

**MINUTES**  
**COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**August 19, 2003**  
**5:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rietz, Council Member-at-Large Goodnature, Council Members Nordin, Jorgenson, Pacholl, Chamberlain (5:10 p.m.), Christopherson (5:10 p.m.), and Koch

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jon Erichson, Dan Wilson, Craig Hoium, Jim Hurm and Tom Dankert

**ALSO PRESENT:** Corrine Johnson, Public, KAAL TV-6, Austin Daily Herald and Austin Post Bulletin

Mayor Rietz called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Item #1 - City Engineer Jon Erichson discussed the status of the new Central Garage facility. The current facility is falling apart, and the expansion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant is also necessitating this move. The Austin Utilities may be interested, but their needs are 3-5 years away. The County is not interested in a joint facility, and the Austin Public Schools are still interested in co-joining. The city has put money aside for this project, in the amount of \$3 million. Another \$1 million is available from other sources within the city through the Waste Transfer Station, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the delay of equipment purchases. However, we are still \$1.3 million or so short. Mr. Erichson noted there is currently a favorable bidding climate in the construction world right now. The bid would be received in late fall with a start date of early 2004 and a move-in date of late 2004. Corrine Johnson, Austin Public School superintendent, stated the school is still interested in this facility.

Mr. Dankert noted a bond issue could be floated for the \$1.3 million difference, but issuance costs would also have to be added. The revenue stream from the equipment user charges would be used to offset the semi-annual bond payments. Equipment purchases would then have to be reduced to fit the debt service expenditure into the budget.

Mayor Rietz questioned if any council members objected with the use of bonds to finance a portion of the project, none noted. Mr. Erichson will proceed with the project.

Item #2 – Community Development Director Craig Hoium discussed the community entrance signs, noting Spruce Up Austin will be doing landscaping for the project if funding proceeds.

Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted the signs are rather extravagant for what the city is going through these days. The sign should state “Welcome to Austin”, nothing else. Mr. Hoium noted the service clubs contributed based on the way the sign is proposed now, with the logos listed below the welcome area. Mr. Hoium noted if the council wants some alterations, he would go back to the service clubs for their approval. Council Member Chamberlain noted the service clubs initiated the signs and have committed some money to them, so we should leave the

service clubs on the sign. Mayor Rietz noted we need the service clubs for the funding. Mayor proposed City of Austin Welcomes You as the sign verbiage. Council Member Pacholl noted the service clubs were fine with him, but the business should be removed. Mr. Hoium noted he would contact the Hormel Foundation for their approval of that since they are also a contributor. Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted he would be okay with the service club names on the sign.

Council Member Chamberlain noted the funding was originally proposed at 1/3 for each entity. Mr. Hoium noted this came from Gary Rhodes who is no longer in the community.

Motion by Council Member Jorgenson, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Goodnature to recommend to council to spend up to \$5,000 for one sign (from Contingency), to allow the service clubs name, but no businesses. The sign shall read something like “City of Austin Welcomes You”, but the city council will see a final draft of the verbiage before it is done. Carried 6-1 (Christopherson – Nay). Item will be added to a future council agenda.

Item #3 – Mr. Hoium discussed the JOBZ zones and the potential of 32 sites totaling 730 acres to be included in the city’s request. Mr. Hoium noted one requirement is that service needs to be installed currently or is coming within one year. All of the properties were reviewed with some being removed from the list. Sites removed were as follows:

- #2 Perry Byam Property
- #11 Old Kmart Property (currently Human Services)
- #12 Astrup Property
- #26 O’Leary Property
- #28 Bud Johnson Property

Council Member-at-Large Goodnature and Council Member Koch requested the USEM’s property be left in as a potential site.

Mr. Hoium noted he would attempt to bring an updated list to the September 2, 2003 council meeting for approval.

Item #4 – East side of downtown Austin was discussed and the potential for redevelopment. Mr. Hurm noted he is trying to coordinate economic development within the community and has had a few meetings with other potential members, such as the Utilities. Mr. Hurm noted he and Mr. Hoium approached the County with some potential areas for redevelopment. Further discussion ensued regarding a “Justice Center”. Council Member Koch noted the Chamber of Commerce would want this facility downtown Austin.

Mr. Hurm noted this was an update only for the council.

Item #5 – Fire Chief Dan Wilson discussed the status of the communications system that has been ongoing for the last 18 months. The changes to our current communication system are the result of changes from the FCC and band frequencies and width. This has been between the County and the Austin Police and Fire Departments, and is proposed to be funded from our PERA money.

Council Member Koch questioned if this included a centralized dispatch center? Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted this has to be done, but the system could be “plugged into” a centralized dispatch center.

Mr. Dankert noted the funding would come from the Fire and Police PERA moneys, and that the total estimated cost of \$670,000 has already been partially budgeted for in 2003.

Council Member Christopherson questioned if a “Justice Center” is built, would we need to do this again? Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted only a small portion of the current expense would not be useable in a new facility.

Motion by Council Member-at-Large Goodnature, seconded by Council Member Jorgenson to recommend to council approval of this project. Item will be added to a future council agenda.

Item #6 – Mayor Rietz discussed the appointment process she uses when recommending citizens to fill vacant posts within the community. The Mayor noted she interviews potential candidates, meets with the management of the organizations to see where their needs are, and then recommends to council a name to fill a vacancy. Currently there is a vacancy at the Austin Utilities with Mr. Lorenzen moving to California.

Council Member Nordin noted Jeanne Sheehan, the Mayors recommendation, may be better served on another committee. Council Member Jorgenson disagreed, noting Ms. Sheehan would make a great Utility Board member. Council Member Koch agreed.

Council Member Christopherson noted Vincent Lynch’s experience on the Utilities Board would be beneficial.

Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted all council should get the lists and also make recommendations to the Mayor on who they believe would be good board members.

Motion by Council Member Christopherson, seconded by Council Member Jorgenson to recommend to council the appointment of Jeanne Sheehan to the Austin Utilities Board. Carried 6-1 (Nordin – Nay). Item will be added to the September 2, 2003 council meeting.

Item #7 – Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted the council needs to follow Roberts Rules of Order when conducting meetings, and that all council should read up on them as they may be beneficial to each council member. Mr. Hurm noted the League may have a videotape that can be viewed.

With no further items on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Director of Administrative Services