

**SPECIAL MEETING
EDMOND CITY COUNCIL**

March 6, 2008

Mayor Dan O'Neil called the Special Meeting of the Edmond City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 6, 2008, in the City Council Chambers.

2. Discussion and Consideration of the Public Safety Center project. Mayor O'Neil stated several discussions have been held regarding this matter and consensus of Council and the public is that a new facility is definitely needed. Council has agreed that using the current Downtown Community Center (DCC) site is not feasible due to the lack of parking and the expense. He noted a building consisting of approximately 90,000 square feet has been agreed upon by Council and staff. Mayor O'Neil stated consensus of Council was to finance the facility using General Obligation Bonds as recommended by the Finance/Audit Committee. He stated the project as designed will cost approximately \$29M. He noted residents as well as downtown businesses have requested Council look at other sites in the downtown area rather than constructing the facility at Kelly and Main Street. Mayor O'Neil assured citizens that Council will diligently study all possible sites for the public safety center. He stated it is the intent of the Council to defer a decision until they have had the opportunity to look at other locations in the downtown area.

Larry Stevens, City Manager, addressed Council and stated a workshop was held on December 10th and consensus of Council was to request that the Police Facility Needs Assessment Committee review the proposal and attempt to reduce the size and cost of the facility. He stated the Police Facility Needs Assessment Committee recommended the Kelly and Main location as the least expensive of the two sites that were being considered at that time. Mr. Stevens noted that Council received an artist's rendering of the building that could possibly be constructed at the Kelly and Main site. He stated an election in May would not be feasible due to the time constraints of the Oklahoma County Election Board which requires a 60 day notice for any elections. Mr. Stevens stated two possible election dates are July 29th and August 26th. He noted a formal resolution calling for an election would need to be approved by May 29th for the July date and June 26th for the August date. He stated once the size, location and cost of the facility is determined, he suggested Council may want to do some advance polling of citizens to gage their feelings on this matter prior to an election. Mr. Stevens noted as a point of clarification that only the DCC site and the site at Kelly and Main Street have been formally reviewed. He also noted that the City has not formally reviewed any private property as a potential site.

Steve Thompson, Assistant Police Chief, addressed Council and presented several downtown sites as possible locations for the new facility shown as Attachment "A" to these Minutes. He noted the property assessments shown on the attachment were taken from the Oklahoma County Tax Assessor's website and are not market value amounts. General discussion was held regarding these locations.

Phillip McNayr, Frankfort-Short-Bruza Associates, addressed Council and stated the facility would require approximately five acres in order to meet the criteria regarding security purposes for the Police Department by creating the appropriate setbacks and also to address future growth needs. He noted the DCC site would not meet those requirements for safety and security or allow for future growth needs. Mr. McNayr noted that a smaller site would require a multi-story facility in order to meet those needs. He stated the railroad tracks could potentially cause security/access problems and any property beside the tracks should be considered carefully. General discussion was held regarding the required setbacks as well as how the safety/security issues would be addressed. He stated either berms or concrete walls surrounding the building could be used to shield the building from the railroad tracks. He noted barriers in front of the door or along the building would eliminate the opportunity to park and detonate a truck with explosives. He stated a normal setback is 100 to 150 feet to the parking lot.

Councilmember Lamb stated the reason for the large amount of property is the need for a surface parking lot. He noted the higher cost of building the facility on the DCC site was due to the need for a multi-level parking facility.

Barry Rice addressed Council and stated as a downtown business owner he fully supported the need for a new public safety center but he wanted the facility to remain in the downtown area. He stated he understood that parking is a problem but he could not understand the Council's resistance to attempting to purchase private property in the downtown area. Mr. Rice stated at one time every building in the downtown area was privately owned and purchased by the City. He noted the 2005 Police Facility Needs Assessment Committee study stated the preferred location is to remain downtown but that parking was a problem. Mr. Rice stated the issue is that it costs more to build a multi-level parking facility than a flat parking lot but that Council was willing to use a park and cover it with a building and concrete parking lot. He noted that several realtors have appraised Barnett Park at Kelly and Main as high as \$2M. He stated he felt there were many benefits to keeping the facility downtown and that it would be a mistake to begin moving public facilities from downtown. He noted all the previous studies have recommended the facility remain downtown.

Charles Geis addressed Council and proposed to relocate the public safety center to the site that is now occupied by the Festival

Marketplace. He stated the Festival Marketplace could be relocated south across 2nd Street on the site of the former Senior Center.

Judy Thorwart, Antique Boutique, addressed Council and stated she was very much in favor keeping the public safety center downtown. She stated she would prefer the public safety center be located at the current location of Smith Carpet. She stated she appreciated everything that has been done in the downtown area because the improvements have kept the downtown as a viable community and that she felt safer with the Police Department located downtown. Ms. Thorwart stated she was opposed to Mr. Geis's suggestion because she really appreciated having the Festival Marketplace in it's present location.

Jean Brewer addressed Council and stated she also fully supported constructing a new police facility but was opposed to moving the facility from downtown. She stated she agreed with Mr. Geis regarding moving the Festival Marketplace and constructing the new facility in that location. Ms. Brewer noted that the underpass just west of the intersection of 2nd Street and Broadway is currently the only way of getting across the City when a train is blocking the tracks. She stated if the police facility were located in the Festival Marketplace site it would allow close access to the underpass.

Karen Moore, downtown business owner, addressed Council and stated she also supported the public safety center remaining downtown. She noted downtown Edmond is a unique area and the business owners have done everything possible to keep the downtown viable. Ms. Moore stated she felt if the police facility is constructed away from the downtown area that other City facilities would soon follow.

Mayor O'Neil stated in most cities, the Municipal Court facility and the Police facility are not co-located due to video arraignments and other methods of appearing before a judge. Councilmember Lamb stated the Police Assessment Needs Committee discussed including Municipal Court services in the project but strong objections were raised by Judge Alan Synar regarding judicial independence issues. He noted by relocating the Police facility away from it's present location, the City has the opportunity to bring an Oklahoma County Court facility to the downtown area and improve the range of court activities as well as adding additional commercial facilities. He also noted that the RFP addresses those issues.

Ray Hibbard, Chairman of the Police Facility Needs Assessment Committee, addressed Council and commended Council on separating the location of the public safety center and the RFP as two separate issues. He stated the Committee did not review the re-development of the downtown area but only the appropriate site for the public safety center. He urged Council to keep the focus of

the police facility not as a development tool because the present facility is very inadequate. Mr. Hibbard stated construction is still several years in the future even if a decision was reached at this meeting. He noted costs are escalating at 3% every six months so the longer the project is delayed the more expensive it becomes.

Kay Bickham addressed Council and stated she supported keeping park land as a park and that she was opposed to utilizing existing park land for a new facility. She noted intercity parks cannot be replaced or reverted back once it is built upon.

Councilmember Miller stated some citizens are discussing the need for precincts or satellite offices and he requested Chief Ricks address these issues.

Bob Ricks, Edmond Police Chief, addressed Council and stated precincts are very common in large cities but Edmond does not fit that category. He noted that precincts are only warranted when it becomes necessary and the needs of Edmond do not necessitate the use of precincts at this time. He stated he was opposed to separating the City into precincts because it dilutes the opportunity for officers to communicate with one another and it also dilutes the chain of command. Chief Ricks also noted that precincts reduce the ability to deliver consistent services throughout the City. He stated the costs also escalate because of maintaining the additional facilities. He stated the only times precincts are necessary is when there are distinct communities within the city as a whole. He noted by deferring the need for precincts for a long period of time, it provides the Police Department the tremendous advantage of providing effective services to the City as a whole.

3. Discussion and Consideration of draft Request for Proposal (RFP) of a Comprehensive Master Plan for downtown City-owned properties. Mayor O'Neil stated he felt it was appropriate for the City to have a long-term plan since the City of Edmond is the major property owner in downtown. He stated this item should be discussed as a companion but separate issue since Council is looking at downtown areas other than the DCC site. Mayor O'Neil stated the Central Edmond Urban Development Board has requested a workshop with Council to discuss a plan for the downtown area. He noted the purpose of the RFP is to investigate possible collaborations with private entities to ensure the continued health of the downtown community.

Councilmember Lamb stated he felt this item should be continued until a workshop could be held with the Urban Board in order to allow their input before finalizing the RFP. He noted that whatever the decision is regarding where to construct the public safety center, the City will be vacating the current use of a facility that is part of the contiguous downtown City-owned

campus. He stated this presents a window of opportunity for the Council to look at ways both to improve the efficiency of the services offered to the public and also to improve the services of other governmental entities who are somewhat hidden in their current locations as well as the possibility of expanding the retail and other associated services using the large mass of property that is City owned. He stated the RFP would provide a catalyst for renewed opportunity to create more economic energy for the downtown core. He noted the City has invested millions of dollars in people space related to the downtown area. He stated he felt Council now has the opportunity to further stimulate the investments already made in the downtown area by reutilizing the City owned spaces that would improve the environment for the businesses on Broadway. Councilmember Lamb stated he felt a workshop was needed to determine all the possibilities that the RFP presents.

Councilmember Miller stated he agreed with Councilmember Lamb and he felt a meeting should be held with the Urban Board prior to sending the RFP to interested parties. He stated he felt it would not be appropriate to begin a process for the downtown area without consulting the Urban Board.

Councilmember Page agreed that a workshop was needed and that Council needed to tie the old studies with the new studies prior to any action being taken. He stated he felt the vision of the downtown area should be continued but that he did not feel that the downtown vision should get in the way of a decision regarding the public safety center. He noted the public safety center has been discussed for approximately five years and much money has been spent on the downtown area and he is ready to move forward with the RFP.

Councilmember Waner stated she agreed that the RFP was a separate issue and she also wanted to move forward. She noted that most of the improvements to the downtown area is the result of the Urban Board's master plan. She stated she felt most of the items have been accomplished but are not complete and the RFP is a good spring board to continue with the remainder of the master plan. She noted she felt Council should do all they can to keep the downtown vibrant by researching different things that other cities have done in this regard.

Consensus of Council was to schedule a workshop on April 14th at 3:00 p.m. with the Urban Board to discuss the RFP.

David Forrest, Chairman of the Central Edmond Urban Development Board, addressed Council and stated he agreed a workshop was needed and he appreciated Council scheduling the workshop. He stated the workshop would allow Council to embrace the relocation of the public safety facility as an opportunity to embrace a vision for redevelopment of the downtown area. Mr. Forrest stated the Board wanted a long-term plan for redevelopment of the

downtown in order to bring visitors to the downtown area. He noted the RFP will outline that vision and start the process.

4. Executive Session to discuss the purchase of real property generally located in the Central Edmond Urban District (Executive Session authorized pursuant to 25 Okla. State. Sec. 307 (B)(3)):

Motion by Miller, seconded by Page, to meet in Executive Session to discuss the above item. **Motion carried** as follows:

AYES: Mayor O'Neil, Councilmembers Page, Waner, Lamb and Miller
NAYS: None

Mayor and Councilmembers recessed to the City Council Conference Room at 6:25 p.m. and returned to the City Council Chambers at 7:15 p.m.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Waner, to adjourn Executive Session. **Motion carried** as follows:

AYES: Mayor O'Neil, Councilmembers Page, Waner, Lamb and Miller
NAYS: None

5. Consideration of action with regard to the purchase or real property generally located in the Central Edmond Urban District.

Motion by Lamb, seconded by Miller, to authorize staff to investigate possible locations within the Central Edmond Urban District and report their findings to the City Council. **Motion carried** as follows:

AYES: Mayor O'Neil, Councilmembers Page, Waner, Lamb and Miller
NAYS: None

6. Motion by Miller, seconded by Page, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Mayor O'Neil, Councilmembers Page, Waner, Lamb and Miller
NAYS: None

Secretary

Chairman

ATTACHMENT "A"				
Property Description	East to West	North to South	Approximate Acreage	Assessed Value
Homeland to Broadway	400	300	2.7	\$ 2,131,710.00
3rd to 4th, Littler to Broadway	400	300	2.7	\$ 1,191,245.00
Lumberyard, Swansons, and City owned Parking Lot	250	300	1.7	\$ 527,316.00
Hurd to Campbell, west side of Broadway	500	300	3.4	\$ 873,407.00
Edwards to Ayers, west side of Broadway	525	500	6	\$ 1,671,409.00
SW Corner of Hurd and Littler, including DCC Parking	100	300	0.7	\$ 154,548.00
Old High School - now Boulevard Academy	275	300	1.9	
Union Bank and City Properties to Littler	350	300	2.4	\$ 461,375.00
3rd to 4th, Littler to Boulevard	475	300	3.2	\$ 1,494,521.00
Old Senior Center Area - City owned	250	250	1.4	
3rd to 4th, against the Railroad Tracks	250	300	1.7	\$ 221,405.00
Buell Property - west of RR tracks at Edmond Rd. and Santa Fe	325	700	5.1	\$ 641,069.00