

City Council Work Session
March 1, 2010

Present: Mayor William Isley, Herbert Toles, Wayne Tucker, Katrina Hennings, John Coyne, David Jones and Brian Skinner.

Absent: Hugh Marlin

Mayor Isley opened the work session at 5:00 PM. He stated there was an open air permit request submitted by ESB Group, and asked if the Council would be agreeable to amending the agenda for the regular meeting to include the request. All agreed.

Mayor Isley stated that the first visitor was the auditor, Ben Vance who would give a brief synopsis of the audit report for year ending 2009. Mayor Isley stated that he had discussed the possibility of a 6 month analysis, to be done in or around the middle of April, in order to better evaluate the City's current financial condition. The Council agreed that this would be beneficial. Mayor Isley then turned the floor over to Mr. Vance, who stated that the 6 month analysis would help determine the best options to cure shortfalls the city is experiencing. In discussing the audit report, he stated that the City did a good job of managing revenue loss due to the downed economy in 2009, but 2010 seemed to be the year to be more concerned. He stated the water department was the greatest concern at this time. He said the utilities department was the largest revenue source but the largest expense as well. He recommended that the water billing be brought back under the supervision of the City Clerk. He stated the water department had been operating in the red for several months, and in order to gain back internal accounting controls, moving the water billing back under the City Clerk's management would be the best option. Herbert Toles asked if the issues discussed last year about the water department had been corrected. Mr. Vance answered that those issues had been rectified. He stated that the software had been updated, which created some billing issues, but the remaining problem is that the City's accounting personnel can only see the moneys collected and not the moneys being billed. He suggested that the software systems in the water department and the accounting department be synched to gain back internal controls. Mayor Isley asked Mr. Vance if there was a certain amount of money that should be kept in reserves. Mr. Vance stated that there should be enough to cover daily operations in an emergency situation. David Jones asked if he thought the City should be considering developing a youth sports complex. Mr. Vance stated that he would have to take a hard look at the figures, but the main concern was the significant debt load obligations that the City holds.

Herbert Toles stated that he had received a call from a property owner on Elaine Street, who informed him that they would be closing off the end of the road. City Attorney, James Hill, stated that the City does not own the street, so the City would not be able to legally do anything in regard to this matter.

Mayor Isley stated the next item of discussion was the proposal for the police department building. Police Chief, Greg Charles, stated that the police department has outgrown the current building, and explained the need for a larger facility. Mayor Isley stated the proposal was broken down into phases that could be implemented by phases or as a whole, but it would cost less to do it all at once. He recognized several police officers who were present, and stated they had taken the initiative to do a fundraiser, selling boston butts and hams, for this cause. The floor was turned over to Architectural Engineer, Kyle Franklin. He explained the entire project would use the existing building on Walker Drive with additions on both sides for locker rooms, lobby, restrooms, conference room, a fortified evidence room, interview room, observation room, a chief's office, lieutenant's office, sergeant's offices, armory, file room, work-out room, break room, and an open office upstairs for 14 officers. He explained if the whole project could not be done at once, the next option would be to renovate the existing structure and the upstairs would

be open office space for 4 sergeants. Another option is just to renovate the ground floor and prepare the second floor for future renovation, because that would be near impossible to do later.

Then one wing at a time could be added. He gave cost estimates that he consulted with a general contractor on, but stated those would only be good for about 4 or 5 months due to changes in the economy. There was discussion on the cost difference and safety factors of brick versus siding. James Hill stated that these prices are only estimates because the job would have to be bid out. Brian Skinner stated that he would like to check on possible grants for this project. Mayor Isley and Chief Charles both stated that they had already checked on grants, and there is nothing available at this time. Wayne Tucker asked if the existing roof would remain, and Mr. Franklin stated it would and some added for the wings.

Mr. Franklin also discussed the library project. He said he had a preliminary meeting with the Library Foundation last week to begin gathering information to do a projection by. He said potential sites would need to be identified within the next 6 weeks.

Work session adjourned at 6:10 PM.

ATTEST:

Helen Williams

Mayor, William Isley, Jr.

Minutes taken by Jennifer Disker.