

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2010

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 15, 2010 at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Ralston, Lundberg, Leezer, Simmons, and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, Clerk III Jim Larson, and members of the staff.

Councilor Wylie was absent (excused).

Mayor Leiken introduced six high school students from Springfield High School who were job-shadowing the Mayor and Council.

The students were Jennifer Mendez, Cindy Cordova, Jessica Velazco, Demetrie Oakes, and Cam "Wing" Nguyen. All students were seniors.

Mayor Leiken welcomed the students.

1. Library Department Update.

Library Director Rob Everett presented the staff report on this item. The Library was a well-used and a vital part of this community and all indications were that more service was desired and needed. This recognition was both gratifying and daunting. In uncertain economic times the Library found itself in the paradox of having an ever increasing demand for its services while its resources shrunk along with everyone else. Last year the Library reduced its operating budget while increasing open hours, circulation, patron visits, internet access, youth, teen, and adult program attendance, and private contributions supporting the Library. This year the Library was prepared to stay the course, but demand for services continued to grow and as it continued to grow it would become increasingly difficult for both our facility and our staff to adequately meet that demand.

Mr. Everett discussed the number of patrons that visited the Library and the number of books, CD's and DVDs that were checked out by these patrons. He also noted the number of people that attended Library programs and visited the Library's webpage. This year, the Library was on track to exceed all of the previous year's figures. There was a surge in activity around service to Spanish speaking patrons. Many people were pursuing job retraining and educational goals during this down economy. In response to this need, the Library had configured their staffing to allow for two additional open hours per week, additional children's, teen's and adult programs, had received a Gates Opportunities Grant for \$27,000 to replace all existing public internet stations and add ten more. They were participating with 180 other public academic and tribal libraries in the Oregon Statewide Database Licensing Project. This past year saw a National Book Award winner, two Oregon Book Award winners, and a New York Times best-selling author come to the library, and the Richard Wildish Theater was filled to capacity twice during the Library's annual Springfield Puppet Festival.

Mr. Everett discussed the partnership between the Library and the School District. Upon learning that the schools would be closed on 16 Friday's during the year, the Library pursued grant funding to provide elementary and teen programs on those days. This summer, the Summer Reading Club helped 1,417 children retain or improve their reading skills by reading more than 13,000 books. The Library also partnered with the Farmer's Market.

Mr. Everett said the Library had been fortunate to experience an increase in activity by Library support groups. The Library Advisory Board was at full strength and under new leadership; the Friends of the Library also had new leadership and had doubled both its membership and contribution level (\$10,500) in the past year. The Library Foundation had increased its Board to 11 members and held its first ever community event with last fall's Springfield Follies. After a period of inactivity they too contributed \$10,000 to the Library.

The Library was a well-used and vital part of this community and all indications were that more service was desired and needed. This recognition was both gratifying and daunting. In uncertain economic times the Library found itself in the paradox of having an ever increasing demand for its services while its resources shrunk along with everyone else. More people were coming to use the Library's services, to look for work, find out about job retraining, create a resume, or pursue an educational goal. More families were coming to the library to help their children be better prepared for school, to complete school assignments, and to experience educational and fun library programs. The library was a resource and a refuge for seniors, teens, and those with few resources of their own.

Last year the Library reduced its operating budget while increasing open hours, circulation, patron visits, internet access, youth, teen, and adult program attendance, and private contributions supporting the Library. This year they were prepared to stay the course, but demand for services continued to grow and as it continued to grow it would become increasingly difficult for both the facility and staff to adequately meet that demand.

Mr. Everett noted that there were three critical areas the Library lagged behind other libraries in Oregon serving communities our size: (1) not open enough hours to be truly accessible to the majority of Springfield's citizens; (2) staffing level was below the number needed to keep the Library open even a few more hours, although through the Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) model they were hoping to discover efficiencies that would help with that issue; and (3) collections weren't large enough to effectively respond to the information needs of Springfield citizens.

Mr. Everett discussed how the Library was addressing these areas. Many Oregon libraries, in communities the size of Springfield and smaller, were open from 50 to 60 hours per week. The goal for Springfield was to be open 54 hours per week. He discussed how the Library used computer and internet access to provide additional services to residents. He passed around some of the digital audio books to the Mayor and Council. These digital strategies were viable in the short term, but did not address the growing numbers who viewed the Library as a cultural center of their community.

A new library facility had been put into the City's Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Everett discussed how he had researched the size of Library needed for Springfield. Even if a new library could be built, they would still need to determine what kind of library it should be and what kind of services it should provide. To discover more about what Springfield's citizens thought about their library service, a community-wide survey was recently conducted. A report and analysis of this survey conducted by the Ulum Group were included in the agenda packet. This report could provide direction for future library services. He further discussed the community survey results. The results indicated that there was interest and support in keeping the Library as part of city government and that at the appropriate time

the voters could support a library enhancement initiative whether that came in the form of an operating levy to increase hours and/or a building campaign to construct a new library. Staff looked to the Council to advise them on whether they should continue to plan in this direction and begin by making preparations to conduct a survey of registered voters that would identify both costs and funding mechanisms in relation to a new library facility.

Mr. Everett referenced two documents that made the case for libraries being “the logical partners for local economic development initiatives that focus on people and quality of life.” In their report; **Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development** the Urban Libraries Council stated that “Public Libraries build a community’s capacity for economic activity and resiliency. Mr. Everett concluded his presentation by noting the many services the Library provided to a wide variety of citizens.

Mr. Everett acknowledged his great library staff.

Mayor Leiken thanked Mr. Everett for his presentation. He asked if Mr. Everett had information on what part of Springfield people lived that came to the Library.

Mr. Everett said he didn’t have that information. He had started to reach out more to the Thurston area (east end of town). It would be incumbent on the Library to get staff out there to increase those numbers.

Mayor Leiken said the 97478 zip code area had the second or third per capita income of the Eugene/Springfield area, which meant there were people that had the funds to assist. He thought perhaps the Library Foundation could have more outreach in that area.

Mr. Everett said the Library Foundation was currently working on a work plan. The staff had worked hard to get the Library Foundation Board built back up and active. Anne Ballew was the new Foundation president. It was important for the Library to have a citywide presence, including east and north Springfield.

Councilor Ralston said the survey wasn’t very scientific, but was filled out by those that supported the Library. It would be more meaningful if people that didn’t attend the Library took the survey, a more community-wide survey would be more accurate.

Mr. Everett said they did want to follow-up on the survey with focus groups. There was also an article in the paper and press releases to the media outlets regarding the survey, which was available online. They were not able to identify who took the survey.

Councilor Ralston said perhaps those that took the survey online were the ones that did not support the Library in the survey results. It would be interesting to know if the 15% that didn’t support the Library, used the Library.

Mr. Everett clarified that the 15% identified themselves as rarely or never using the Library.

Councilor Lundberg said the decision the City faced was a cultural decision and whether or not they considered library services part of Springfield’s culture. Although her children were no longer in public school, she supported the schools and also supported the Library. They needed to take a survey of everyone that included costs. She was interested in looking at a building that would better serve people and perhaps a private citizen or business could contribute towards that. She was supportive.

Mr. Everett said they needed time to build that support for the Library in the community. The Library Foundation helped to build that support and a voter base.

Councilor Simmons said he had been a long time supporter of the Library. He referred to the study and noted that if the voter population was surveyed, the results could be slightly different. If they chose to build a new facility, a survey of all voters would be prudent. He felt the Library was an integral part of the fabric that weaved the community together and provided an opportunity for learning and cultural development. The problem was finding the funds to increase the hours. They may need to consider a cost associated with the use of the Library by the participants. This was an excellent opportunity to visit the issue. He didn't want the Library to go away, he did not want it to become a for-profit corporation, and he didn't want to turn it over to Willamalane. He agreed with the main premise of the survey. He would like information in the report showing a budget comparator from year to year.

Mayor Leiken spoke regarding the Battle of the Books event. He felt that event would continue to grow and the Library should showcase the fact with a banner that the Springfield Library was a chief sponsor of the event. He noted how his children, along with Councilor Lundberg's children, spent a lot of time at the Library when they were in Council meetings. The Library was very important.

Councilor Leezer said this was an excellent report. Libraries were always important, but especially during these tough economic times. It would be wonderful to have a beautiful library like Eugene. She thought they would find the support they needed.

Mayor Leiken said he was pleased to learn that Anne Ballew was chairing the Foundation.

Mr. Everett said Ms. Ballew was fiscally responsible and he appreciated that about her.

2. Police Department Update.

Police Chief Jerry Smith presented the staff report on this item. He provided Council with brief updates on major department programs and projects. Topics of discussion included:

- Municipal Jail Operations Status
- Police Planning Task Force
- Staffing (Hiring issues)
- Reported Crime status
- Levy Status

Chief Smith introduced Kathy Cunningham, Court Supervisor, and said she was available to address issues regarding the Courts and Jail. The Police Department saw a lot of citizen involvement in profound and positive ways. He gave an example of a citizen this month who stopped and detained a burglar. This was the third consecutive year that a citizen had stepped forward and provided funding to replace a canine when there was a need. Those funds were kept in an account for that purpose when the need arose. They had enough for three dogs. When the K9 program began, there was pushback from the community and now they were very supportive.

Chief Smith said it was a challenge to recruit and employ good quality people for police officers. They recently received 70 applications for a position, 50 showed up and a significant number failed the written part of the test. They ended up with 5 potential candidates, but one was eliminated from the list. They had 3 officers in the academy, one in training, and 3 vacancies.

Chief Smith said in 2009, the case numbers issued were down by almost 13% from 2008. There were a number of factors to consider. Eugene's numbers all increased. He expected Springfield's numbers would continue to decline. There was a vacancy on the Police Planning Task Force which was being advertised. He commended the PPTF members for their assistance with the community survey and long-range plan. They were looking at the jail policies now and providing input.

Chief Smith referred to the levy. There was .75 on the levy for police, court staff, and prosecutor staff, and another .34 attached to jail operations. They were underspending on the Police side of the levy, but there was not enough experience with the jail to determine the impact on the levy. He felt the operation of the jail was going better than expected. He thanked and acknowledged the Citizens Academy Alumni Association for volunteering to help with the overnight stay at the jail. During the overnight stay, they had 80% capacity. The jail staff was doing well. He noted that it cost \$5 per day per inmate for three meals a day. They had found a few mechanical issues that were being addressed. Hyland had done a great job in addressing any issues. The Police Department receipted over \$38,600 in bail in less than one month since the jail opened. The last 6 months of 2009, the Police Department receipted about \$37,000. It was too early to say it was a trend, but did seem to be a good indication. The jail had not been opened for long enough to determine if the failure to appear (FTA) rate would decline.

Chief Smith said the jail was inspected by the Department of Corrections last week. They requested that Council acknowledge that the jail existed. He would schedule a time with the City Recorder when the Mayor and Council could tour the jail. Chief Smith said they would also need to schedule time for the Grand Jury to tour the jail. The jail served both the Police Department and the Court. He asked Ms. Cunningham to share the impact to the Court.

Ms. Cunningham said the impact had been challenging to the Court. They had found that the increase of people being held meant an increase in the number of people that needed to be sent to trial, some within 30 days. She described the timeline of the process and the work involved. They found an increase on their trial dockets, and attorneys bringing people in to change their plea. That meant longer hours for the courtroom. Prisoners had increased substantially. Today they had 13 prisoners and 23 cases. Other days there were even more cases associated with the prisoners. They adjudicated more cases in February 2010 than were filed. They hoped that trend continued. The jail had a large impact on the City Prosecutor's office, getting discovery out and coordinating negotiated settlements or trials.

Chief Smith said there had also been a benefit to the City of Eugene. An inmate at Springfield was sent to the Eugene Court and was sentenced to a 30 day sentence at the Springfield Jail, where he was returned to fulfill both his Springfield and Eugene sentences.

Councilor Ralston asked who paid for that.

Chief Smith said because the inmate was already in the Springfield jail on Springfield charges, the City of Eugene was not required to pay for the concurrent stay.

Councilor Ralston said that issue was discussed during the Human Services Commission meeting. He asked if Eugene had 15 beds assigned to them. That was not adequate and he hoped Springfield utilized as much space as possible and that Eugene paid Springfield for any prisoners housed here.

Chief Smith said Springfield was in conversations with the Municipal Court in Eugene regarding that issue.

Mayor Leiken asked if the Springfield Jail was equipped to hold white collar Federal prisoners.

Chief Smith said they could take a look at that. INS had severe requirements, and Lane County had opted out of negotiating with them because of the cost. Before the jail was constructed, the Federal government had talked with Springfield. It was not something they were considering immediately, but could be something considered in the future.

Councilor Ralston asked how much it cost per bed per day.

Chief Smith said about \$75.

Councilor Ralston said even if the beds weren't being used, it still cost the City. The City could charge \$30-\$40 per bed per day. He wanted to encourage getting as much revenue as possible.

Mayor Leiken asked how many inmates were housed at the jail.

Chief Smith said they had been as high as 47, but were at 40 today. Most people chose to bail out, which meant they paid their bail.

Ms. Cunningham said last week an individual had plead guilty to a drunk driving charge. His fine and his fees came out to \$1,577. This individual had posted bail of \$1500 and then paid the remaining \$77. If that person had not posted bail, it could have taken a year or so to try to collect that money. It will make a significant impact for Court operations to have as much of that money up front as possible.

Councilor Pishioneri said there would be a catch up period. At some point there would be reoccurring offenders that would bump out the other population. He discussed the Federal offenders and staffing issues. He commended Chief Smith and his staff for being diligent in doing the job right.

Chief Smith said the Police were seeing more people with mental illness. There was a lack of resources locally and statewide for those with mental challenges.

Mayor Leiken thanked Chief Smith and Ms. Cunningham for their presentation.

3. Update on Cherokee Drive Sewer Local Improvement District Assessment Methodology, Establishing Maximum Assessment Per Property, and Citizen Requests Concerning Payment of Associated Systems Development Charges (SDC).

City Engineer Ken Vogeney presented the staff report on this item. In preparing the draft City Engineer's Report for the Cherokee Drive Sewer LID, staff had determined that there were several factors that could be applied to the Assessment Methodology that had varying levels of impact on the benefitted property owners. Also, staff had received numerous comments from property owners concerning the uncertainty of the construction cost. All of the cost information prepared to date was based upon estimates and not actual bids from contractors, and property owners were requesting that Council provide them with more certainty. Lastly, staff had received requests from several property owners within the District about pre-paying their Local Wastewater SDCs before the City increased the rates on one and two family residential construction.

Staff was preparing the City Engineer's Report for the Cherokee Drive Sewer LID for presentation at a public hearing before Council on April 5, 2010. In evaluating the typical assessment methods for

work of this type, and citizen comments received by staff, three topics had arisen that staff desired to bring to Council for further direction. These questions were summarized below and discussed in more detail in Attachment 1 of the agenda packet.

Assessment Methodology: Staff found that 75.6% of the property owners would have a lower cost using an Assessment Methodology that was based upon the length of frontage of their lot along the street, and 24.4% would have a lower cost if the Assessment Methodology was based solely upon the number of lots within the district boundary. Considering that each property within the district received essentially the same benefit (a public sewer connection) from the project regardless of the size of their lot, staff recommended assessing all of the properties at the same rate as derived from the frontage length method, with the City paying the balance of project costs.

Maximum Assessment: Several property owners had expressed concern to staff that the cost information provided by the City continued to be estimates and that their actual assessments could be substantially higher. Staff requested Council's direction on including in the City Engineer's Report a maximum assessment amount that could be charged to any property owner.

Pre-Payment of Local Wastewater SDCs: Several property owners had asked if they could pre-pay their SDCs so that they could take advantage of the rates in effect today rather than the rates that would be in effect whenever they decided that they needed to connect to the public sewer. From staff's perspective, this was another way for some property owners to essentially "freeze" their SDC rates by pre-paying the fees for their properties within the district. During their work session on financing options for this LID on January 25, 2010, Council did not support "freezing" the SDC rate. Staff communicated this to property owners at the neighborhood meeting February 18, 2010. Staff expected that the subject of "freezing" and pre-paying SDCs would come up during the public hearing on April 5, 2010.

Councilor Ralston asked if the maximum assessment of \$7500 would include the SDC hook up charge.

Mr. Vogeney said it was the public system construction only. Whatever the cost was for their individual property was their own cost. The assessment amount would get the pipe to their property. All other fees would be in addition to that.

Councilor Lundberg asked how much assistance would be given for those that qualified, and if it would be for the public construction or their private hook up.

Mr. Vogeney said the assistance available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program would be for their private side, not on the public side. The district did not qualify overall for CDBG funds, which would have assisted with the public construction. They had encouraged residents to work with Housing Manager Kevin Ko regarding assistance.

Councilor Lundberg said during one of the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) meetings, a representative from the State discussed a different CDBG program that she thought was run through St. Vincent DePaul. She had the representative's business card and would get that to staff. She thought there was some additional assistance. She asked about the rates on the loans.

Mr. Vogeney said Council directed staff to use a 3.5% interest rate for the loans. That amount would be incorporated into the Engineer's Report for the Bancroft funding.

Councilor Ralston clarified staff's recommendations. He said he didn't see anything in there about the pre-payment option.

Mr. Vogoney said staff recommended they did not offer the pre-payment option.

Councilor Ralston asked why the homeowners would not be allowed to do that if it was to their advantage. He asked if it would be an option.

Mr. Vogoney said one of the concerns of the homeowners was regarding the SDC rates that were scheduled for an increase in the future. One of the concerns of staff was trying to keep track of who paid which charges, when and for how long they would be allowed to pre-pay. If someone was going to connect to the sewer in 10 years, and paid their SDCs at today's rate, the long-term loss of that revenue could be an issue for the City.

City Attorney Joe Leahy said the City would also have two sets of standards between those that could pay now and those that could not pay now.

Councilor Simmons asked how they could refuse if someone applied to be hooked up to sewer and brought in payment tomorrow.

Mr. Leahy said the City wouldn't have the authority to accept it.

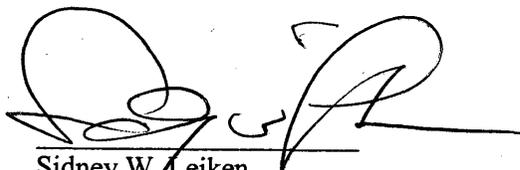
Mr. Vogoney said there wasn't anything for them to hook up to.

Mr. Leahy said if they filled out a permit, they would need to act on that permit in a specific amount of time (180 days) or they would lose it.

ADJOURNMENT

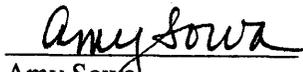
The meeting was adjourned 7:03 p.m.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa



Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa
City Recorder