

Tuesday - June 15, 1999 - 3:00 p.m.

Worksession

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 Deputy City Clerk Phyllis Corns

Absent: None

CONSENT:

Budget Amendment re: Fair Housing Assistance Program

Summary: The consideration of a budget amendment, in the amount of \$25,000, to appropriate new federal funds received for the Fair Housing Assistance Program for FY 1998/99.

The City has been carrying out its fair housing program under contract with the Asheville-Buncombe Community Relations Council and Fair Housing Commission since January 1988, using HUD Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) funds. The City's Community Development Division serves as Lead Entity and monitors the program. On November 24, 1998, City Council approved a 1998/99 budget of \$18,400, equal to the HUD FHAP grant for the twelfth year of this program.

The City has now received a revised grant agreement from HUD, increasing the FHAP grant amount by \$25,000, for a total grant of \$43,400. A budget ordinance is needed to appropriate the new funds.

Community Development staff recommends City Council adopt the budget amendment.

Budget Amendment re: Summer Teen Program Grant Funds

Summary: The consideration of a budget amendment, in the amount of \$1,950, to appropriate grant funds from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina to fund outdoor adventure activities in the Summer Teen Program.

The Summer Teen Program is designed to provide recreation activities for teens ages 13-16 for eight weeks during the summer. The program is located at six locations throughout the City in community centers. The Teen Program will offer a wide variety of recreation activities and hands-on job training. Grant funds will be used to implement the outdoor enrichment activities including a challenge ropes course, rock climbing, rollerblading, and mountain biking. The Parks and Recreation Department's in-kind match of \$26,708 will be in labor, administration, transportation, supplies, and training for the overall Summer Teen Program. The funds are budgeted in the Recreation Division.

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends the City of Asheville to accept the grant funds on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Department into the Recreation Division operating budget for outdoor enrichment activities in the Summer Teen Program.

Intent to Close Unnamed Alleyway off Henrietta Street

Summary: The consideration of a resolution of intent to permanently close an unnamed alley off Henrietta Street. -2-

A petition has been received from Merrimon Avenue Baptist Church requesting that an unnamed alley off Henrietta Street be permanently closed to public use. The petition received includes the affidavit of Bill Bigham, President of Merrimon Avenue Baptist Church, owner of PIN No. 9649.10-35-9416. Merrimon Avenue Baptist Church owns all of the adjoining land on both sides of this unnamed alleyway.

This unnamed ally is a paper street and has never been opened and used as a street. The City has no plans to utilize this street. All utility companies will be contacted. The resolution of intent to close the unnamed alley off Henrietta Street will be advertised in a local paper and the location will be posted with the resolution of intent to close.

The Public Works Department staff recommends the resolution of intent to permanently close the an unnamed alley off of Henrietta Street be adopted and that the public hearing be held on July 27, 1999.

Citizen Participation Plan for Community Development Programs

Summary: The consideration of a resolution approving the Citizen Participation Plan for the City's community development programs.

The N.C. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development's (HUD) regulations require the City to develop and follow a Citizen Participation Plan, detailing how it will involve residents, particularly those in low-income groups and organizations representing them, in the planning and implementation of its housing and community development programs, including the allocation of Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds.

The existing Citizen Participation Plan dates from 1995, with minor revisions in 1997. It does not satisfy quite all of HUD's requirements and no longer describes all the steps that are being taken to involve and consult residents. The revised plan provides a fuller description, and, in particular, sets out a new framework for developing the Five-Year Strategic Plan which the City must revise and update in 2000.

The plan proposes that a Steering Committee be set up to oversee and guide the Strategic Planning process, with membership open to anyone who is prepared to participate consistently and constructively as well as invited representatives of key agencies and community groups. Subcommittees will act as focus groups to examine in detail the four main areas of the Plan: Housing, Homelessness, Public Housing, and Non-Housing Community Development. The process will draw and build upon other relevant planning processes such as the Asheville-Buncombe VISION.

Staff recommends that Council approve the revised Citizen Participation Plan.

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.

YOUTH CRISIS PREVENTION

Dr. Gene Rainey, Chairman of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, presented City Council with a list of teenage statistics and urged City Council to participate in a Youth Center designed to serve young people and their families. He reviewed how the Youth Center will offer opportunities for prevention, education, training and reward. Their proposal is to build a \$2.5 Million Youth Center which will hopefully be located on the A-B Technical Community College campus or the UNC-Asheville campus and will serve 13-29 year olds. The operating budget for this Center will be \$475,000 and the annual administrative cost of serving students will be \$10 -3-

per student. The Center will be self-supporting. He then outlined the goals, one of which will be to establish 20 youth centers in the next 12 years. Dr. Rainey then asked the City to commit \$25,000 seed money (which can be spread over two years) to the Next Generation Inc. and they will raise the balance on the \$2.5 Million

Center. They would like to have a representative of the City's Parks & Recreation Department on their Board, along with suggestions from City Council of possible trustees. Dr. Rainey also asked for a resolution of support in order to go to granting institutions.

Dr. Rainey responded to various questions and comments from Council on the Youth Center, some being, but are not limited to, locations in schools districts, transportation for latch-key children, what are other cities around the country doing, how will the centers be self-supporting, are there any model Youth Centers, who will counsel the youth, who will be supervising the child care facility, and how much of program will be volunteers.

Mayor Sitnick thanked Dr. Rainey for his hard work. She felt there was nothing better to invest in with a better return than investing in our youth. She said that City Council will give serious consideration to the \$25,000 request.

Councilman Cloninger felt that in next year's budget, this is the kind of thing that would be appropriate to come out of the contingency fund.

Mayor Sitnick asked that the record show that City Council has received this information and instructs the City Manager to place a resolution of support on the next formal City Council agenda.

REQUEST OF OFFICE SPACE FOR ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE VISION

Assistant City Manager Doug Spell presented City Council with a letter from Pat Smith, Asheville-Buncombe VISION Board Chair, which requests that the space for VISION in the City Development Office be renewed for another year. The letter states that they have looked for other possibilities, but find that the organization can't afford space that is comparable size and exposure. The donated office space sends a strong message to the community that the City supports the VISION and its efforts to set measurable standards for community improvement.

Ms. Pam Wall, Executive Director of Asheville-Buncombe VISION, responded to various questions from Council.

Vice-Mayor Hay felt that this is a good location for VISION in terms of accessibility and having a high profile. He said this is a critical time with VISION and now is the time when the City wouldn't want to say they didn't support the VISION in a comprehensive way.

Mayor Sitnick supported the VISION process and their work. She said that there are some ways that can be explored for the VISION process to become self-supporting, like the possibility of volunteers helping run a souvenir booth (when more space is available) and sharing some of those revenues.

It was the consensus of City Council to allow the VISION Office to remain in the City Development Office until June 30, 2000.

REPORTS ON BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Councilman Cloninger said that due to meeting conflicts he has been unable to attend the meetings of the WNC Regional Air Pollution Control Board as the City Council liaison to that Board. Therefore, Mayor Sitnick appointed Councilman Cobb to be the liaison to the WNC -4-

Regional Air Pollution Control Board and instructed the City Clerk to notify the Board of the liaison change.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

City Council discussed and gave direction to the City Manager and Budget Director on the following outstanding budget issues: parking fees, cable television connection, outside agency recommendations (in particular the Chamber of Commerce's \$100,000 request), Institute of Government, Center City Director/Plan, annexation plan, Public Information Officer, water rate increase, garage signage and Pedestrian Coordinator.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:44 p.m., Councilman Cloninger moved to go into closed session to consult with an attorney employed by the City in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the City and its attorney. The parties to the lawsuit about which the Council expects to receive advice are: Trinity Baptist Church Inc., City of Asheville, Carrier Heights Neighborhood Association, CC&J Enterprises Inc., and Jackson Park/Woolsey Neighborhood Association - statutory authority is G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3). This motion was seconded by Councilman Cobb and carried unanimously.

At 7:25 p.m., Councilman Sellers moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilman Cloninger and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Sitnick adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
