

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

June 11, 2013 – Noticed Agenda Attached

Meeting Convened: 3:00 p.m. in the City Auditorium

Meeting Adjourned: 5:40 p.m.

Council Members present: All. Staff present: Englehart, Shaver, Moore, Taylor, Valentine, Romero, Prall, and Kemp. There were other staff members in attendance. Harry Weiss, Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Robin Brown, Avalon Theatre Foundation, were also in attendance.

Agenda Topic 1. Avalon Theatre Discussion

City Manager Englehart advised the purpose of the workshop is to review the business plan and provide an opportunity for questions from the City Council. Councilmember Norris expressed the desire to hear what was taken out of the initial project in order to provide the three proposals that have come forward.

The architect, Daniel Gartner of Chamberlin Architects, explained that design changes were made in regards to the value engineering in order to reduce the cost. He noted that phasing has been a challenge for years, prioritizing what elements are most important. Three options were described; an \$8.2 million option, the completed “core” project; a \$7.6 million option that included building the shell of the addition, three stories with everything stubbed in but nothing inhabitable (elevator shaft but no elevator, roughed-in restrooms but no fixtures, no multi-purpose room) but as Stan Kiser from FCI Constructors, Inc. pointed out, the new HVAC would be housed in that addition and that would supply the old part of the building; and a third option at \$7.1 million which only includes the elevator and the additional restrooms besides the auditorium improvements. The third option does provide minimal ADA compliance and addresses the health and safety issues.

Councilmember Chazen inquired if the impact of the addition on parking was looked at and what the analysis showed. Engineering Manager Prall advised that parking was studied, there would be adequate spaces after the addition, as well as a configuration for loading and unloading, and that the cost for reconfiguration was estimated at \$150,000. That amount was not included in the bid amount because they would not be needed until the next phase when the stage is expanded.

Councilmember Chazen inquired as to the City’s exposure regarding accessibility with the second option. The City Attorney did convey that the City could be exposed to liability due to its aggressive pursuit of ADA compliance throughout the City in the past as well as the extent of

the City's resources, to just have a plan to comply is somewhat in conflict with the City's past performance given those other factors.

The business end of the Theatre was then discussed. Councilmember Brainard likened the Theatre to a facility rather than a business. Councilmember Norris expressed her focus was more on number of citizens served. Discussions ensued with promoter Ron Wilson (Sandstone Productions) as to how an improved theatre would increase the revenue as well as the number served. Facility Manager Stuart Taylor talked about making the Theatre more artist-friendly and listed some of the amenities that would improve that experience and attract more artists.

Labor costs were discussed, along with hours, hourly wage, use of part-time help, and how increased number of events may not actually increase City net revenue.

The history of the City's commitment was described by Councilmembers Doody and Boeschstein. The City Manager explained the allocation over a two year period.

After a brief recess, the meeting reconvened. City Manager Englehart clarified that the \$7.1 million project (Option C) does meet ADA compliance and accessibility but does not provide any additional room.

DDA Director Weiss posed that the DDA and the Foundation are contributing their \$3 million and \$1 million respectively to the City to get the project done, with the DDA wanting specific elements accomplished to meet their goals of making the building safe and usable. If the City postpones or adds costs to the project, it is unfair for the City to expect additional contribution from those two entities or to ask the DDA to backstop the Foundation's contribution.

Chair of the Foundation Board John Halvorson explained the dilemma with fundraising without having the City's commitment both with grantors but also with private donors.

The pros and cons of starting with Option B or C and then moving into the core project (Option A) when more funds were raised was discussed. FCI's Stan Kiser said it would make more sense to start with Option B, building the shell.

Councilmember Norris believes Option A is what needs to be done and asked DDA Director Weiss if the City begins with Option B, and the Foundation is unable to come up with the difference, would the DDA board be willing to make up the difference to complete Option A? Mr. Weiss said he can put that question to his board on Thursday.

There was a discussion on whether to start with Option C, which the Foundation stated they have their share for that option, or to start with Option B, with several Councilmembers stating that Option A is where they want to be. The concern was that starting with Option C adds to

the cost when moving to Option A. Foundation representatives felt that just starting the project would help the fundraising. Multi-year commitments from donors was also discussed and whether that would be acceptable to City Council from a cash flow basis.

The discussion wrapped up with the Council asking DDA Director Harry Weiss to ask the DDA Board if they would be willing to split the difference if Option A were to be authorized by the City Council.

The Mayor directed the City Manager to place the Avalon Theatre item on the next City Council agenda.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2013, 3:00 P.M.
CITY AUDITORIUM
250 N. 5TH STREET**

To become the most livable community west of the Rockies by 2025

- 1. Avalon Theatre Discussion**
- 2. Other Business**