

Capital Facilities Committee Meeting
August 19, 2010, 4:30 p.m.

1. Call meeting to order: Alderperson Joe Martin called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call of Membership:

Present: Dean Gazza, Lynn Hagee, Karen Harkness, Alderperson Joe Martin, Chris Quello, Paula Vandehey, Attorney Jim Walsh, Liz Witek

Excused: Alderperson Ed Baranowski, Kelly Helein, Don Hietpas, Lisa Remiker, Dave Willems

Others Present: Kathy Beck, Terry Dawson, Peter Gilbert, Ellen Jepson, Vicki Lenz, Alderperson Michael Meyer, Jan Quinlan, Colleen Rortvedt, Maureen Ward, Tony Wiczorek

3. Approval of Minutes

The committee approved the minutes of the July 22, 2010 meeting (Walsh/Vandehey 8 -0).

4. Appearances – City Attorney Jim Walsh presentation of letter from Don Hietpas

At Martin's request, Walsh shared a letter from Don Hietpas (attached).

5. Action Items

a. None

6. Information Items

a. Group discussion of Capital Facilities Committee procedures

After congratulating Dawson on his retirement, Martin opened the meeting for discussion among Committee members. Quello expressing his appreciation of Hietpas' articulate letter and stated he concurs with building a new library. He also expressed concern with the library world changing so rapidly the building studies may be out of date in a few years.

Committee members expressed a variety of concerns on costs of building new, the adequacy of remodeling, the City's ability to commit to costs, private funding, space needs and timeline for the project. Harkness explained her concerns with projecting costs, difficult in any case due to cost fluctuations, and especially so absent a definite timeline.

Dawson stated he believes in doing the project right versus doing it fast. He said the while at this time the Library is not in major crisis, there are design and space needs to be addressed: design for technology is not optimal, access to meeting rooms is problematic, security is not the best, and crowding is an increasing problem. He also addressed the issue of the atrium as wasted space. Dawson said the atrium is used for concerts and programming on a regular basis. The space is used by mothers with small children and families. The space is welcoming and takes an otherwise ordinary building and makes it attractive to the public. He noted that a public building has different concerns than a building designed to conduct City business. While the community's library service needs could be met by remodeling, a new building would do so more efficiently.

Walsh said the allocated funds for the project can be revisited with Council any time. Currently the \$10 million dollars is in the Capital Plan for five years as a place holder pending the Facilities Master Plan which may be approved for the 2011 Budget. Gazza noted the amount could possibly increase or decrease based on other project priorities and the economic climate. Martin reminded

committee members we cannot forecast the numbers. The City is currently facing a \$3 million deficit and will be cutting many things including jobs in the upcoming budget.

Witek added the Library Board has contributed input for the building studies, especially for the first study. The Library Board has approved the recommendations from both consultant studies to build a new building. Witek said the Library has had as many as 3,000 visitors on a peak day and it would make perfect sense to build a new library. She hopes this does not go as far as a referendum.

Gazza said from a Facilities point of view, you always want to build new, but in reality does not see it as a possibility at this time given the financial climate. Harkness added based on all of the information the CFC Committee had been provided to review she believes the Committee would be in agreement that the most prudent way to proceed would be to build a new library. However, she also believes the Committee would be in agreement there are too many unknowns such as stimulus dollars, fundraising and the economy. It is a tremendous balancing act. A library structure planned and built in phases may be the most favorable option. Witek said she would like to see a building planned and built that has a lifespan of at least 20 years.

Aldersperson Martin called on the audience and staff for questions, comments and concerns.

Aldersperson Meyer thanked the committee for their strategic approach and getting to the crucial matter being discussed. He noted that Hietpas' letter brought to mind two things: funding, which is a flexible number dependent on the type of structure; and private funding, which is easier to obtain if the building is new. A phased structure may be a possibility. He said the Mayor is looking at ways to increase the efficiencies of City staff by the way they are repositioned and structured. The savings in efficiencies may be enough to pay for building. He believes the Committee should recommend a new structure but be flexible in their approaches so a new structure can get built.

Martin asked administrative staff for their opinions. Rortvedt feels there is a lot of talk about the type of space the Library should have. She believes the space should be customizable and evolvable. She added that utilizing space and furniture that can change with the future needs of the library would be a plus. Wiczorek reiterated Dawson's comment that it is important to do it right rather than fast, making sure finances are in place and shareholders are on board. Dawson said though there is much uncertainty and deep concerns about the City's financial state, it is important to think creatively about modular designs and look at other opportunities for financing. We may not have answers, but these are things to keep talking about. Ward said "Just do it."

Quinlan commented that she is impressed with the committee and their earnest hard work, and also Martin's leadership. She felt that this type of discussion and level of engagement bode well for our community.

Martin said he has been proud to have the opportunity to chair the Capital Facilities Committee. He had hoped to bring a decision to Council, but has realized he cannot do so without further work. He would like the committee to continue to meet but divide into two groups, finance and building. The Finance group will be chaired by Remiker and include Harkness, Quello, Hietpas and Jan Quinlan. The Building group will be chaired by Gazza and include Eric Lom, Don Harp, Colleen Rortvedt and Vicki Lenz.

Martin said the City employs talented staff and he would like to utilize the talent and get their input. He will facilitate groups and believes more important than separating the groups is bringing them back together to see what they can do. He asked that the groups meet in closed session and Attorney Walsh has confirmed they may do so without issue. Each group will develop a mission statement. The Finance group will explore funding sources and the Building group consider sites and designs. After the groups have done further work, they will report back to the full Committee at a date to be determined.

b. CFC Survey Monkey results and comments provided

Survey results were provided.

7. Adjourn

Martin moved to adjourn; Quello seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm