

Tuesday - July 15, 1997 - 3:00 p.m.

Worksession

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Barbara Field; Councilman M. Charles Cloninger; Councilman Edward C. Hay Jr.; Councilman Thomas G. Sellers; Councilman James J. Skalski; and Councilman Charles R. Worley; City Attorney Robert W. Oast Jr.; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

CONSENT:

Park Avenue Subdivision Speed Study

Summary: The City Traffic Engineer has performed the necessary traffic analyses associated with the following locations and is seeking authorization from the City Council to change these speed limits.

Add to 20 MPH

- (1) Parkridge Court (entirety) (4) Thistle Knoll Court (entirety)
- (2) Clubhouse Court (entirety) (5) Briar Knoll Court (entirety)
- (3) Creekside Court (entirety) (6) Gatehouse Court (entirety)

Add to 25 MPH

- (1) Park Avenue (entirety)

These locations were reviewed over a period of time and the appropriate speed analyses were conducted.

1. Parkridge Court, Clubhouse Court, Creekside Court, Thistle Knoll Court, Briar Knoll Court and Gatehouse Court

A Speed Study was conducted along these streets in the Park Avenue Subdivision per the request of the citizens of this area. The existing speed limit is 27 MPH. The residential nature of these roadways as well as their widths indicate that the speed limit should be reduced to 20 MPH. The Asheville Police Department concurs with our recommendations.

2. Park Avenue

A Speed Study was conducted along Park Avenue per the request of the citizens of this area and the City of Asheville Police Department. The existing speed limit is 27 MPH. The Speed Study indicates that the 85th percentile speed is 33 MPH and the pace speed range is 21-35 MPH. The residential nature of this roadway and its width suggest that the speed limit be reduced to 25 MPH. The Asheville Police Department concurs with our recommendation.

The Public Works Department recommends the approval of these additions to the speed limit ordinances.

Civic Center Parking Garage Repairs

Summary: The consideration of the selection of a contractor to perform repairs

on the Civic Center Parking Garage structure.

City staff prepared bid specifications and cost estimates for repairs and maintenance for the Civic Center Parking Garage. The scope of work was outlined as follows: -2-

The proposal includes the items listed below:

- Repair concrete;
- Seal all cracks in concrete;
- Pressure clean and seal all deck surfaces;
- Install vertical and horizontal expansion joints;
- Clean and caulk joint between concrete floor and vertical barrier panels; and
- Repair concrete curbs.

* Bid specifications call for additional work described as painting of parking deck ceilings, surface coatings on columns and walls, and parking lot striping. (See bid results chart below.)

In April 1996, a total of 32 advertisement for bid letters were sent out, including 13 to certified minority businesses registered with the City. Advertisement letters were also sent to the City's Minority Business Office, the Asheville Business Development Center, and other similar business resource organizations. Six bid proposals were received, none from certified minority businesses. The results are listed below:

Firm Name	Base Bid
Chamberlain Co. Inc.	\$ 164,434.00
Salem Contracting & Waterproofing	146,003.00
Construction Adhesives Bonding Inc.	219,358.75
Sigma Construction Co. Inc.	186,971.21
Carolina Preservation & Restoration Co. Inc.	142,317.00
* G.E.M. Constructors Inc.	1,033,161.00

After review of these bid proposals with the Finance Department, who has daily operational management authority for the City's parking structures, it was determined that Carolina Preservation & Restoration Co., Inc., of Asheville, the only bidder with a current City privilege license, would be selected as the lowest responsible bidder. It was then determined that City Staff would seek Council approval to enter into a contract to perform work listed in its proposal for \$142,857.00.

Shortly thereafter, City staff determined that other funding options could be available for the parking deck repairs and put the contract processes on hold until March 17, 1997, at which time CPRC was recontacted. CPRC then submitted a revised base bid of \$143, 671 for Items 1 - 31 listed in Exhibit B of the contract.

On May 8, 1997, it was determined by the City Attorney's office, who had consulted with the North Carolina Institute of Government, that the bids from

1996 for restoration and repairs to the Civic Center Parking Garage were now "stale" as they were not guaranteed for one year or more, and that North Carolina law required that the City rebid the project.

The project was immediately readvertised for bids. A total of 39 advertisement for bid letters were sent out, including 13 to certified minority businesses registered with the City. Advertisement letters were also sent to the City's Minority Business Office, the Asheville Business Development Center, and other similar business resource organizations. Five bid proposals were received, none from certified minority businesses. The results are listed below:

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Firm Name	Base Bid
Volunteer Floor Company Inc.	\$ 129,727.17
Carolina Preservation & Restoration Co. Inc.	150,013.85
Chamberlain Co. Inc.	167,745.40
Salem Contracting & Waterproofing Inc.	199,113.00
Construction Adhesives Bonding Inc.	260,340.00

Staff recommends Council approval of the lowest responsible bidder, Volunteer Floor Company Inc. of Knoxville, Tennessee, and requests Council direct the City Manager to enter into a contract for \$129,727.17 for repair of the Civic Center Parking Garage.

Senior Games Grant

Summary: The consideration of applying for a grant, in the amount of \$500, to assist local programs to serve more participants and obtain more visibility for the local Senior Games Program.

Funds are available through the North Carolina Senior Games to provide a year-round health promotion and education program for adults age 55 and older. The City of Asheville wishes to apply for funding to develop a rack card and a speaker's bureau for the Asheville-Buncombe Senior Games.

The Asheville-Buncombe Senior Games are designed to provide athletic and cultural arts activities for adults ages 55 and older. In 1997, 822 people participated in the program. The program included 55 athletic events and 33 artistic events in the categories of Literary, Visual, Heritage, and Performing Arts. Grant funds will be used to implement a rack card and speaker's bureau to promote the Asheville-Buncombe Senior Games. The amount of the grant request is \$500.

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends approval of the application for grants funds through the North Carolina Senior Games.

Amboy Road Greenway Grant

Summary: Funds are available through the State of North Carolina, Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources in the National Recreational Trails Fund Program (NRTFP) from the Federal Highway Administration to provide trails for public use in North Carolina.

The Amboy Road Greenway represents the City of Asheville's next phase of a major greenway system being developed along the French Broad and Swannanoa

Rivers. Phase I was completed in 1994 with the completion of French Broad River Park. Phase II was completed in 1996 with the completion of the second half mile loop of trail in the park. French Broad River Park was funded through a partnership between the City, RiverLink, and CP&L.

Phase III, Amboy Road Park, is in the early stage of development and will provide a river front park featuring a boat launch, fishing areas, and support areas for the growing activities in the region. The City of Asheville has been awarded a grant for \$20,000 from the North Carolina Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission to assist in the design of the park and has committed another \$100,000 for the construction. -4-

RiverLink has received a grant for \$30,000 through the Pigeon River Fund to build boardwalks over the wetlands of the greenway.

Phase IV, Amboy Road Greenway, is part of the overall plan to complete another section of greenway on the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers. The cost of the project is approximately \$65,000. The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting \$30,000 in grant funds which would be matched by 50% of the cost by our crew's labor, equipment, and project supervision.

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends the City Manager to apply for and enter into this agreement.

Accept Recommendations of Regional Water Authority to Award Contract for East Asheville/East Buncombe Pipeline Replacement Program

Summary: The consideration of adopting a resolution awarding the contract to the lowest responsible bidder, Cooper Construction Company Inc. for \$694,797.00.

The Engineering Department has developed construction plans for the Pipeline Replacement Program Phase II - Contract B, East Asheville/East Buncombe Water Line Project. The engineer's estimate for this project is in the amount \$804,541.00.

The project was advertised for one month. On Tuesday, May 27, 1997, the Engineering Department received 4 bids for the project. The construction time for this project is identified as 150 calendar days in the contract documents. Funds in the amount of \$788,000.00 are budgeted in the Regional Water Authority's Capital Projects Ordinance No. 92-17 (29 Fund).

This project was presented before the Regional Water Authority of Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson on June 24, 1997, at which time they recommended awarding the bid.

Staff recommendations that City Council accept a resolution awarding the bid for Pipeline Replacement Program Phase II - Contract B, East Asheville/East Buncombe Water Line Project - Contract E-422 to the responsible low bidder, Cooper Construction Company Inc. and authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary agreements and contracts.

Accept Recommendations of Regional Water Authority to amend Capital Project Ordinance to Appropriate Funds for the Woodside Hills Project

Summary: The consideration of a budget amendment amending Capital Project Ordinance 82-25 to provide funding in West Area Annexation for Woodside Hills in the amount of \$240,000.

By Resolution 82-25 dated October 5, 1982, the Authority authorized and

budgeted for various capital projects to be funded by investment earnings, contributions from other funds and appropriated fund balance.

According to the Water Agreement, the Authority is required to fund annexation water improvements. Woodside Hills Subdivision is located off Asbury Road in the recently annexed West Area. The Authority appropriated approximately \$850,000 for water system improvements for this area in accordance with the 1988 Plan of Service prepared by Black and Veatch. Subsequent construction contracts and engineering services for these water system improvements totaled -5-

approximately \$624,000. This resulted in a surplus of approximately \$226,000, which has subsequently been transferred to other capital projects.

A part of Black and Veatch's plan of service included the installation of fire hydrants at key locations in Woodside Hills. During the construction contract, existing 2-inch waterlines were discovered at these locations. These 2-inch waterlines will not support a fire hydrant and additional 6-inch waterlines must now be installed to improve fire protection at an estimated cost of \$240,000. Approval of this budget amendment will provide the funding required for this additional construction contract and the engineering services associated with it.

Regional Water Authority approved the Woodside Hills Project on June 24, 1997.

Approve amending and restating Capital Project Ordinance 82-25 in order to provide funding in West Area Annexation for Woodside Hills.

At the request of Councilman Skalski, City Manager Westbrook said that he would provide him with a report on the debt of the Water Fund.

Mental Health Managed Care for City Employees

Summary: The consideration to extend an agreement approved in February 1996 to provide mental health managed care to the employee benefits program.

Last year the City decided to put together a HMO look-alike feature for mental health, drug, and alcohol treatment under its employee benefit program. No such programs were commercially available in the community at that time, and a program was put together for the City by Provider's Care Network (PCN (of Asheville) to meet this need.

The success of the program, and the dollar savings to the benefit plan have been exceptional. The proposed agreement will continue that service for two more years.

The cost for this agreement is estimated at \$15,450 and sufficient funds are currently budgeted in the 46 fund for fringe benefit costs.

Staff recommends approval of the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute the proposed agreement with PCN.

Driveway Access Improvements at Airport

Summary: The Asheville Airport is situated on land owned by the City of Asheville and leased to the Airport Authority pursuant to a Lease Agreement dated July 1, 1980. The Authority is undertaking improvements to the driveway and access road at the airport consisting of lengthening the outbound driveway, relocating its intersection with State Road 280 approximately a quarter mile southwest to the signalized intersection with Fanning Bridge Road, and creating

a circular drive with in the airport compound. The present location of the exit is on a curve on a high speed fourlane road and left turns are difficult to negotiate. Requests to the NCDOT to signalize the current exit location have been denied, but the State has indicated that it will make appropriate changes to the Fanning Bridge Road signal if the exit is relocated.

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Because the intersection will be on State Road 280, the State requires as part of the access permit application that an agreement be entered into whereby construction will be carried out in a certain manner, and the completed driveway will comply and be maintained in accordance with certain standards. The agreement also holds the DOT harmless from damages arising by reason of the construction.

The Lease Agreement provides that the Airport Authority may make capital improvements "for aeronautical purposes and purposes incidental thereto... provided that authority first obtain written approval thereafter by the City."

The Agreement establishing the Airport Authority provides that the Authority may enter into contracts providing for improvements at the Airport, so it appears that the Authority may enter into the Agreement with the DOT. The DOT apparently requires that the property owner also execute the Agreement.

This resolution accomplishes two things: (1) gives the City's written approval to the proposed access improvements as required by the Lease; and (2) authorizes the City Manager to execute the Agreement with DOT.

To the extent that the DOT agreement shifts to or creates any legal responsibility for the City as the owner or the Authority as the lessee/applicant, this responsibility would be the Airport Authority's, as the Lease provides specifically that the Authority is responsible for management, operation, regulation and maintenance of the Airport. I have suggested that the Agreement be modified to indicate that the Authority is the lessee and that the City is the lessor of the property.

Approval of the resolution is recommended.

Agreement with NC DOT re: Sweeten Creek/I-40 Sidewalks and Budget Amendment

Summary: On September, 10, 1996 City Council authorized the City Manger to send a letter to the NC DOT outlining the City's agreement to participate in sidewalks on I-40/Sweeten Creek Roadway Interchange. The NC DOT's preliminary estimate was \$37,000 for the sidewalk. The City's portion of the original cost of the sidewalk was 40% or \$14,800. The final estimate for the construction of the sidewalk is \$38,900, based upon a final design prepared by NC DOT, with the City's portion being \$15,560.

The sidewalk would extend from Roberts Road to approximately 200 feet north of I-40. This includes 1,290 square yards of sidewalks. Construction is scheduled to begin fall of 1997.

Staff recommends that City Council authorize the City Manager to sign the Municipal Agreement for improvements at the interchange of Sweeten Creek and I-40. Staff also recommends that City Council appropriate \$15,560 for the City's portion of the sidewalk improvements at the same intersection.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place these

items on the next formal City Council agenda.

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PRESENTATION OF DIRECTORY COVER COMMEMORATING ASHEVILLE'S BICENTENNIAL

Mr. Chuck Reiley, Mr. Mike Erich, and Ms. Sharon Post, BellSouth representatives of BellSouth, presented City Council with a framed 1997 Directory cover commemorating Asheville's bicentennial.

LAND PURCHASE ON BROADVIEW DRIVE

Mr. Sherman Fearing, Housing Development Analyst, said that the City needs to appropriate funds to purchase vacant property on Broadview Drive for the development of single-family, owner-occupied homes.

On February 14, 1997, the City of Asheville closed on the sale of 17.282 acres of vacant land adjacent to the Meadows Apartments. The City had planned to develop this tract into a subdivision of single-family, owner-occupied affordable housing units. Since there were access problems, the City decided to sell and look elsewhere for an alternate site. The proceeds of \$200,000 will be used to purchase 12.23 acres of unimproved land on Broadview Drive in Oakley.

In May 1997, the City executed an Offer to Purchase and Contract, subject to Council's approval, for the Broadview Drive property. The total price of the contract was \$190,000. The property has been appraised at \$183,500 and the sellers have agreed to sell at this price. The City proposes to develop the Broadview Drive site into a subdivision of single-family, owner-occupied affordable housing units. This property is zoned RS-8 under the UDO. The above \$200,000 will be used for the Broadview Drive property as follows:

- a. Capital Outlay Land Acquisition \$188,000
(to cover property purchase and closing costs)
- b. Professional Services \$ 12,000

Community Development staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

LEASE OF GROVE ARCADE BUILDING

City Attorney Bob Oast said that he is requesting consideration of a resolution authorizing the disposition by lease of the Grove Arcade Building to the Grove Arcade Public Market Foundation ("GAPMF"), and of a budget ordinance amendment appropriating money toward the rehabilitation of the structure.

The Grove Arcade Building was constructed at the beginning of this century as a shopping arcade and was actually used as one until taken over by the Federal Government during World War II. The Federal Government used it as an office building for about 50 years, and the building has been vacant since 1995.

Since the building became vacant, the City and other organizations and entities in the City have been exploring ways to preserve, restore and reuse the Building. For at least the last year, the City has been working with Public Interest Projects and the GAPMF, and most recently with GAPMF only, to

rehabilitate and use the Arcade as a public market, with a mixture of commercial/office/residential uses on the upper floors.

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The first step in this process was for the City to acquire the building. Initially, the City explored the possibility of an outright conveyance to an entity that would operate the Arcade, but this was not legally possible without paying the government for the property. Under the National Monument Act, the City was able to acquire the Arcade essentially at no cost, but had to agree to rehabilitate the structure and to use it in accordance with certain laws and regulations. The City and GAPMF have been working with the General Services Administration to make sure that the proposed use meets all legal requirements.

Since January, the City and GAPMF have been working on the terms of a Lease Agreement and a Preservation and Operation Agreement by which GAPMF would lease the building from the City, and would assume responsibility for all operational aspects of it, and for compliance with federal laws and regulations. The City and GAPMF have agreed on the substantive terms of these instruments.

In order to give effect to the Agreement between the City and GAPMF, Council needs to adopt an authorizing resolution. The law provides that leases for longer than 10 years shall be treated as sales of real property, and further provides that historically or architecturally significant properties may be disposed of to nonprofit corporations by private negotiation and sale. Accordingly the resolution authorizes the disposition of the Arcade to GAPMF, and outlines the general terms of the proposed transaction. A notice of this resolution must be published at least 10 days prior to the date of the transaction. The law further requires that Council adopt a resolution authorizing a lease, and requires for 10 days advance notice of Council's intent to adopt the resolution.

Accordingly, a resolution is attached that authorizes the disposition of the Arcade, which because of the length of the lease term is required to be treated as a sale, and directs the Clerk to publish a notice of (1) the intended disposition, and (2) of Council's intent to give specific authorization for the lease at a regular meeting.

Part of the agreement with GAPMF is that Council will follow up on its commitment in an earlier resolution to appropriate \$100,000.00 toward the improvements to the Arcade. An ordinance amending the budget in accordance with the previous resolution is also necessary.

If Council intends to authorize and proceed with the proposed transaction with GAPMF, adoption of the resolution and budget ordinance amendment is recommended.

City Attorney Oast responded to questions from Council as they related to taxes, improvements to streets and sidewalks around the Grove Arcade, the working relationship between the City and the GAPMF, and most of all, parking.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Field, City Manager Westbrook said that the City has been negotiating exclusively with the GAPMF.

City Manager Westbrook said that in the near future there will be a joint meeting with City Council and the GAPMF to officially authorize the signing of the lease.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place these items on the next formal City Council agenda.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

Mr. John Scaralia, City Business & Development Manager, said that City Council set a public hearing to consider the City's participation in site development improvements requested by J.L. de Ball-Girmes of America, Inc.

J.L. de Ball-Girmes of America, Inc. is looking to locate a supplementary production unit at its existing site on Old Charlotte Highway. Plans call for renovation of 45,000 sq. ft. of the existing 178,000 sq. ft. building in order to begin manufacturing. The company is looking to significantly expand within two years, and plans to accommodate 12 -16 employees by July 1, 1998; up to 50 by January 1, 2000. Wages will average \$9 -12.00 per hour.

The firm plans to invest a total of \$7 million within two years in the renovation and equipment upgrades for this operation; and \$2 million by July 1, 1998. Included will be repairs and upgrades to the roof, HVAC capacity, and plumbing and electrical improvements, as well as major machinery and equipment purchases. Staff has prepared an agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the City's participation.

The agreement consists of the City entering into a contract whereby the City would contribute \$51,300 provided the terms of the contract are complied with by J.L. de Ball-Girmes of America Inc. The conditions include: the requirement of the corporation creating a minimum of 12 new jobs by July 1, 1998, with wages at \$9-12 per hour; investment of \$2,000,000 by July 1, 1998; and expansion to accommodate 50 employees. The guarantee for the City is through a Letter of Credit. The payback period for the City based on this financial assistance will be 4.5 years.

Staff recommends setting a public hearing to consider the City's participation in site development improvements requested by J.L. de Ball-Girmes of America, Inc.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

BOOST REPORT

Mr. Irby Brinson, Parks & Recreation Director, said that during the budget work session in May, 1997, with City Council, Council gave approval to continue the study regarding the Parks and Recreation proposal relating to the BOOST Transportation System. Over the past month, staff has met on several occasions with representatives from Buncombe County and the State of North Carolina to investigate this proposal. In the meantime, the Asheville Transit Authority has renewed the Paratransit contract with Laidlaw Transit Service through June 30, 1998. During a meeting with the Transportation Project Consultant through the Division of Public Transportation for the Department of Transportation, discussion centered around a possible study of the entire transportation system throughout the City and the County. This study would include a review the proposal presented by Parks and Recreation as well as a review of the current system being used County-wide. Ninety percent of the funding for this project would be paid for by the State of North Carolina with the remainder being paid by the City and the County. It is anticipated that the City's cost associated

with this study would be between \$3,000 - \$5,000.

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The Parks and Recreation Department recommends working with the State of North Carolina and Buncombe County to solicit a consultant to study the transportation system within the City and the County. Staff also recommends City Council consider a budget amendment, in the amount of \$5,000, for the City's cost associated with this study.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

STEPHENS-LEE FINANCING

Mr. Irby Brinson, Parks & Recreation Director, said that based upon Council's directive at the July 8, 1997, City Council meeting to expedite the renovation project for the Stephens-Lee Community Center, staff recommends the following steps in order to expedite the letting of contracts for the renovation of the Stephens-Lee Community Center. Current cash is available from the City Hall roof and Municipal Building renovation projects to adequately fund the anticipated contract costs for Stephens-Lee renovations. This contract could be let as early as August and construction could begin as early as September 15. This will allow for this project to begin prior to the other three major projects that are currently anticipated. The certificates of participation will be sold to fund the Municipal Building renovation, the City Hall roof, and the Old Water Maintenance Building. According to the Finance Director, these three projects would make a competitive package for the sale of COP's.

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends City Council approval of a budget amendment to reappropriate a total of \$1.4 million from the City Hall roof repairs and the Municipal Building renovations into the Stephens-Lee renovation project.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

FIRE STATION 4/POLICE RESOURCE CENTER IN SKYLAND

Fire Chief John Rukavina said that in January, 1995, the City entered into an agreement with Skyland Fire Department, Inc. for a 99-year lease of property for construction of a new fire station. Subsequent to that agreement, the City retained Barney Woodard, AIA, to design, specify and solicit bids for "Asheville Fire Station 4" (and, later, for additional space for an Asheville Police Department Resource Center). Based on Woodard's estimates at the time, approximately \$430,000 was budgeted for this facility, with a potential addition of up to \$100,000 for the Police Resource Center.

On June 5, 1997, the bids solicited by Woodard were opened and tabulated. The low bid (not including a construction contingency or professional fees) was \$784,000. There are insufficient capital improvement funds available to make up the difference between the amount budgeted and available funds.

Staff would like to negotiate with the architect to redesign the station (with expansion opportunities in the future) to one bay (not two); living quarter space for one company; and minor revisions to the space of the Police Resource

Center.

Staff recommends (1) that City Council reject bids for Fire Station 4/Police Community Center due to their being significantly over -11-

the architect's estimate and budgeted funds; and (2) that City Council direct the City Manager to cause to be prepared an agreement with Barney Woodard to redesign Fire Station 4/Police Community Center on a reduced scale, and in a manner that would allow for future expansion as needed.

Vice-Mayor Field suggested going out for bids again since the bidding environment may have changed. She was concerned about cutting the station down to two bays given the growth in South Asheville. She also suggested a cheaper alternative than a full metal building.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Field, City Manager Westbrook said that the price per square foot was \$82.00. He felt the budget was the problem, not the bidding process. He explained that \$430,000 was budgeted for just the Fire Station 4, then \$100,000 was added to include the Police Resource Center. That, in addition to the original figure from the architect being 3-4 years old, has the project under-budgeted by approximately \$350,000.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Cloninger, City Attorney Oast said that it was his opinion that the law provides that you can negotiate with the lowest bidder in this particular instance.

Fire Chief Rukavina responded to questions from Council regarding how long one bay would serve the existing community.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information, instructed the Fire Chief to negotiate with the contractor for a lower bid, and instructed the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

TELEVISING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Mr. Robin Westbrook, Community & Public Information Coordinator,

asked for Council's consideration of the taping formal City Council meetings to be broadcast on InterMedia Cable channel 10 every other Saturday.

The Asheville City Council asked staff to explore the possibility of televising formal City Council meetings. After discussions held with Hometown TV, Asheville City Schools, and Buncombe County, it was determined that taping the formal City Council meetings every other week to be aired on Saturday would best meet the needs of all interested parties.

Effective Client Promotional Services (ECPS) submitted a bid to tape the meetings every other week for a fee of \$600 per meeting. They will provide three employees (2 cameramen and 1 engineer), equipment, and lighting for an average annual cost which should not exceed \$15,600. She explained why the Asheville City Schools indicated that they could not provide the same service for the cost. This also eliminates the concern about finding someone to tape during the summer months.

Asheville City Schools has given the City and Buncombe County the use of channel 10 on Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m. Asheville City Council meetings will be aired one week and Buncombe County Commission meetings will be aired the next week.

The taping of the City Council meetings can begin on a trial basis on August 12, 1997. This session will be used to adjust lighting and test equipment. The first taping to air will take place on August 26, 1997. This session will air on Saturday, August 30.

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If City Council wishes to broadcast formal meetings, it is the recommendation of staff the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to contract with ECPS in the amount not to exceed \$15,600 for one year to tape formal City Council meetings beginning on August 12, 1997. Therefore, a budget amendment in the amount of \$15,000 is necessary.

She said that Buncombe County paid \$65,000 upfront for the video equipment and accessories and they are paying \$340 per meeting for the taping.

Councilman Cloninger supported televising the Council meetings, however, he suggested starting with the taping with the new Council in December. He felt that some people might think this is an attempt on City Council's part to get publicity unfairly during the election campaign, where other candidates would not have that opportunity.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

DOWNTOWN STREET CLOCK

Ms. Suzanne Molloy, Assistant Public Works Director, said that Mr. Charles Cunningham desires to donate \$6,000 toward the purchase of a street clock for the City.

Per instructions from City Council at its July 8, 1997, meeting, a subcommittee of the Streetscape Committee met for the purpose of determining the following:

- The best clock design that will complement the overall streetscape design for downtown;
- The optimal location for such a clock; and
- A definitive cost for equipment and installation.

Based upon these goals, the subcommittee recommends a design consistent with downtown architecture and amenities to be located in the grassy island at the intersection of College, Patton and Spruce Street (across from Max's Deli). The estimated cost of the "Georgetown" clock is \$10,500 and installation is estimated at \$500. Public Works staff intends to construct the pedestal base and coordinate electrical service to the unit. It will subsequently be maintained by public works.

Since the construction time for the clock is 90 days, and it is the donor's desire to dedicate the clock in conjunction with a planned Bicentennial ceremony, it will be necessary to place an order not later than August 1, 1997, to meet this request.

Staff recommends that City Council appropriate \$5,000 for the remaining balance necessary to purchase the clock. Mr. Cunningham's donation will be utilized as the down payment (company must have 50%) to place the order. Community groups will make every effort to acquire private funding for the remaining balance

over and above the gift amount.

Ms. Leni Sitnick, Co-Chair of the Bicentennial Committee, said that it has just been confirmed by the Sponsorship Committee for the Bicentennial that they will be able to up with at least half of the difference between Mr. Cunningham's contribution and the additional monies needed through pledges to the bicentennial for beautification.

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Vice-Mayor Field said that she thought Quality Forward will also be looking for some matching funds.

Ms. Sitnick then passed out a leaflet containing official bicentennial activities. She also informed City Council of another bicentennial project in the making - one in which the public is being asked to write an anthem for Asheville.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

MSD ADDITIONS TO WEST ASHEVILLE ANNEXATION SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS AREA - PHASE I

Ms. Cathy Ball, City Engineer, said that there are seven hundred and eighty-one (781) linear feet of existing 8" sewer line adjacent to this project location that belongs to MSD. Due to the condition of the existing sewer line, MSD would like the City to add this section for replacement to the existing contract with Buckeye Construction Company for West Area Annexation Sewer Improvements - Phase I. This additional work is estimated at \$46,453.

City staff requested that MSD provide a check in the amount of \$46,453 to us for the cost of this construction. A letter from MSD indicates that they would like for us to proceed with adding this work to our existing contract with Buckeye Construction Company but cannot provide the money until it is approved by the MSD Board. The MSD Board will meet on July 16, 1997, and MSD staff is recommending approval. In the event that the funds are not approved by MSD, City staff will withdraw the recommendation to increase this contract to City Council at the July 22, 1997, Council meeting.

The additional work by Buckeye Construction Company will not be performed until the work in the original contract is completed. Therefore, the additional work requested by MSD will not delay the completion of the original scope of the project.

Staff recommends that City Council authorize the City Manager to increase the total contract price for the West Area Annexation Sewer Improvements - Phase I project by \$46,453, which will be reimbursed by MSD.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

MSD BILLING COSTS

Assistant City Manager Doug Spell said that for the past year, City staff has been working with representatives of other municipalities and MSD regarding the

current per bill amount paid by MSD to local governments for billing and collection of sanitary sewer accounts in their jurisdiction. During this time, he has served on a subcommittee which also included Mike Morgan, Town Manager of the Town of Weaverville and Larry Turner, Deputy Manager for Operations with MSD.

The initial task which we undertook was to survey area municipalities which perform billing services for MSD. He reviewed a copy of the "Direct Billing Cost Summary" which shows the estimated cost per bill ranging from \$1.55 to \$3.53 for the cities of Montreat, Black Mountain, Weaverville and Asheville. He pointed out that much of the diversity in the range of direct -14-

billing costs is based upon the size and complexity of functions performed by the organization, as well as the number of customers served.

For background, the billing charge paid by MSD has remained at an amount of \$1.30 per bill since 1990. The concern of local governments performing the billing costs for MSD is our awareness of the increased costs which our municipalities have faced as a result of various increases such as salaries, material costs, operation and maintenance, and postage. In trying to address what a reasonable rate increase would be, staff considered two options. One option would be to hire a consultant to conduct a formal study in order to determine the rates based on specific data. However, the smaller municipalities do not feel that the cost participation in a study on a pro rata basis is beneficial. A second approach which seems reasonable is to base the increased costs on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Since 1990, the CPI has ranged from 2.5 percent to 3.3 percent each of those years. Based upon this information, the current billing costs would be \$1.54 per bill projected from 1990.

In discussing the increase, the information based on the CPI is very close to the lowest billing cost for any of the municipalities participating in the survey. Therefore, staff feels that it is reasonable to request that the increase be in the amount of \$0.25 per bill taking the total to \$1.55 per bill.

Staff recommends the adoption of a resolution requesting the MSD Board increase the per bill cost by \$0.25 based upon survey data from municipalities and the Consumer Price Index for a total amount of \$1.55 per bill to assist in the recovery of actual costs.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has

received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

AGREEMENT WITH BUNCOMBE COUNTY - FACILITY MAINTENANCE

Assistant City Manager Doug Spell said that over the past several months, City staff has met and coordinated with staff from Buncombe County discussing the area of facility maintenance. This is an area where there is the ability for mutual benefits due to the different staffing and services provided by each respective governmental agency. Buncombe County has a facility maintenance staff that consists of individuals that are licensed and perform construction and maintenance functions in the areas of electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems. In turn, the City of Asheville has necessary equipment to apply sand and salt and perform snow removal and also has other specialized pieces of equipment in our fleet inventory. During the discussions between County staff and City staff it was agreed that this was an area in which cooperation would be mutually beneficial.

The areas which the City would assist the County in pertain to the spreading of sand and salt in the parking lot travel aisles serving the Health Department, Emergency Services access alley, area on east side of Court House, area on north side of County Jail, and Social Services. Snow removal would consist of City staff assisting County staff in the clearing of walk areas around the Health Department and Court House. The other area which the City would be able to provide assistance to the County would be regarding access to various equipment which the City has in our fleet inventory, such as a backhoe or bucket truck based upon availability of equipment and equipment operator. In turn, the County would assist the City in efforts related to evaluation, repair or replacement of various systems serving City facilities with the City paying for all material and equipment costs associated with such projects.

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An "Interlocal Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding" was prepared in order to undertake the cooperative efforts in the area of facility maintenance. This agreement was executed on April 21, 1997 for a "pilot project" which would allow the City and the County an initial review of these efforts through June 30, 1997. Following this, on June 17, 1997 City staff met with County Manager Wanda Greene and discussed this initial review. It was agreed that both parties liked the arrangement and it was decided that this area of mutual cooperation should continue. City staff requests City Council endorsement of a "Interlocal Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding" in the area of cooperation for facility maintenance and authorization for the City Manager to execute the Memorandum dated July 22, 1997, extending the agreement for one year until June 30, 1998, with automatic renewal for one year periods for subsequent years subject to termination by written notification of either jurisdiction.

City staff recommends adoption of the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Memorandum extending the Interlocal Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding through June 30, 1998 with automatic renewals for one year for subsequent years.

Mayor Martin asked that the record show that City Council has received this information and instructs the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
