

Tuesday - March 17, 1998- 3:00 p.m.

Worksession

Present: Present: Mayor Leni Sitnick, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Edward C. Hay Jr.; Councilman M. Charles Cloninger; Councilman Earl Cobb; Councilwoman Barbara Field; Councilman Thomas G. Sellers; and Councilman O.T. Tomes; City Attorney Robert W. Oast Jr.; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

CONSENT:

Contract Award for Biltmore Village Street Lights & Fixtures

Summary: The consideration of entering into a contract with Haynes Electric Construction Company in the amount of \$20,200 to install 42 decorative street light poles and fixtures in the Biltmore Village Historic District of Asheville.

Change Order for Additional Repairs to Civic Center Parking Deck

This item was pulled from the agenda.

Pilot Program relative to 70 Hanging Flower Baskets in Downtown

Summary: The Potpourri Garden Club desires to sponsor a pilot program to place 70 baskets containing flowers which will hang from street light poles in the Downtown District.

Mayor Sitnick hoped that whatever efforts are made in the downtown area, like mini-kiosks, that we apply some of those solutions to other areas in the City as well.

Summertime Kids Program Grant Application with WNC Community Foundation

Summary: The consideration of the City applying for a \$2,000 grant through the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina for enrichment activities for the Summer Teen Program.

Approval of Regional Water Authority's recommendation to award construction contracts for Newfound Mountain Reservoir & Water System Improvements Project

Summary: The consideration of a resolution awarding construction contracts to Cooper Construction Company, General Contractor, in the amount of \$825,831, and M.B. Haynes Electric Company, Electrical Contractor, in the amount of \$87,945, for the Newfound Mountain Reservoir and Water System Improvements project. The bid summary is as follows:

GENERAL CONTRACT

Engineer's Estimate: \$ 1,190,000

COMPANY BID

Cooper Construction Company, Hendersonville, N.C. \$ 825,831

Buckeye Construction Company, Canton, N.C. \$ 922,424

Steppe Construction Company, Mill Spring, N.C. \$ 984,985

Hobson Construction Company, Arden, N.C. \$ 1,009,675

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ELECTRICAL CONTRACT

Engineer's Estimate: \$ 80,000

M.B. Haynes Electric Company, Asheville, N.C. \$ 87,945

Hayes & Lunsford Electric Company, Asheville, N.C. \$ 98,200

Brevard Electric Company, Brevard, N.C. \$ 99,600

Approval of Regional Water Authority's recommendation to purchase approximately two acres on Candler Knob Road from Buncombe County for West Asheville Reservoir

Summary: Consideration of recommendation to purchase approximately two acres on Candler Knob Road from Buncombe County in the amount of \$21,000 for the construction of a new 5 million gallon West Asheville Reservoir.

Mayor Sitnick 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.

PRESENTATION BY GREENWAYS INC. REGARDING GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

Mr. Mike Matteson, Urban Planner, said that The Trust for Public Land is a private nonprofit organization that acquires land for the use and benefit of the public. They have an ongoing working relationship with the City of Asheville with respect to greenway planning.

Greenways, Inc. is one of the nation's foremost landscape architecture and greenway planning and design firms. The Trust for Public Land has subcontracted with Greenways, Inc. on the greenway master plan.

Mr. Matteson then introduced Mr. Will Abberger, representative from The Trust for Public Land, and Mr. Chuck Flink, representative from Greenways Inc., who briefed City Council about the greenway master planning process, the Broadway/Reed Creek Greenway and about the benefits of greenways in general.

Mr. Abberger and Mr. Flink responded to various questions from Council relative to greenways.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Cloninger, Mr. Flink said that the greenway master plan will be completed in June of 1998 and before City Council for approval shortly thereafter.

On behalf of City Council, Mayor Sitnick expressed Council's full support of the greening of Asheville.

1998 BELE CHERE BUDGET REQUEST

Mr. Irby Brinson, Director of Parks & Recreation, said that over the past several months, various committees of the Bele Chere Board and staff liaisons have been working to complete a balanced budget for the 1998 Bele Chere Festival. The budget ordinance, in the amount of \$506,000, establishes this budget for anticipated expenditures and revenues for the upcoming festival. He noted that from an economic impact, Bele Chere generates \$12 Million in three days.

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Mr. Brinson responded to several questions from Council, some being, but are not limited to: how much overtime is spent in the Public Works, Police and Parks and Recreation Departments, and what items are associated with logistics.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Cobb, Mr. Brinson said that they strive to have 2/3 of the entertainment being from local entertainers in this region. The majority of the other dollars goes to headliners.

Mayor Sitnick suggested the Bele Chere Committee consider the idea of charging to participate in Bele Chere, possibly by selling buttons to show support. Those buttons could be sold at movie theaters, gas stations, check-out counters, etc., for maybe 50-cents to \$1 with the proceeds going to the City to help with expenses. If this would prove to have a negative impact, then she felt the City should not proceed in that direction. However, she hoped that the Bele Chere Committee and the Parks and Recreation staff continue to look at creative, innovative way to bring in money for parks and recreation needs for this community. She also suggested that staff bring back a report to Council at some later appropriate time with some ideas in the direction of additional revenue sources that will help benefit Bele Chere.

Councilwoman Field was not comfortable in using Bele Chere as a money-making festival for the City. She suggested if Bele Chere makes money, the City should put it back into the Bele Chere Festival for better events and paying local performers a little more money because local acts can't afford to perform at Bele Chere.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Cloninger, Mr. Brinson said that staff will look at festivals that have been established for 10-15 years and then see how the reactions were when they started charging to attend the festivals.

It was the consensus of City Council to ask Mr. Brinson to review the information already accumulated relative to additional revenue at Bele Chere and look for other possibilities for revenue for the 1999 festival.

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

REPORTS FROM BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Outside Agency Review Committee

At the request of City Council on March 10, 1998, the City's Outside Agency Committee met with Mr. Ian Booth relative to the Mountain Area Ecotourism Project to consider his request for a one-time contribution of \$5,000 to match the County's contribution of \$5,000. As a result of that meeting, the Committee recommended an appropriation of \$2,500 to come out of this fiscal year's budget.

It was the consensus of City Council to instruct the City Manager to place this item on the next formal City Council agenda.

Housing & Community Development Committee

Councilwoman Field reported that the Housing and Community Development Committee has met and reviewed applications totaling \$3.75 million. Because the City has only \$1.83 million to appropriate, tough decision will have to be made on which projects to fund at what amounts. She also commented on the HOME Consortium's application process as well. -4-

Recreation Board

Councilman Cobb invited City Council to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 1998, at 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Banquet Room.

OTHER BUSINESS

Hillcrest

Councilman Tomes asked for Council's support relative to the pedestrian bridge issue at Hillcrest along with some better access for the Hillcrest residents.

Discussion surrounded why the pedestrian bridge was closed, noting that the Housing Authority, at the request of the Hillcrest Residents Association, asked City Council to request the N.C. Dept. of Transportation ("NC DOT") to close the bridge. At the City's request, NC DOT did close the bridge with the community's interest at heart.

It was the consensus of City Council for staff to report back to City Council at their next worksession with a history of the pedestrian bridge issue, and then hold a community meeting at Hillcrest and invite a representative from NC DOT, the Hillcrest Residents Association, the Asheville Transit Authority, and members of the Housing Authority to the meeting.

Litter

Due to the inordinate amount of litter in and around Asheville, it was the consensus of City Council to hold the Mayor's first roundtable on litter to educate the citizens and tourists to not only clean up Asheville, but not to trash it. Staff was instructed to begin the process with an oral report at a worksession from the Public Works Director as to what they are already doing to help combat litter. Thereafter, a date will be set for the roundtable, along with a press release to be prepared inviting the public, along with Quality Forward, Adopt a Street Program, representatives from business organizations, representatives from schools, and Chamber of Commerce representatives.

Mayor Sitnick suggested an overall theme be developed with some sort of recognition of people going the extra mile in helping control litter.

City Manager Westbrook noted that there is a problem along major thoroughfares with trash from fast food restaurants and construction projects. Mayor Sitnick responded that she would encourage fast food restaurants to do something in-house so their customers are educated on litter control.

Councilman Cloninger said that he would be happy to talk to the Chamber of Commerce about this issue because litter is a tourism issue too.

Towing of Vehicles from Private Parking Lots

At the request of Vice-Mayor Hay, City Attorney Oast said that he would investigate if the City can regulate the \$100 towing charge to people who are towed out of privately operated parking lots. Also, the City Attorney was instructed to see if the City can require all parking lots to have consistent signage in a prominent place concerning the towing.

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CLOSED SESSION

At 5:03 p.m., Vice-Mayor Hay moved to go into closed session to establish or to instruct the City's staff or

negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the City in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the purchase of land - statutory authority is G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5). This motion was seconded by Councilman Sellers and carried unanimously.

At 6:20 p.m., Councilman Sellers moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Field and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Sitnick adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
