

CITY OF DEER PARK
710 EAST SAN AUGUSTINE STREET
DEER PARK, TEXAS 77536

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Minutes

of

A JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DEER PARK, TEXAS, THE DEER PARK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION HELD AT CITY HALL 710 EAST SAN AUGUSTINE STREET, DEER PARK, TEXAS ON JULY 23, 2018 BEGINNING AT 5:30 P.M., WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT:

JERRY MOUTON	MAYOR
SHERRY GARRISON	COUNCILWOMAN
TOMMY GINN	COUNCILMAN
BILL PATTERSON	COUNCILMAN
RON MARTIN	COUNCILMAN
RAE A. SINOR	COUNCILWOMAN

MEMBERS OF DEER PARK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PRESENT:

T. J. HAIGHT	PRESIDENT
SUE MAUK	SECRETARY
DOUG BURGESS	MEMBER
JEFF LAWTHOR	MEMBER

MEMBERS OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION PRESENT:

JO KEIFER	VICE CHAIRMAN
SHERRY REDWINE	MEMBER
ERIC RIPLEY	MEMBER

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

JAMES STOKES	CITY MANAGER
GARY JACKSON	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
SONIA ACOSTA	DEPUTY CITY SECRETARY
CHARLIE SANDBERG	PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Mayor Mouton opened the meeting on behalf of the City Council, President T. J. Haight opened on behalf of the Deer Park Community Development Corporation and Vice Chairman, Jo Kiefer, opened on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Commission at 5:30 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO THE DEER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

– Assistant City Manager, Gary Jackson began the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance. “I want to thank each of these three groups for coming out on this warm evening.”

Parks and Recreation Director, Charlie Sandberg gave background details of the Community Center project and highlighted critical information of the renovations and expansion proposed, to include an indoor pool included in the project plan. There are 6 million dollars allocated for the renovation and expansion of the project.

Mr. Jackson commented, “From inception of the project, it was planned, that in 2018, the design process would start as well as selling the debt on the bond. There are a number of deficiencies that are noted in the structural integrity of the building. We are not ready to sell the bonds yet. Once the bonds are sold, it is mandatory to spend a certain amount of money each year over a three year period and we are not in the position to do that yet. There are some critical decisions we have to make. We wanted to start the process in 2018, but it might take a little longer than that.”

Mr. Sandberg continued discussing the background details of the Community Center. The building opened up in 1975 with about 15,378 square feet in size. An addition of 8,755 square feet was constructed in 2007, yielding a total of approximately 24,133 square feet. The Earl Dunn Center was built west of the Community Center in 1982 with approximately 7,000 square feet. Building conditions varies with each component and in general, the facilities appear to have been reasonably maintained and are functioning currently as it was originally intended to. With the aging of the facilities, they have become outdated and somewhat structurally and functionally obsolete.

Mr. Sandberg commented, “Mr. Steven Springs with Brinkley,Sargent,Wiginton Architects, will be giving many details of the building observation survey conducted pertaining to the condition of the two buildings.”

Mr. Springs began his discussion with key site observations. The buildings are in an anchored corner with a large park which land locks the buildings and limits the expansion. The building observation survey indicates very little accessibility compliance with current accessibility standards. There are challenges relating to changes needing to be made due to the vintage aspect of the building. The building has a history of foundation movement over time. Movement is very evident at the addition point and at the point of connection between it and the original building. The structural movement is causing some problems exposing the building to water damage and creating ongoing maintenance challenges. Also issues with mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. Currently, those systems are operating fine, but noted by their age, they are toward the end of their life cycle. Permanent repairs to the structure would necessarily be highly invasive and lack 100% certainty. It would also be very expensive, and Deer Park should seriously consider replacement, versus repair of the Community Center. The cost and consequences of the disruption of services should

also factor into such consideration. A renovation would most likely interrupt the operations of the building. The three main issues to consider, that lead to a recommendation of replacement, are structural movement, life span of systems within the building and the functionality of the facility. The Earl Dunn building does not show to have as many issues as the Community Center, besides some systems nearing the end of their life cycle and the facility itself being outdated. No significant structural problems were detected for the Earl Dunn building. An assessment of the brick on the buildings was also discussed. There is displacement, which causes a risk of brick coming off the wall. Once water infiltration hits a certain degree, it starts rusting the brick ties, which ultimately cause the displacement. This assessment of the facilities are all visual and non-destructively. To learn more about if repair/renovation is the direction taken, there will be some kind of destructive analysis.

Mayor Mouton asked, "Can you give a brief description of what destructive analysis means? For example, the brick analysis, how are you going to determine if the brick ties are still there?"

Mr. Springs responded, "You cannot know what is going on in a concealed condition without revealing it. The only way to determine that is to take the brick off. The danger with that is, once you peel it off and there is a problem, the question arises, when do the dominos start falling?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "Are we in any position to quantify some kind of dollar amount if we chose not to want to replace the building? What will the costs be to keep the building functional and operational without doing any destructive analysis?"

Mr. Springs responded, "We have not that on our side. All you can really do is try to come up with a budget guess based on a square footage cost."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Could that be an option without a destructive analysis?"

City Manager, Jay Stokes, commented, "Let's go to all the bullet points and other problems and then we can talk about what some of the costs might be."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do we know internally what this would be valued at before we even get into cost analysis for fixing the building?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "We can look at the amount it is insured for, the replacement costs, but I do not know the dollar amount right off the top of my head."

Mr. Springs continued discussing other significant issues and emphasized that once a space or a component of a building is touched, that space or component will have to be brought up to code.

Mayor Mouton commented, "It might be wise to spend what it would cost on a new facility."

Councilwoman Sinor asked, "Are we surprised at all this?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "When the report came out in 2016, the decision was made to not move forward because we were not selling the bonds for the Community Center project until 2018 because there were so many projects already in progress."

Councilwoman Sinor asked, "How did we come up with 6 million dollars to renovate?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "That was already done before the study in 2016."

Councilwoman Sinor asked, "Does our engineering department get involved?"

Assistant Public Works Director, Brent Costlow responded, "If there is an issue, we do get involved. There were some plumbing issues before."

Mr. Stokes commented, "Whenever we set the budget, it was not based on this study. It was based on what we thought it would cost to try and get an expansion that included a pool. We have known for a long time that the building has problems. I do not think anyone thought it would be this extensive of issues."

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "It is better we get into this now, instead of waiting and starting the renovations process."

Mayor Mouton asked, "It hasn't gotten worse since 2016 has it?"

Mr. Springs responded, "I have to confess, that I have not walked through the building since 2016. We were involved in the Maxwell Center as well and did the assessment of both Community Center and the Maxwell Center buildings at the same time. The Community Center was tabled because it was not planned to be done for a couple of years, so the focus was put on the Maxwell Center. We did not do a needs assessment on the Community Center like we did at the Maxwell Center."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Is it getting worse?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Physically, no it has not."

Mr. Costlow commented, "There is nothing currently where you can see a dramatic difference. What we worry about is what we can't see."

Mr. Springs commented, "Whatever you decide today, you are still going to be challenged with a high maintenance building. You can continue to maintain, just know it will continue to be high maintenance because it is not going to stop moving."

Mr. Jackson commented, "In addition to the maintenance, if we went in and tried to start making improvements like putting in pools and we have leaking underground plumbing, those things will have to be addressed first."

Mr. Springs commented, "You would get more bang for your buck in terms of cost for square foot by doing a new structure or a significant addition to an existing structure, than doing incremental expansions. That can get expensive."

John Schmitz, of Schmitz Partners Engineering PLLC., commented, "It is my understanding that in the program, there are talks of a possible inside pool. From a structural standpoint, that would be a big mistake. There is extremely expansive soil under the building. This soil has a liquid limit of 40, the recommended liquid limit is 30, a plasticity index of the soil under the building is over 30 and the recommended plasticity should only be 20, so this soil is highly expansive. The only way you can keep the expansive soils from reacting is to keep down the moisture content. Pools have a tendency to leak, and that will be adding more danger to that expansive soil. In my professional opinion, I would take the pool out of the plans."

Mayor Mouton commented, "We have already promised some kind of a pool and it is already in the verbiage. There will be some kind of inside pool, available year round for water aerobics. I do value and appreciate your professional opinion because I do agree that it would be a major issue to try and incorporate it. Part of this discussion today is the beginning of the first steps to figure out where we go from here."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Are you saying not to put in any kind of pool or just an indoor pool?"

Mr. Schmitz responded, "An inside pool."

Board Member, Jeff Lawther asked, "Can you not separate the cost for the repairs and maintenance of the existing building from the expansion of the new facility? The repairs of the existing building are needing to be done whether we pass this tax or not. Does that money have to necessarily come from Type B tax or can you not separate the two and take the money from somewhere else?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "Yes. We can separate it and take the money from somewhere else."

Mr. Lawther commented, "You must have had some kind of an idea what you were going to spend the 6 million dollars on."

Mayor Mouton commented, "The logical next step is to figure out what we need to spend the 6 million dollars on. We do not have to spend it on any repairs. We can figure out many other options. We can figure out how to maintain the building if we do not want to replace it or we could ignore some of the problems, and then what would we do with the 6 million dollars."

Mr. Lawther asked, "Was there set plans drawn of what to do with the 6 million dollars?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "No, there was not. I think your point is valid, and we should put everything on the table. Do we just maintain the building, or try to fix it? I am throwing that out, not only to Council, but to Staff and other representatives as stakeholders in this process, to figure out a definitive direction."

Councilman Patterson asked, "From a legal standpoint, the 6 million dollars can only be spent on what was identified?"

Mr. Gary Jackson responded, "There are two different items that work together. One is the ballot language. There was no dollar amount on the ballot. The advice we were given by the bond counsel was to not have dollar amounts on the ballot for legal reasons. Council passed a resolution, and it merged the dollar amounts that were passed within fiscal parameters along with the ballot language of what the authorized projects were. Even though the ballot does not say a principal amount, the resolution still binds us to a dollar. Also, if you spent less on one project and you had savings, you could potentially use the money on another project."

Councilman Patterson commented, "It seems to me that the building is a loss. It seems to me, the right thing to do is to build a new building and to incorporate the pool and the expansion. To renovate that building, in my humble opinion, does not appear like the right thing to do."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Are we bound to stay within the park parameter?"

Mr. Jackson responded, "You couldn't venture off from the Dow Park area."

Councilman Martin asked, "The language for the renovation and expansion would apply if we do what is recommended, even if it is totally rebuilding, providing it is in the park area?"

Councilman Patterson asked, "I am assuming we would be free to move the programs to other city facilities that we have in town?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "We have contractual obligations to programs and instructors and also rentals that are booked at least a year in advance."

Councilman Patterson asked, "I am guessing we will figure all that out."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Where do we go from here in regards to Council? Do we want to explore the analysis of what it is going to take to repair the building to give it an extended life?"

Councilwoman Garrison responded, "No, I do not."

Councilman Patterson commented, "No. I think we are going to come up with the same conclusion as we did with City Hall."

Mayor Mouton asked, "How much will it cost to do the analysis?"

Mr. Jackson responded, "Getting to the dollar amount will mean we will have to go do some destructive testing. What is entailed in that testing is if we tore off some brick, there is a chance it may all the come off. What happens if the wall behind the brick has issues too?"

Councilman Patterson commented, "We have recommendations from the experts, saying that we should not move forward with trying to fix the building. The bottom line is that the building is broke."

Mr. Jackson commented, "It would be very likely you would be throwing money away."

Councilwoman Sinor commented, "Can the money legally be rolled over?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "It absolutely can be used for that."

Mayor Mouton commented, "There are some different aspects of things we can do."

2. RECESSED/RECONVENED – Mayor Mouton recessed the meeting at 6:30 p.m. to allow the opening of the Deer Park Community Development Corporation regular meeting and reconvened the joint meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Mayor Mouton commented, "We need to try and give some kind of a definitive direction of what we would like to see, where we want to go from here and narrow it down to some items we would like to explore to try and give Staff, the architectural firms and engineering firms a chance to give us answers that could help us make a decision."

Councilman Patterson commented, "I would like to move forward with constructing a new building and to try and incorporate all the things we need to incorporate."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What do we do with the 6 million dollars?"

Councilman Patterson responded, "I thought we could use it."

Mayor Mouton responded, "We can, but it won't be enough."

Councilman Patterson commented, "If it was me, I would start working on a project plan that can tell me how much it is going to cost."

Mr. Stokes commented, "In the interim, we could be saving the money. There is nothing that says we have to borrow that 6 million dollars. If it takes a couple of years to figure it out, we could be saving that money. If it ultimately comes up to 6 million dollars, we wouldn't have to borrow it, we would already have the 6 million dollars."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Going back to the pool option, could that be separated and done with a portion of that money if we figure out a plan and have that as a secondary action item to explore? For the wet and dry side, since there are two different components, which it is in the verbiage, shouldn't we be at least be on two different tracks of exploring options and cost?"

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Shouldn't we know at least how much the dry side is going to cost before we decide to separate the two?"

Councilwoman Sinor commented, "We can't just say we decided because we know it is going to be real expensive. We have to have a number."

Mr. Springs commented, "We still have our needs assessment portion of the original project that we haven't done yet. I would suggest, with that remaining fee, to try and develop several conceptual budget scenarios. At least, that would give you some notion on where to start prioritizing for what is needed in the community. We could frame conceptual budget scenarios for you. It sounds like that was one of the challenges you had on prior projects, a budget that was not based on a scope of work. Now, we can develop various scopes of work and the budget it would take to execute that."

Mr. Stokes commented, "One thing to think about, is who do you want to do that? Do you want a committee?"

Councilwoman Sinor commented, "I think you have to have Staff involved."

Mr. Springs commented, "It is not in our current fee to be down here doing a bunch of public meetings."

Councilwoman Sinor commented, “If we do stick with the renovation of that building, what would that renovation look like and the cost to that.”

Councilwoman Garrison commented, “A new building not a renovation.”

Councilwoman Sinor commented, “You can’t just tell citizens you don’t know.”

Councilwoman Garrison responded, “I think they can look at the report.”

Mayor Mouton commented, “I think it would behoove us to have some kind of a dollar figure and try to attach an appraised value to the balance worth of the building and where we exceed that to get it up to code. Even though I think it would be best not to do the destructive analysis to find that number.”

After a discussion, it was agreed upon to form a committee with eight members to be part of the study analysis for the Community Center.

3. ADJOURN – Mayor Mouton adjourned the workshop meeting on behalf of City Council, President Haight adjourned on behalf of the Deer Park Community Development Corporation and Vice Chairman Kiefer adjourned on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Commission at 6:42 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Shannon Bennett, TRMC
Deputy City Secretary

Jerry Mouton, Mayor
City Deer Park City Council

T. J. Haight, President
Deer Park Community Development
Corporation

Jo Kiefer, Vice Chairman
Parks and Recreation Commission