

**MINUTES**  
**COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**DECEMBER 2, 2003**  
**5:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rietz, Council Member-at-Large Goodnature, Council Members Jorgenson, Pacholl, Christopherson, Nordin, and Chamberlain

**ABSENT:** Council Member Koch

**STAFF PRESENT:** Don Tomlinson (until 5:30 p.m.), Denny Maschka (until 5:15 p.m.), and Tom Dankert (until 5:40 p.m.)

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

Mayor Rietz opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and announced the City of Austin has received a grant for \$380,000 from The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). This grant will be used to help pay for the costs of infrastructure going into the Cook Farm site. In other news Mayor Rietz noted the employee that was originally drawn to be Mayor for the Day has declined, so the Mayor has drawn Craig Hoium to be the Mayor for the Day.

Item #5 - Park and Recreation Director Denny Maschka discussed a proposal to plant some locust trees on the East Side of the Courthouse to replace the trees that are to be cut down. Similar locust trees are planted near the Town Center and do not provide much of a habitat for the birds to nest in. The total proposed cost of replacing the four trees would be \$1,250 to purchase and plant the new trees. The removal of the trees would cost the same as originally proposed. The other option, planters, would cost \$3,533 and would require annual planting and maintenance.

Council Member-at-Large Goodnature requested this be discussed at the next joint city/county meeting on December 17. After some additional discussion, no council noted their opposition to the proposal.

Mr. Maschka also discussed the phone call some council members received regarding the removal of twelve trees so the Grunewald house could be moved. Mr. Maschka noted the house was so huge that one side had to be removed, and the trees on the north side of the street had some rot in them, so we decided to take them down. Many citizens have informed us they were happy the trees were removed. Council Member Christopherson requested the public be notified ahead of time that the trees would be removed. Mr. Maschka noted they will try to inform the citizens in the area ahead of time. Mr. Maschka noted we could come and plant some more trees, trees that would only grow up to fifteen feet in height. Mr. Maschka noted he would call the citizen.

Item #7 – Don Tomlinson, the City’s “webmaster” gave a presentation of the current website, and what would be happening to it in the near future. Mr. Tomlinson went through some of the pictures that are located on the site, and also showed council how citizens can communicate with us via email and the eforum. Mr. Tomlinson also noted that 123,724 hits have been made to this site since

the counter was added about four years ago. Council Member-at-Large Goodnature noted building permits should be made available to the public on the web site.

Item #2 – Mayor Rietz updated the council that a proposed joint powers agreement for the operations of Mower County Transit between the City of Austin and Mower County is currently being drafted by David Hoversten’s office. Council Member Jorgenson is working with Garry Ellingson and Craig Oscarson on this issue.

Other Item – Mr. Dankert handed out the booklet that will be discussed at the December 8, 2003 Truth In Taxation meeting to be held in the council chambers. Mr. Dankert noted the booklets have a lot of information, but specific details will not be covered unless specifically requested.

Item #3 – Mayor Rietz discussed the memo that City Administrator Hurm put together regarding “Comprehensive Planning and its place in economic development”. Mayor Rietz requested everybody read the document and call Mr. Hurm with any questions.

Item #6 – Mr. Dankert handed out the City Code books (draft copy) for council to review. The books were distributed as follows:

<b><u>Book Number</u></b>	<b><u>Elected Official</u></b>
#5	Tom Dankert
#17	Council Member Nordin
#15	Council Member Chamberlain
#12	Council Member-at-Large Goodnature
#16	Council Member Pacholl
#18	Council Member Christopherson
#11	Council Member Jorgenson
#13	Mayor Bonnie Rietz

Council Member Koch will have his assigned to him (#14) by the City Administrator’s office.

Item #1 – Mayor Rietz discussed the current organization of the council whereby the committees, such as fire, finance, and ordinance are now gone for a collective Committee of the Whole work session. These new work sessions allow all council to hear about the issues directly and then have a say into them.

Moved by Council Member [REDACTED], seconded by Council Member [REDACTED], adjourning the work session at [REDACTED] p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Director of Administrative Services