not provided comments. She inquired if there was any support/preference of moving the former City Hall to an off-site location. She noted there were a couple of raised hands in the affirmative.

Councilmember Rawlings stated the minutes of the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session had not captured the intent of his comments; minutes indicate he was for moving the former City Hall next to the current City Hall. His intent was that he was open to the idea of discussion of the suggestion for relocation made by another councilmember.

Councilmember Filla thanked attendees and the Governing Body for the Special Call Public Meeting. She stated agreement with Mr. North's comment about the need for a comprehensive plan to keep from looking at decisions in an incomplete manner. Her desire would be to entertain three or four options, charrette-style, looking at all facts, space and options. She shared details of her vision for the site from the perspective of "and", not "either/or." The existing Fire Station is about the same size of the former City Hall, and the buildings would look charming side-by-side, with a courtyard and park. The combined footprint of the buildings are 3.1% of the site. The buildings could have shared parking, likely as part of a circle drive located to the front. The City has not yet looked to see if there could be shared parking with the new Fire Station. She stated that 32% of residents are within a 10 minute walk to the park compared to the national average of 54%. The two buildings are landmarks; like art in a public place. A significant amount of money has been expended on other art pieces and other parks in the City. Tearing down the buildings would be an irreversible decision and they would be missed. The buildings cannot be added to the National Historic Register if we do not give them time and they are torn down. There is room for a playground/spray ground with side-by-side building configuration. There is the opportunity to have the best and all we can put in the site; the City develops great parks. It is clear that relocation of the former City Hall is not wanted. She recommended the Governing Body to return to the "drawing board" for review of conceptual plans.

Councilmember Azeltine stated prior to the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session, it had been the consensus to leave the former City Hall on the site with perhaps a slight move. Tonight's meeting packet documents numerous meetings held over the past eight years and the unwavering recommendation of the Historic Commission during that time that the former City Hall should not be taken out of its historic context. Although the building is everyone's City Hall and this is the central location of a very young City, the building would not fit surrounding the development in Town Center Plaza and Park Place if the building was relocated next to the current City Hall. He questioned if the planning process would pass muster if the building was demolished and an exact duplicate rebuilt at its present location. Historical significance is the time the building has been part of the City. In his opinion, the building should remain at its current location. The goal of tonight's meeting would be to have decision on whether to relocate the building, which would provide City Staff or a consultant a starting point to create a master site plan, using a charrette-process moving pieces on a board. The City has been in a circular process, repeatedly revisiting the same items and a visual is needed.

Councilmember Cain stated her strong feeling that part of the reason discussions have gone on for so long is the development is of critical importance. She respects and is fond of the old, sharing examples of her vintage first car, purchase of an original Leawood home and renovations of an older home. She has noted in her 17 years real estate experience, most people have difficulty to see past wallpaper or comprehend space planning on a small site. She stated the City has one chance to respect history in regard to the former City Hall and two-bays of the existing Fire Station. It is sad the site is so small rather than 20 acres, and she understands the lack of park space having taken her small children to Franklin Park. The City will likely need to build restrooms and shelter, which would be insignificantly smaller footprint than the footprint of the two bays of the existing Fire Station. Her vision for present and future generation would be to reduce the existing Fire Station to the original two bays, by removing the wings and back of the building, and to place glass doors on the front and back of the remaining structure. This would create an open shelter, used to display the charming historic fire truck. Hallmark created a Keepsake Ornament of the fire truck; the truck is a true original and cost \$5,000 and was restored. The former City Hall could be moved next to the two-

bay structure and a fire-hydrant fountain and benches placed in the middle. The footprint of the buildings would be 3.1% of the park. She implored the City to distribute a Request for Proposal to park planners asking for several options and scaled schematics, along with costs, which the Governing Body could review and discuss and open back up to public comment. A plan containing multiple options is needed to make comprehensive decisions.

Councilmember Osman stated as a member of the Governing Body he firmly believes in the passionate desire of the Governing Body, residents and community to have the best for the City and a long-term vision. However, in a poll of the City's 40,000 population, the 1,500 residents of the Leawood HOA or the Governing Body, answers to that would be different. His vision is historic and not historic. When he joined the Governing Body in 2010, he had proposed a unique train park based on having an open slate for the site. Regardless as to whether a train park was feasible, his vision was different from others. Each Governing Body member brings their own perspective, and often it is easier to blame others than yourself. Discussion has occurred throughout the years, taking longer than he would have imagined, with strategic parts in the development process occurring such as demolition of the former Police Department and expiration of the cell tower lease in 2019. In his opinion, he and others have failed because there is currently no master plan. The idea to relocate the former City Hall was only raised for consideration; the building will need to be moved on the current site due to its proximity to the new Fire Station and there will be cost regardless if the move is within the site or 10 miles. The City should hire an architect for space planning, the cost of which would be justified in the long-term. The City spends a great deal of money on public art and for traffic signals. About one-half of the approximate 1.5 to 2 acre site will need to be used for the new Fire Station, parking, green space and setbacks. Just the footprints of the former City Hall and existing Fire Station account for 3.1% of the site. He would like to have the buildings, but to make an informed decision he would like to look at several options for the site, including one that includes the former City Hall, one that includes both the former City Hall and the existing Fire Station and one that is a clean slate. At this time, he is opposed to moving the former City Hall next to new City Hall; character would be lost and the building truly fits Ward One and Ward Two.

For audience edification, Councilmember Azeltine asked for next steps and timeline should a decision on the disposition of the former City Hall be reached.

Mr. Lambers stated based on a Governing Body desire that the former City Hall remain on the current site, he would need the concern raised by a few Governing Body members addressed as to whether or not to have a location for the building north of the existing Fire Station rather than risk exposure to weather for several years in storage during construction of the new Fire Station. At this time it seems several Councilmembers have mentioned placement of the former City Hall between the new and existing Fire Station. That can be done, but must be agreed to live with if that is chosen. The former City Hall must be moved due to site confines to avoid construction of the new Fire Station. The existing Fire Station must remain active during construction. Once the new Fire Station is built, land will be freed up.

Mr. Lambers stated if the desire is for multiple options, the next step would not be a Work Session, but the preparation of a Request for Proposal [RFP] to get a consultant out to meet with the Governing Body after the first of the year. Preparation of the RFP would take about 30 days and 30 days to review. He estimated return to a Council Meeting in February 2019. The consultant would participate in a March 2019 Governing Body Work Session. A planning application based on a concept plan would take about 90 to 120 days. The existing Fire Station can continue to be used with stop-gap measures taken, as has been done for the last 20 years.

Mayor Dunn reminded that cost estimates for storage of the building on a flatbed truck, crawl space and basement, had been provided at the October 15, 2018 Governing Body Work Session. Mr. Lambers stated if a crawl space or a basement is desired, the building must be placed north of the existing Fire Station as opposed to storing on a flatbed truck.

Councilmember Sipple questioned if the City had staff experienced on playgrounds and designing fire stations, and if so, could using internal staff accelerate the project process. Mr. Lambers recommended that external expertise be used due to site confines and each decision having an associated opportunity cost. Timing and funding availability at this time in the project are not issues, and the cost would be worthwhile. He pointed out there will be winning and losing options, and use of external expertise would provide a position of neutrality.

Mr. Lambers clarified to Councilmember Sipple the Governing Body would meet with the consultant and the Governing Body would work to determine what the consultant should bring back as part of a concept plan. To accomplish this might require one or more Governing Body Work Sessions, based on challenges encountered in making a decision on the existing Fire Station. As part of the City's planning process there would be Interact Meetings, residents would receive notifications and have opportunities to comment at Planning Commission and Governing Body meetings. The more detailed the plan, the better the residents can have an informed opinion.

Councilmember Osman asked for a current status of plans for the new Fire Station. Mr. Lambers stated plans are finalized and ready to go, but the City cannot move forward until July 2019 when the cell tower lease expires and also the former City Hall is moved.

Councilmember Osman inquired if the architect for the new Fire Station could be hired for site planning of the 2-acre park. Mr. Lambers expressed his belief the architect for the new Fire Station would not possess the relevant expertise, but would be welcome to bid the project. Councilmember Osman questioned if having two architects planning the small site would present a challenge. Mr. Lambers stated the property will be bisected, so minimal overlap would be expected.

Mayor Dunn asked when the planning process timeline for the new Fire Station would begin. Mr. Lambers stated that with an assumption the former City Hall would remain at minimum and be somewhere on the site out of the way of construction, the planning process can start immediately.

Mayor Dunn stated based on comments made tonight, she hears the desire for the former City Hall to remain on site. Her preference would be to place the building on a foundation or crawl space from the beginning, rather than storing on a flatbed truck.

Mr. Lambers requested a motion be made to retain the former City Hall on the site for closure of the topic.

A motion for the former City Hall to remain at 9615 Lee Boulevard, located somewhere on the tract, was made by Councilmember Filla; seconded by Councilmember Azeltine.

Councilmember Harrison acknowledged receipt of resident concerns that the City has slighted north Leawood in regard to parks and numerous mentions that residents have not been offered the opportunity to provide input. She pointed out parks in the City are on property usually donated by developers and larger lots are typically found in north Leawood. There has not been an outright attempt to not have parks in north Leawood. The Governing Body has a regular meeting schedule [first and third Monday of month] with published agendas. The Governing Body, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and Planning Commissions welcome input. She encouraged the public to visit the City's website to view meeting agendas, and to contact Councilmembers or attend meetings to provide comments/wishes.

The motion was approved with a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Mr. Lambers confirmed to Mayor Dunn the Governing Body Work Session scheduled on December 3, 2018, for continued discussion would not be needed on this topic. He stated the next steps would be an RFQ [Request for Qualifications] for park consultants and to commence the City's planning process for the new Fire Station.

Councilmember Cain inquired if a motion would be needed to declare directions and to have options for the RFP/RFQ. Mr. Lambers stated a separate motion would not be necessary. He would ensure the RFQ explicitly states there would be multiple options under consideration, along with costs needed for each. Mayor Dunn pointed out the City had paid DeGasperi \$12,000 to \$14,000 in regard to options/cost for retaining the existing Fire Station. She stated it is imperative to have alternate costs for the park plans; having glass doors was not previously estimated.

Mr. Lambers confirmed to Councilmember Harrison the new Fire Station is designed for three bays, one of which is planned to house the antique fire truck.

Mayor Dunn thanked all participants for their attendance and interest in this important project. She stated there would be multiple future opportunities for additional public comment in this deliberate process.

Mayor Dunn reminded the Holiday Lighting ceremony at City Hall would be Monday, November 19, 2018. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 P.M.

Debra Harper, CMC, City Clerk

Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk