

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP SUMMARY
May 14, 2007**

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado met on Monday, May 14, 2007 at 7:03 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium to discuss workshop items. Those present were Councilmembers Bonnie Beckstein, Teresa Coons, Bruce Hill, Gregg Palmer, Doug Thomason, and Council President Jim Doody. Councilmember Linda Romer Todd was absent.

Summaries and action on the following topics:

1. **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:** Stephanie Tuin, City Clerk, gave an update on the status of appointments to various volunteer boards. She also reviewed the current activities for the various boards. Volunteers for interviews for both the DDA and the Commission on Arts and Culture were solicited.

Action summary: Gregg Palmer, Jim Doody and Bruce Hill volunteered for DDA interviews. Bruce Hill, Bonnie Beckstein and Teresa Coons volunteered for the Arts Commission interviews.

The Council President called a recess at 7:55 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

2. **REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT IMPROVEMENTS AGREEMENTS USED FOR DEVELOPMENTS:** Tim Moore, Director of Public Works and Planning, introduced the topic noting it was a continuation of the discussion regarding Code changes to make the process smoother for the community. Planning Manager Lisa Cox reviewed the required improvements for each type of development as well as requirements for completion, guarantee and warranty as well as the method for the City to insure completion. The requirements are put into place to protect the citizens and end user, as well as the City, to make sure taxpayer dollars do not have to be expended to complete the improvements. The Development Improvements Agreements lay out all of these requirements and guarantees the completion, the performance and includes a financial guarantee. The dollar amount is 120% of the projected cost of the improvements. The Maintenance Guarantee is also a mechanism that is used to make sure of the quality of the improvements within the first year. There are also provisions to address temporary improvements. The agreements seek to balance the rights of the owners, the developers, and the future owners. Ms. Cox said it is not unusual that construction schedules slip a little so there are provisions to extend the timeline of Maintenance Guarantees and to make sure the City is still protected. In 2006, the Planning Commission approved 35 subdivision plats where the developers used a Development Improvements Agreement. DIA's are also used to allow owners to move into their property without all the improvements being complete; not life safety improvements but improvements such as landscaping, a prime example.

Ms. Cox concluded by pointing out both documents are legal contracts and thus are very complete.

Councilmember Coons inquired about the timing of the release of such agreements. Planning Manager Cox detailed the time frame for the inspections that then in turn lets the Planner know the agreement can be released. Due to workloads, there have been some delays. Councilmember Coons asked if there is a deficiency does the time clock start over. Ms. Cox stated not always, but if the deficiency is significant, the time clock does get restarted.

Councilmember Palmer asked how long this process has been in place. City Attorney Shaver answered over 17 years. The agreements have been refined, and have evolved so the process is very predictable. Councilmember Palmer asked if these are required on all new projects. City Attorney Shaver replied any new subdivision where there are infrastructure improvements, the developer has a choice; they can allow the plat to be held or use DIA's. The DIA process is to their advantage as they can market their property sooner. Councilmember Palmer asked if there have been requests to waive the DIA. City Attorney Shaver responded infrequently; most developers are knowledgeable about the advantages including the fact that the City inspectors are keeping an eye on the contractor so it serves the developer.

Councilmember Hill wanted to clarify that the developer can do all the infrastructure improvements without a DIA but with a DIA it expedites the process to market the property. Ms. Cox said they would still execute a DIA but would use a plat hold as a guarantee not a monetary obligation for security; at completion they execute a Maintenance Guarantee. Councilmember Hill asked why do they have to sign a DIA when they are using a plat hold. City Attorney Shaver explained the DIA details the improvements that must be done. Ms. Cox said it is a promise to construct in accordance with the City standards.

Councilmember Hill stated that prior to DIA's, plats would be approved and then the improvements might not be constructed but with DIA's in place, that won't happen. City Attorney Shaver concurred.

Action summary: No action was requested.

3. **GJ COMMUNICATIONS CENTER UPDATE:** The Police Department will update the City Council on planning for and implementing solutions for the immediate space needs and other infrastructure challenges at the Police Department, and planning for a new public safety facility relative to the Grand Junction Regional Communications Center (GJRCC). Police Chief Bill Gardner introduced the topic and referred to those in attendance from the City and also Rebecca Thiess, Undersheriff of Mesa County, representing Sheriff Stan Hilkey. He outlined the development of how this planning process began. He introduced Deputy Chief Troy Smith.

Deputy Chief Smith reviewed the Communication Center history and 2006 data. Nearly 50% of the calls come from cell phones now which can't always be located. The training for the Communication Center is very intense and the job is very difficult.

A work team was drawn together to address two key needs: solve current challenges and strategically plan for a new public safety facility. The Communication Center is the number one priority and the property evidence facility is number two. One of the difficulties is remodeling the Communication Center and still keeping it up and running. A number of recommendations came out of the work team:

- Remodel the Communications Center to add space to the data room and the operations floor to accommodate new technological advances and anticipate future growth in both technology and personnel
- Replacement of the uninterrupted power source (previously approved by Council)
- Replacement of the back up power system
- Relocate the City's Information Systems infrastructure for the Police Department into the Communications Center's data room
- Add 3 additional dispatch consoles to the center
- Create a space for training new Telecommunicators (located in a modular)
- Relocate support personnel to offices within the modular

Current staffing requires 72 hours of overtime per week. Eighty-five percent of the staff has worked over 100 hours per pay period since the beginning of the year.

Councilmember Palmer asked if the current trainees will bring the staffing levels up to reduce the overtime. Deputy Chief Smith replied that is a good point but a difficult question to answer. Even with the new hires there is one vacancy and likely additional vacancies coming forward. With six months of training, it will remain an issue. With the existing configuration, additional personnel cannot be accommodated. Consoles are placed so close together it is difficult for the dispatchers to hear and the heat generated by the machines is detrimental to the equipment and the employees. The uninterruptible power supply had to be placed in an office due to the floor support needed. Due to federal grant funding availability, the 911 board decided to go to the 800 MHz radio system and utilize that grant funding. Officer safety is an issue with the current system.

Coplink is a system to allow linkage of databases with other agencies and involves analytical tools. Deputy Chief Smith related a story where the Coplink system helped with an arrest. Councilmember Palmer asked if all the other agencies have to have Coplink. Deputy Chief Smith said the data will come through the Sheriff's office so it is not necessary for Fruita and Palisade to have it. Councilmember Palmer was pleased with the prospect of that type of linkage taking place and recognized the hard work that has gone into this process.

Deputy Chief Smith advised the funding for the Coplink program is in the supplemental appropriation request.

Deputy Chief Smith concluded that both the operational space and the data space are insufficient to maintain the continuity of the critical public safety communications service delivery. One modular is in place and two more are on their way.

The Communication Center will have to be taken down briefly while the new uninterruptible power supply is installed.

Three lab personnel will be moving into the new CBI facility by the airport once complete in the fall or early next year. Property and evidence will remain in the current Police Department building.

Councilmember Palmer asked Deputy Chief Smith to detail taking the system down during the switch over. Deputy Chief Smith stated that it is hoped it will only be for a very short time frame but a contingency plan is in place in case the system does not come back up.

Councilmember Coons asked how the funding for the Communications Center is distributed. Deputy Chief Smith responded that Mesa County Sheriff's office pays for all of the unincorporated areas and also Collbran and Debeque. Fruita and Palisade pay their prorated amount and 60% of the funding comes from the City of Grand Junction.

Councilmember Beckstein asked if there has been any thought to a private contractor taking over. Chief Gardner responded that the private sector does a number of things very well. Currently a private company does the non-emergency transport calls and that is not really up to the City standard. Next year it may come back to the City. Private companies perform based on a profit margin and public safety does not fit a for-profit model very well. Councilmember Beckstein expressed her concerns that the budget is not meeting the needs. Deputy Chief Smith advised the budget was not exceeded any year except for 2006. He pointed out that the Police Department isn't the only department that is feeling the effects of growth.

City Attorney Shaver added that there is also significant liability for this type of operation. The costs for a private contractor would contain a large factor in insurance costs.

Councilmember Hill stated that there is a need for temporary resolutions while working on a long term solution. He asked how the staffing situation can be addressed. Chief Gardner said the staffing is unacceptable and he pledged to work with the City Manager to come up with a plan which will include increasing the number of authorized staff.

Councilmember Coons asked about the process of screening applicants. Chief Deputy Smith said this is ongoing and they are working with Human Resources and the Police Psychologist, and adjusting the training model.

Chief Gardner expressed that he knows the City has limited resources and there are infrastructure needs throughout the City, but within 4 to 5 years the need for a new public safety facility is crucial.

Action summary: No action is being requested except support for the supplemental appropriations request.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Coons brought up the Airport Authority issue. It is clearly an emotional issue and she wondered if an invitation could be sent to the Authority to come and talk to City Council. Councilmember Palmer said he has tried to keep City Council advised but renaming the Airport is on the agenda for May 15, 2007. He can extend a request that the issue be postponed until the Airport Authority comes and talks to Council. He urged that the issue not be confrontational. Although the City appoints three members of the board, it does not fund the airport operations.

Councilmember Coons agreed but asked that the discussion be at a workshop when the public is aware. Councilmember Palmer stated the Airport Authority tried that last Monday, opened the meeting to the public and only 6 to 8 citizens showed up.

Councilmember Hill asked if the name change will bring more business and a greater position in the market.

Councilmember Palmer explained how it has been explained to him. Airport staff asked the question about going through this upgrade for which \$78,000 in signage will be spent. It was suggested that the name change should be discussed now along with marketing it to the different airlines. Councilmember Palmer said the current name implies a sports facility or military facility and there have been inquiries to that effect. The airfares are higher than they should be due to lack of competition. The Authority hopes to market the airport and region to draw additional airlines. The Authority went to an airline convention and tried to market this area and after speaking to representatives regarding the area, Montrose had an edge due to their regional name as that is what the airlines recognized. It is not to diminish the legacy of Walter Walker. The Authority is spending money on Walker Drive road signs and other signage, but rather the purpose is to market this area better.

Councilmember Hill asked if there is a compromise to have the name be Grand Junction Regional Airport at Walker Field. Councilmember Palmer said absolutely, they intend to explore several options.

Council President Doody said that the way to do business is let the community have some debate or input. Councilmember Palmer advised Council President Doody that since he will be at the Tuesday meeting that would be an appropriate comment to make.

Councilmember Palmer said all Authority members have been in community service and want to do the right thing. Council President Doody said the comments from the public are that it is not being discussed openly. Councilmember Palmer reminded the Council, all the members of the Airport Authority board are experienced community members and meetings are open to the public. Council President Doody invited the public to attend the Airport Authority meeting on Tuesday at 5:15 on the third floor of the Airport terminal.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.