

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP SUMMARY
April 17, 2006**

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado met on Monday, April 17th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium to discuss workshop items. Those present were Councilmembers Teresa Coons, Jim Doody, Gregg Palmer, Jim Spehar, Doug Thomason, and President of the Council Bruce Hill. Absent was Councilmember Bonnie Beckstein.

Summaries and action on the following topics:

1. **INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE (ISO):** 10 Year Review Update by Dennis Parshley, Insurance Service Office (ISO). Mr. Parshley advised that he is here to evaluate the City on fire services. Mr. Parshley said the last review was in 1997 and said he is here earlier than the ten year review due to the amount of growth. Mr. Parshley talked about the process and said ISO is trying to get out to communities sooner due to the amount of growth to ensure the classification is correct. He said there is a chance to improve and said most communities stay the same, a few get worse, and a few improve. Mr. Parshley stated that recordkeeping is the key regarding liability issues. He then described some of the items that he looks at such as the communications center, training, staffing, equipment, number of hydrants, and service lines. He said part of the review for the water department portion is flow tests throughout the City. Mr. Parshley said City Manager Kelly Arnold will receive a report within six months and said the report will have a list of items that he looked at, the score that was achieved, and what the City could do to achieve the maximum score.

Councilmember Thomason asked if the current rating is 4 and asked Mr. Parshley to please explain what that classification means. Mr. Parshley said there are ten classifications: 1 is best versus class 9 which would be an area without water. He said a rating of 4 is about in the middle and said that is about average for a community of this size.

Councilmember Spehar questioned how the rating is used by insurance companies. Mr. Parshley said that is just one of the items the insurance companies look at when writing a policy. He said that does not mean the insurance rates will go down if the classification goes down. He said lower ratings under 5 affect insurance for commercial and industrial buildings.

Council President Hill stated the City is in the process of adding personnel to the department and questioned if that would be a factor in the review. Mr. Parshley said not at this time, but it will be a factor the next time they do the review, along with other improvements that have been made. He also encouraged Council to stay ahead of the development and said that the City could request ISO to come back and request another review or every year and a half a questionnaire will be

mailed out and will be sent to the Fire Chief to request them to do another review.

Action summary: City Council thanked Mr. Parshley and expressed their appreciation.

2. **METH STREET CRIMES UNIT:** The Grand Junction Police Department (GJPD) proposes the creation of a uniformed police unit dedicated to law enforcement intervention to attack methamphetamine distribution, addiction, and related crimes. Interim Police Chief Gardner summarized the history of the study and the proposal. He said the purpose of the Task Force was to form a focus group of people from law enforcement, the Department of Corrections, the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center, the Drug and Alcohol Prevention Center, businesses in the community, family members of addicts, and insurance organizations. He said the Task Force group made a conscious decision to have a mission statement and a list of principles to reduce the tragedies from methamphetamine use.

(Council President Hill left the meeting at 7:55 p.m.)

Interim Police Chief Gardner said an Intern from Mesa State College interviewed 200 plus jailed inmates and said the results were used to form a good database for research. He said a majority of the felony crimes are directly or indirectly linked to methamphetamine and said a majority of the inmates were involved with methamphetamine. Interim Police Chief Gardner said that 75% to 80% of the children in the custody of the Department of Health Services (DHS) are children of methamphetamine- using parents. He said that methamphetamine has become a major concern and said the Task Force brought in a number of law enforcement personnel who testified and gave enforcement recommendations. Interim Police Chief Gardner said that he is here to review the recommendations that were made to make the product difficult to sell and bring pressure on the offenders. He listed three important pieces: the enforcement piece, the prevention piece, and the treatment piece. An organized Drug Task Force can work together to infiltrate and eradicate. He said for example, this year there was a three month investigation that brought down a large methamphetamine conspiracy. He advised the Task Force is in need of a unit that can respond immediately apart from other organized conspiracies, as a direct impact team. Interim Police Chief Gardner said they should be uniformed officers and be able to respond to all Crimestopper tips, not 911 emergency calls. He said they should be well supervised and have good communication with the DEA and neighborhood officers. He identified the last important piece to be a multi-jurisdictional Task Force and noted it is very important to collaborate with the Mesa County Sheriff's Department. He said that he spoke with Sheriff Hilkey and he is very committed to the program. Interim Police Chief Gardner said that he also spoke to the Palisade Police Chief and the Fruita Police Chief regarding their ability to participate. They both welcome the program and want to

participate on an ad hoc basis. He advised it will take a minimum of 6 to 9 months to staff up. There will be a 4 week experiment with a Meth Street Crimes Unit this summer using their current resources.

Councilmember Coons said the District Attorney's (DA) office is also a participant of the Task Force and is in favor of the program. She said the DA's office really emphasized the need for training for the officers so they know what they need to do.

Councilmember Thomason questioned if other departments are contributing financially. Interim Police Chief Gardner said both the Grand Junction Police Department and Mesa County Sheriff's Department are absorbing the cost of the experiment for the summer and said no, on the proposed budget, that it does not include any Mesa County funding, but said they are contributing to the treatment side.

Council President Pro Tem Palmer said that it nice to see the entire community working together collectively to support this and questioned if this will be operating outside the City limits. Interim Police Chief Gardner said only with the help of the Mesa County Sheriff's Department and said that this is a joint Task Force partnership.

Chief Gardner stated the request is for four additional officers and one supervisor. He said the street officers will answer the emergency calls, but officers on this team will only work with the Task Force program.

Finance Director Ron Lappi said there are two numbers that will affect both the 2006 and 2007 budgets. He said the cost estimated is \$210,000 for the first year or 2006, to get people on staff and get them trained. He said the estimated cost in 2007 is \$306,000. He said this will really not affect the budget, long term as they are just moving positions that were approved for 2007 forward. He said there is one impact of funding the Task Force; the traffic unit starting in 2007 was supposed to bring in revenue. He said Staff will need to reevaluate the budget for 2007 and said by amending the sales tax revenue estimate there will be enough revenue to fund this program for the next two years.

Councilmember Spehar said he is supportive of this program, but wants to make sure that all budget requests are reviewed when additional funding is identified rather than funding requests as they come forward.

(Council President Hill returned to the meeting at 8:16 p.m.)

Mr. Lappi agreed and said this proposal was not in the budget and he was told this was a priority that needed to be funded.

Council President Pro Tem Palmer noted that the methamphetamine use does constitute an extraordinary circumstance.

Interim Police Chief Gardner agreed this is a very extraordinary circumstance and said the officers are very frustrated because they know about the methamphetamine problem, but they do not have time to deal with the drug users. The department is appreciative of Council's support of this program.

Councilmember Doody questioned what will happen at the Mesa County jail if this is successful.

Councilmember Coons said that jail over crowding is a concern so Mesa County will be looking at how the criminals are sentenced for the various crimes committed.

Interim Police Chief Gardner advised these people are going to end up in jail anyway. He said there will be great cooperation between the street police and the Mesa County Jail; the department is working on arrest standards, how people are housed, and how to protect the community.

City Manager Kelly Arnold said there will be a budget amendment presented to City Council in two weeks. Mr. Lappi concurred noting the first reading is scheduled for May 3, 2006.

City Manager Arnold said that he recommends that Council support this proposal, but cautions that this probably won't be temporary. He too does not want to lose track of the original proposals in the budget. City Manager Arnold said there was a meeting 2 weeks ago with the school district regarding the education side of this program. He said this will be a challenge for the officers and school officials to open this dialog on this problem and change the DARE program to include education on meth abuse.

Action summary: Council thanked Interim Police Chief Gardner for all of his work on the Task Force and said this is a much needed program for the community.

3. **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:** A Staff review of the upcoming vacancies and time frames for scheduling interviews. City Clerk Stephanie Tuin said letters were mailed out to the Cinema at the Avalon, Inc., the Avalon Theatre Foundation, Inc., and the Downtown Development Authority requesting those boards recommend a representative to be a member on the new Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee. She reviewed the upcoming vacancies for the Downtown Development Authority/Downtown Grand Junction Business Improvement District Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Urban Tails Committee, Ridges Architectural Control Committee, and the Riverfront Commission.

Councilmember Coons questioned if there has been any requests for a Traffic Safety Committee. Ms. Tuin said yes, that she has had a couple of conversations with Mesa County and said that they have some grant money to revitalize that committee. She said that Officer Quimby was going to talk with Interim Police Chief Gardner to come before Council to discuss that possibility.

Councilmember Thomason questioned if there is another GJ101 scheduled. Assistant City Manager Dave Varley said not yet, that once the new management intern is on board in June, Staff will try to get one together early fall.

Council President Hill asked when the intern will start. City Manager Arnold said the intern will start June 12th and hails from the University of Kansas.

Action summary: Terms on the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee were clarified as being three years, it was suggested that board vacancies be advertised during the Council meeting intermissions and Staff was directed to place a discussion regarding the Ridges Architectural Control Committee on a future workshop agenda.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.