

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

August 19, 2009

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 19th day of August 2009 at 7:03 p.m. in the City Auditorium. Those present were Councilmembers Bonnie Beckstein, Teresa Coons, Tom Kenyon, Gregg Palmer, Bill Pitts, Linda Romer Todd, and Council President Bruce Hill. Also present were City Manager Laurie Kadrich, City Attorney John Shaver, and City Clerk Stephanie Tuin.

Council President Hill advised the process for the meeting tonight and the workshop following.

Council President Hill called the meeting to order and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizen Comments

Elizabeth Lavelly, 629 Ouray Avenue, advised the Winter Summit was held on behalf of the homeless and she wanted to update the City Council. She listed those organizations in attendance at the Summit, noting the amount of enthusiasm to address this issue in the community. She encouraged the City Council to get involved and to include ways to address homelessness in the Comprehensive Plan. She invited them to a meeting the following day at the Homeless Shelter at 10:00 a.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Kenyon read the Consent Calendar and then moved to approve item #1. Councilmember Beckstein seconded the motion. Motion carried.

1. **Setting a Hearing on Amending Chapter 24 of the Code of Ordinances to Regulate the Use of City Medians**

The incidence of persons standing on City medians has increasingly become a problem for motorists using the streets. Persons that stand, sit or otherwise occupy medians create a dangerous situation for motorists, pedestrians and traffic. City staff recommends that an ordinance be adopted to regulate use of the City medians.

Proposed Ordinance to Prohibit Solicitation in City Medians and Rights-of-Way

Action: Introduction of a Proposed Ordinance and Set a Hearing for September 2, 2009

ITEMS NEEDING INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION**Public Safety Initiative****a) Ballot Resolution**

To provide an opportunity for the City Council to consider the Public Safety Initiative and possible November 2009 ballot question. The ballot question would ask voters to approve a sales tax increase to build public safety facilities.

Council President Hill advised that this item was discussed at a previous workshop but no decision was made nor were all seven members of Council present at the workshop. That is why this item is before the City Council this evening. First, the City Council must decide if a question will be placed on the ballot. If that is decided in the affirmative, then the City Council will address the specifics. He asked for a motion and then they will move into discussion.

Resolution No. 72-09—A Resolution Setting Titles and Submitting to the Electorate on November 3, 2009 a Measure to Increase the Sales and Use Tax from 2.75% to 3.00% as a Voter Approved Revenue Change as Defined by Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution

Councilmember Coons moved to adopt Resolution No. 72-09. Councilmember Todd seconded the motion.

City Council then asked for a presentation.

Laurie Kadrach, City Manager, presented this item. She first addressed the economic impact of each of the options and explained the model that is used to compute that impact. Another piece in the Staff Report is the recommendation from Cobb and Associates, a firm hired by the City Manager to provide analysis of the public sentiment.

City Manager Kadrach reviewed what has been done to extend and improve the use of the current facilities, including the Communication Center, at Fire Station #1. In preparation for new facilities, the groundwork that has been laid so far was accomplished including a needs assessment that was a ten-year outlook. The most recent proposal was only the first phase in that ten-year plan. An architect was hired and put together a project team that included Staff that were not necessarily in favor of new facilities for police. That project team identified the public safety facilities as the number one priority. A grant application for Fire Station #1 and a Neighborhood Fire Station has been submitted. The City has also used reserve dollars to prepare the site. Ms. Kadrach reviewed the analysis the City has done both prior and after the election in

November 2008. Lastly, City Manager Kadrich listed the work session and meetings where the City Council has discussed this issue.

Councilmember Todd asked how the City is faring regarding federal guidelines and compliance. City Manager Kadrich said there are deadlines looming for conversion of the radio system to 800 MHz by 2012. The City is continuing to move forward in coming into compliance.

Councilmember Todd asked what the response time is to get to the large equipment stored at City Shops. City Manager Kadrich said that would depend on the location of the call. The ideal situation is that the officer and the equipment are at the same location. The current situation does add to the response time.

Councilmember Coons asked if the current situation is adequate and what problems would be anticipated if the issue was phased in over the next several years.

City Manager Kadrich responded that a band-aid has been applied to the public safety situation. Sharing the CBI building will likely continue for certain lab work but there is other lab work that can't be done at the CBI facility. The proposal calls for sharing of the central operations so that most of the centralized functions can be shared and thus save taxpayers money. It was estimated that the savings was \$12 to \$14 million in savings by combining those functions. The current City funds are not sufficient to fund the construction of the central building.

Councilmember Todd asked if the City is going to borrow money or hold onto the funds. City Manager Kadrich said a ¼ cent increase would still need to be matched by other City funding and the amount of revenue from that increase is now less than what was estimated previously.

Councilmember Palmer asked for clarification on the \$53 million option. City Manager Kadrich explained how that would fit into the resolution. Councilmember Palmer then asked about the language that spoke to operation of facilities. If the tax were to sunset, then how will those operating expenses continue to be funded? City Manager Kadrich said it could be used for operations but would typically be for one-time expenses.

Councilmember Coons asked for clarification from the City Attorney on the bonding process.

City Attorney Shaver referred to the questions brought up by Mr. Dennis Simpson and then answered that the question is a revenue question. It is not a debt question. If a question were to be approved, the City would seek financing through Certificates of Participation through another entity and then the City would lease those facilities.

Councilmember Palmer asked about more information on the ballot question. City Attorney Shaver advised the question in the resolution is not complete, if the Council decides to place a question on the ballot, they will then need to insert the additional language.

Councilmember Coons asked Terry Cavanaugh of Cobb and Associates, the consultant referred to previously, as to how she gathered her information and made her conclusion. Ms. Cavanaugh listed her sources of information and her conclusion is that the public is still not clear on what the question is. Councilmember Coons asked if the time frame is too short to still educate the public. Ms. Cavanaugh responded that this is her belief. She then gave City Council a variety of examples of the sentiments in the community and how the need should be met as it is still unclear. Councilmember Coons asked about timing. Ms. Cavanaugh said that communication is the key, as well as consensus and a strong citizen mandate.

Councilmember Kenyon said the mandate he hears is that there should not be a tax increase. There was also confusion in the community. His conclusion is that the City is not ready.

Councilmember Todd said the elected officials need to step up to the plate in times of downturn. They can create jobs in this downturn time and they should move forward on this desperate need. The City Council needs to engage the community and move forward. It is \$32 dollars per household per year to build these facilities. Without placing a measure on this ballot, they will have to wait until November 2010 or April 2011.

Councilmember Pitts said when he was campaigning, he said he would listen to the public. He agreed there is a need and to do nothing would be to go backwards; but in listening, he thinks placing it on this upcoming ballot would be an error.

Councilmember Palmer agreed the need is well established but he respects the reasons the voters said no. He agreed with Ms. Cavanaugh as far as the timing and the questions that the public still have. There are still other questions that could impact this matter such as the Clifton annexation. The economic conditions are not good and the people he has spoken with think the City should wait. He said he preferred not to have the matter on this ballot.

Councilmember Coons said her constituents don't all agree. Some agree with the not now, but many think it will be a stimulus package for the City. Many think that now is the time. The amount of the tax increase is minimal compared to the impact on the economy. She thought many of the questions from the last election have been answered and the project has been adjusted. If the Council decides to go forward, then the responsibility is on Council to get the word out. She is in favor of going forward.

Councilmember Beckstein agreed the need is there, however, there is so much going on and so many unsettling things going on at the Federal and State level. The citizens want the City to slow down and think about it. Start slower and make sure the citizens know the Council is listening. There are a lot of citizens who do not feel they were part of the analysis. She would like to see it happen, but now is not the time.

Council President Hill thanked the members for adjusting their schedule to be at this meeting. Staff provided options after the Council had a work session and laid out some different options. Although they have tried to engage community groups, there is more work to be done. He can't think of a better time to build something, but wonders if that is an argument that the citizens would accept in this environment. Regardless of how the vote comes out, the Council will adjourn in the next room to begin planning.

The vote was called. Motion failed by roll call vote with Councilmembers Kenyon, Palmer, Pitts, Beckstein and Council President Hill voting NO. Councilmembers Coons and Todd voted YES.

Council President Hill advised with the failure of the motion the next item is no longer necessary.

b) Contract with Mesa County Elections for the Public Safety Initiative Election

In order to place the City's ballot question regarding the Public Safety Initiative on the Mesa County ballot, an intergovernmental agreement setting forth the responsibilities of both entities is required. In essence, by this intergovernmental agreement, the City will enter into a contract with Mesa County for them to conduct the City's election.

No action was taken on this item.

Non-Scheduled Citizens & Visitors

There were none.

Other Business

There was none.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Stephanie Tuin, MMC
City Clerk

*Resolution Numbers were revised due to a numbering error.