

Minutes of the Independence City Commission's February 20, 2019 Special Meeting

The Independence City Commission met for a special meeting on February 20, 2019 at 5:30 P.M. in the Veterans Room at the Memorial Hall. Mayor Louis Ysusi, Commissioner Gary Hogsett and Commissioner Leonhard Caflisch were present. Others present included:

City Staff

Craig Whitehead, City Manager
Kelly Passauer, Assistant City Manager
Michael Borovetz, Director of Finance
Jeff Chubb, City Attorney
David Schwenker, City Clerk/City Treasurer
David Cowan, Director of Public Safety
Shawn Wallis, Fire Chief
April Nutt, Director of Housing Authority
Jerry Harrison, Police Chief
Terry Lybarger, Director of Utilities
Mike Passauer, Public Works Director
Barb Beurskens, Park and Zoo Director

Visitors

Ellie Davis
Vance Kelley
Andy Pitts
Dean Hayse
Jerry Bright
Judy Ysusi
Tim White
Jon Risner
Drew Demo
Tony Royse
Larry McHugh
Brian Beecham

Call to Order

Mayor Ysusi called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Worksession

A. Discussion of City Hall and Public Safety Facilities, Phase II.

Andy Pitts with TreanorHL gave a summary of the steering committee's and TreanorHL's work up to present day. Mr. Pitts also clarified some misconceptions that the Commissioners had regarding the costs of Option B, which the total cost estimate in the Steering Committee's report [\$14,878,043] was verified as accurate by Mr. Pitts.

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Commissioner Hogsett questioned why some committee members no longer support the project. Mayor Ysusi stated the main thing the committee was in favor of was the 1916 City Hall building as an anchor for downtown and needed to be renovated and reused and a facility needed to be built to house public safety. The committee was also informed by the facilitator that the cost and size of the project could always be massaged down that could be more realistic for the community.

Andy Pitts stated that no committee members were thrilled about the cost and Treanor did not want to present any costs that were not accurate for the scope that is being talked about. He then added that the City would ultimately need to decide the size and dollar amount to fit within the guidelines set by the committee.

Commissioner Cafilisch commented that to get the best solution you can't place restrictions in the beginning and now we need to figure out how to meet the need going forward. Going to the next phase we need to look realistically where is the money coming from.

Craig Whitehead mentioned the report that was presented at the January 31, 2019 Special Commission Meeting and emphasized that the report did not look at raising property taxes but focused on repurposing the special use sales tax.

Mayor Ysusi stressed the need to sell the idea of repurposing the special use sales tax to the voters and if they don't approve it then we don't have a plan b.

Commissioner Cafilisch talked about cost savings after moving out of building d and paying off existing bonds for streets and how those savings could be used to pay for this project as well. He also talked about technology advancements that would require less space in the future and keeping our plan within a manageable square footage and keeping an eye toward the future.

City Manager Whitehead talked about the space study and questioned how by reducing the square footage needs that could be accomplished without cramping the facility.

Commissioner Cafilisch stated that was what the preliminary design phase is for, to take the spaces and try to fit them in. He mentioned for an example that the Commission room doesn't need to go back into the building.

City Manager Whitehead noted that the Commission room was multifunctional that it is used for municipal court and as a training or conference room.

Commissioner Cafilisch discussed having multiple floor plans and alternatives to consider that could lower the cost and make it more feasible for the citizens.

Mayor Ysusi talked about having facilities that meet the needs of staff but still have funds available to meet the needs for streets, ADA and addressing facility issues in other city buildings.

City Manager Whitehead explained that it is not the goal to eat up special use sales tax funds for this one project.

Commissioner Cafilisch asked Mr. Pitts and Mr. Kelley if they see any problem with quality space in the 1916 City Hall building. Mr. Kelley did not see any problem. Commissioner Cafilisch asked if they could present different options and possibly adding additional phases to the project. Mr. Kelley asked what specific options the Commissioners would like to look at.

After some discussion it was decided that Treanor would look at two sites for the Fire/EMS building and report on the advantages and disadvantages and if there are limitations to those sites.

Commissioner Hogsett inquired about the possibility of putting the project on the November ballot.

Commissioner Cafilisch stated that they should get the preliminary design, evaluate the options, educate the public and give them time to look over the project and give feedback.

Mr. Kelley stated that they could come back later with an official proposal for Phase II and bid results for Phase I so the Commission could have the whole picture in front of them

B. Concerns and issues that are pertinent.

Commissioner Cafilisch discussed having meetings with the County Commissioners to discuss ways of combining resources to save the taxpayers money.

City Manager Whitehead indicated he could extend an invitation to the County Commissioners for the March worksession.

Mayor Ysusi stated that he was trying to arrange a date to have legal counsel from the Kansas League of Municipalities present an overview of the Commission's roles and responsibilities at a future meeting.

Adjournment

Motion:

Commissioner Cafilisch moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hogsett seconded.

Aye: Ysusi, Cafilisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

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Louis Ysusi, Mayor

Leonhard Caflisch, Commissioner

Gary Hogsett, Commissioner

Attest:

City Clerk/Treasurer