

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MARCH 02, 2011 @ 6:00 PM
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM
MINUTES**

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Reggiani called the Council Work Session to order at 6:00 pm on March 02, 2011 in the Library Meeting Room.

B. ROLL CALL

Present for roll call were *Vice-Mayor Reggiani*, Council members *Keith van den Broek*, *Jim Kacsh*, *David Allison*, and *Robert Beedle*. Absent were *Mayor James Kallander*, Council members *Bret Bradford* and *EJ Cheshier*. Also present were City Manager *Mark Lynch*, City Clerk *Susan Bourgeois* and Deputy City Clerk *Robyn Kincaid*.

C. COMMUNICATIONS BY AND PETITIONS FROM VISITORS

1. Audience Comments regarding agenda items

Clay Koplin, Chamber of Commerce and CEC, stated that he had attended the last PSBD committee meeting and that he had provided the estimated utility costs for square footage to the City Manager as well as a site plan for an alternative location that he took him to today for consideration.

Mayor James Kallander and *EJ Cheshier* joined the meeting via teleconference.

D. WORK SESSION TOPIC

2. Tsunami Zone Review

Reggiani reviewed for the Council the Public Safety Building Design Committee's task to provide the City Council with a conceptual design for a new public safety building. The parameters are to work with CH2MHill, to review both locations and to encourage community input. He stated that it has become apparent that site selection would not be feasible with this committee. The committee has done a great job and encouraged community input which has been very welcome and very much appreciated and he hopes it keeps coming. He reviewed the history of the new public safety building so the Council would know what has transpired in the last three years with this process and where the committee is now focusing in on why the tsunami zone issue is such a big deal. He stated that to locate a new building back at the same site, in the tsunami zone, would really limit the outside funding for construction and maintenance for the new building. *Lynch* added that grant funds are becoming more difficult to get for the current building. The facility cannot stay at the same location unless the community is willing to pay for everything the grants would normally fund. He has been in contact with John Madden, the Director of Home Land Security for Alaska, and he says they cannot give a number for the tsunami zone until the study has been done and it could be two years yet before it is done. *Joanie Behrends* stated that she had done some research on the tsunami level when she was writing the disaster preparedness and she spoke with the people at the Palmer Tsunami Center. There is more information available at the West Coast Tsunami Warning Center's website. The tsunami testing is a detailed investigation of the lay of the land on the ocean bottom. Currently Cordova is ninth on the list to be done. She mentioned that she would be surprised if the study was done in the next two years. *Kacsh* stated that there is the possibility that the City could build this new building, the rules could change, and there could be no outside funding available. *Beedle* stated there are many other communities that cannot have a public safety building above the tsunami zone level, there has to be a way to mitigate that challenge. *Reggiani* stated that the City could build anywhere but we may not get funding based on the site selection if it is too low. *Beedle* added that he is not sure the city should build based on a tsunami threat. *Reggiani* stated that he would

like to see the committee keep working on the design until the actual official tsunami level number can be obtained. **Van den Broek** stated if the City is currently getting threats to lose funding for its present location, then maybe the City needs to band with other communities in this situation and fight the ruling. **Lynch** stated that the argument would come back that, if the level cannot be obtained, the City should select a site that is the best site possible. **Kacsh** stated that everything is almost at a standstill for more design until we have a site selected. **Reggiani** replied that there still is much work to be done in floor planning and the inside of the building that can be worked out to give us more than just blocks to play with. He stated that he is afraid that if we do not get started than we could be behind on funding. **Beedle** stated his concern with designing a building that is at least two or more years out and technology changes. If we just talk design, could we take the site selection off the table for now to minimize controversy? **Cheshier** stated that he agrees with **Reggiani** that we should continue work on the design with a neutral canvas and that the designing still needs to be paid for so we still need to get planning money. **Van den Broek** stated that the committee should focus on design. The committee has encouraged a lot of community involvement, if they wait two years the momentum and community involvement could go away and this will all have been a waste of time. **Kacsh** stated that the City Council should move forward on site selection beyond the two sites reviewed thus far and look at both the City owned and privately owned properties. **Reggiani** stated that the City could get funding for a design specified to be built out of the tsunami zone. He reminded the Council that the Cordova Center took eight years to plan and it will be at least three before the current building will start to be vacated. This is not too early to start planning the next project. **Chief Mike Hicks** added that as a Public Safety Building Design Committee member there have been many things brought up and discussed in the meeting that will benefit the community regardless of where the new building goes. **Jennifer Gibbins** asked how much the City has committed for the design of this building thus far. **Reggiani** replied that the City has committed \$75K to CH2MHill to produce a conceptual design. **Tom Bailer** stated that it is important to start the planning now because it takes a long time to get the details and materials together and the Public Safety Building is a complex building that will take much planning. It is a lot cheaper to move rooms around on paper once a site has been selected and we know what each room will require. **Dick Groff** added that **Irv Petty** from Home Land Security gave a verbal number for the tsunami level to be 50 feet or higher. The number is, however, unofficial. **Clay Koplín** inquired as to what the Copper River Highway site level was at. **Groff** responded that it was at 48 feet. There will be enough fill at that site to raise it up to the 50 feet if we choose that site. **Van den Broek** inquired about the level of the 5-mile sub-station. **Hicks** said he did not know and that they have received grant money for equipment for that site before but currently are having difficulties. **Allison** stated that everything at this point is speculation; we need to design the building, and then decide what location would best fit the needs of the building. We are a long way and much funding to get before we start the groundwork on a site so he does not see the need to worry about a site selection. **Van den Broek** stated that currently the ball is rolling on site selection, we do not want to stop that, it should continue while it is still on everyone's minds. Perhaps the Council should set up a few more work sessions to discuss site selection. A good decision will come from good options. **Clay Koplín** added that the sub-station was built after the last tsunami review and was built on an annexed piece of property, which is why they do not have that number. **Mayor Kallander** said he is encouraged that no one is ready to let this go. This could be a ten-year process and we need to get designs and cost estimates floating around Juneau and D.C. so we can start getting funding. We need to be a forward thinking Council like the Council before us and encourage economic development in Cordova. **Van den Broek** stated that another reason to focus on the site selection is that the Cordova Center will be done in two-years so we need to decide if we want to save the library site for eight years or sell it.

3. Police and Fire Building Space Needs

Reggiani had **Dick Groff** come and go over the list of space needs for the Police and Fire Building for Council. **Groff** stated that there were some concessions made in the two-day workshop that are itemized on the right side of the handout. **Groff** answered some basic equipment questions from Council. **Van den Broek** asked why there has been space allotted for three bunkrooms. **Groff** responded with five reasons: if the department will ever become a paid department, we will need a place to have a 24/7 team; it will be the alternate EOC and will need to have a place for volunteers to crash for a bit; if the department ever configures a schedule for the volunteers to be in the hall certain days of the week then we will need to have a place for them to sleep; there is an option to have a single person actually live there that will be on duty all night; lastly it will be a place to house trainers when they come to town. **Beedle** stated that that could be something that could be added on later. **Reggiani** stated that these numbers are to help CH2MHill build numbers for the vertical costs. **Allison** stated that at this point, we should be planning for the maximum and future needs, then cut it down depending on funding. **Beedle** asked if there are estimates yet. **Reggiani** replied that there are not yet. **Groff** stated that a Public Safety Building is built to a higher standard than a house or a store, which will be reflected in the costs. **Kacsh** stated that as a committee member they are still working on the space needs. What is presented in the handout is a work in process. **Reggiani** stated that in two or three weeks the committee will have some numbers to look at from CH2MHill. **Chief Hicks** reminded everyone that this committee is designing fifty-years into the future, so they have to try to anticipate the needs. It may be a paid department or if Cordova's needs grow. **Tom Bailer** stated that he does have a concern with the fitness room and the bunkrooms. He thinks they should be utilizing the hotels and restaurants in town. Also, there is Bidarki available to meet the fitness needs. **Van den Broek** agreed with **Bailer** that the fitness room stuck out to him as well and perhaps those funds can be put towards a public facility. **Joanie Behrends** stated that for training, they bring in instructors and some classes require many hours. The EMS1 training, for example, is a 50 hours class and because they are training volunteers, they have to do the training in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate their work schedules. To do this extends the training over long period and if the department puts the trainers up in a hotel, it could cost thousands of department money. This in the end would have to be paid for by the taxpayers so it may even out in the end. **Chief Robert Baty** stated that the fitness room is important because the departments are public servants, which are required to keep a certain level of physical fitness for their safety and for liability reasons. Yes, Bidarki is available but it is difficult with shift work to make it there when they are open. It also, would be an incentive for volunteers to keep fit. With both departments, there are high-risk situations that could have high liability if they are not physically fit. In addition, the City could be held responsible if a means for them to maintain that expectation is not readily available. The training room also provides a place for private training for self defense, which would limit the excessive force issues. To mitigate that risk the fitness area was included in the design.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Clay Koplín stated that the planning process is great. Looking into the future is important. It takes time to get a quality product. The tsunami zone is a driver but perhaps more cooperation could be given if approached differently. He stated that the community does need a new Public Safety Facility but it also needs a vibrant district with adequate parking to support it with growth opportunities.

Tom Bailer stated that the Resolution from Council to start this committee is the best thing they ever did. The committee has got people involved and concerned who are coming to the committee with feedback, which is fantastic. He did talk to a community member this week about the usage of truck in the alley way and they have not been using 40 foot trucks. Not to say they will not need to use one in the future but they do not currently use them. Yes, look for sites but do not forget what the committee has already accomplished. There have been many great things brought to the table: crosswalks, 2nd street

parking, alleyway, snow dump, etc. We can use those ideas for developing the downtown site even if we do not use it for the Public Safety Building.

Luke Weinrick, Mt. Eccles Estate #7, stated that he liked the idea of planning for a building but is not happy with the downtown site and would like to see the Council look at other locations. The open canvas is a good idea. Keep planning and looking for financing it is looking ahead for Cordova.

F. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Beedle stated that there are no complaints for the need for a building just the sites. He hopes those that are putting the time into the selection are listening. The Council should look at other spots and not rule anything out. He thanked the committee members for their work.

Allison said the committee needs to be careful not to short themselves in office storage and space, this is the planning stage. He stated that he is not too concerned with the site selection but the Rec Center and pool need to be considered too. We will need a place to put them eventually even if it is a long ways off.

Van den Broek said to push for more work sessions to discuss the site selection.

Cheshier stated that there have been some good conversations so far. The bottom line is to set ourselves up the best way we can to get free money.

Reggiani stated that we have many concerns with the downtown area, outside of it possibly being a location for the Police and Fire Facility, which will need to be addressed. Some of them will be brought up and talked about at the P&Z meeting Tuesday night at 7:00 pm at the City hall conference room.

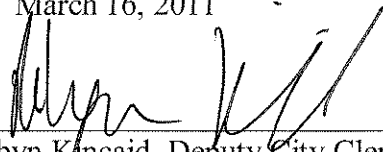
G. ADJOURNMENT

M/Kacsh S/Beedle to adjourn the work session at 7:25 pm.

Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: March 16, 2011

Attest:



Robyn Kincaid, Deputy City Clerk

