

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Thursday, August 14, 2008 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring Street, Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor	-	Richard Heffley
Mayor Pro Tem	-	Curtiss Schonenberg
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
Councilman	-	John Wagner
Councilman	-	Charles Richardson (left at 8:55pm)
Councilman	-	Bruce Tesch
City Manager	-	David Meisell
City Secretary	-	Patti Glaeser

**1. Call to Order.**

Mayor Heffley called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.**

Mayor Heffley led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

**3. Consent Agenda:**

**a. Approval of invoices.**

**b. Approval of Minutes of July 24, 2008 Regular Meeting.**

**c. Approval of Minutes of July 29, 2008 Special Meeting.**

Councilman Schonenberg moved to approve the consent agenda. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**4. Consideration and Action to Approve Invoice from Curtiss Automotive.**

Councilman Richardson moved to approve the invoice from Curtiss Automotive. Councilman Tesch seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka  
Abstain: Councilman Schonenberg

The motion passed.

**5. Citizen's Presentations and Comments.<sup>1</sup>**

Dr. Tom Hancher, former Mayor, thanked Council for their service. He discussed the reasons 4-B taxes were set up, which included to promote progress in the Community and to create jobs. He said it was not to make large profits. He said the CCIDC was organized so that an independent group would make the decisions at the Industrial Park and keep politics out of City Hall. He also voiced his concern that the recent letter to the editor, insulted 30 years of mayors and councils. He said some mayors and councils were not aware the 1987 Water/Sewer Study existed. He also said things did happen during that time. Sewer lines and gas lines were replaced during that time and a new water tower and sewer plant were built.

Dwain Dungen, former Mayor, also spoke. He believes the CCIDC should allow new businesses to feel wanted. He said the City is not an independent realtor. Income is still generated after the sale, including income through sales tax and ad valorem taxes. He also believes people on Boards should handle economic development and tourism.

Lori An Gobert discussed her concerns with the removal of CCIDC Board Members. She doesn't feel it was handled nicely. Her main concerns deal with the CCVB and Chamber contracts. She said she is going on rumors and assumptions regarding not renewing the CCVB contract. She said the money from the Hotel Occupancy Tax is legislated for the promotion of arts, culture and tourism and she does not feel there are experts in the City for that. She feels that if the City is not going to keep someone that has experience working, it is not the best utilization of funds. She has not heard anything about the Chamber but is wondering if the City will bring the Chamber into the City as well.

**6. Discussion of City Manager's Report including Scada System Update, Water Line Easements River Status, Water Pumpage History, Sales Tax Update, City Hall Renovations, Water Line Repairs, Tree Trimming Season, Interest Rate History, Industrial Park Sewer Plant Aerator, Great Southern Wood Real Estate Valuation.**

City Manager, David Meisell, presented his City Manager's Report, which is attached to the minutes. Tim Gescheidle, of TGA Associates, discussed the City Hall Renovations. The major things the City plans to do is to make City Hall ADA compliant, remove asbestos, install new HVAC and heating, and add a new City Council Chamber downstairs. Mr. Gescheidle said the price projection was \$972,968. He also presented Council with a preliminary construction schedule with actual construction beginning in January.

Mr. Dungen said that the Central Appraisal District (CAD) has Great Southern Wood's undeveloped acreage currently valued at \$9,500. Councilman Wagner questioned Mr. Dungen as to what year that was. Mr. Dungen said it was 2007. Councilman Wagner said that the CAD has the valued listed as \$18,000 for 2008.

Mayor Heffley then moved to Agenda Item #13.

**13. Consideration and Action Regarding the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau Contract.**

Mr. Meisell showed a chart of the hotel/motel revenue and a proforma of taxes received with a 3% inflationary growth curve. He said it appears the number of rooms sold has not increased over the years. He also discussed the impact of raising the Hotel Occupancy Tax Rate from 6% to 7%.

Mr. Meisell discussed what would happen if the contract were not renewed. The Administrative Assistant would, at least for the next year, be housed at the current location at the Opera House and would become an employee of the City of Columbus. The City would take over dispersing funds. With lower administrative costs, there would be more funds available to disburse to the public organizations. Mr. Meisell projects awarding 4 grants at \$25,000 each. Those organizations would be held to the standards set in the Hotel Occupancy Tax statute. Lori An Gobert admitted it sounds like a good idea.

Councilman Richardson moved that the Contract with the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau not be renewed. Councilman Tesch seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**14. Consideration and Action Regarding the Columbus Chamber of Commerce Contract.**

The City currently funds the Columbus Chamber of Commerce \$10,000. Mr. Meisell said the Chamber could apply for a \$25,000 Hotel Occupancy tax grant but its proceeds had to be used as required by the Hotel Occupancy Tax statute. George Fox, Executive Director of the Chamber, was present and agreed with the proposal as long as the City keeps their share of the agreement. He stated he would appreciate the opportunity to get more money.

Councilwoman Frnka moved to cancel the contract with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. Councilman Richardson seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**7. Public Hearing: Redesignation of Property located at 638 Bonham from District R to District R-3.**

Mayor Heffley opened the public hearing at 8:30 pm regarding the redesignation of property located at 638 Bonham from District R – Residential to District R-3 Day Care Facilities District. Mr. Meisell explained the process of changing to District R-3 – Day Care Facility. Councilman Richardson expressed his concern with traffic issues at that location which is across from St. Anthony's School. Most of the children will be dropped off prior to school starting. There is also a side entrance on Live Oak Street that could be utilized.

No one from the public commented during the public hearing. The public hearing closed at 8:35 pm. The regular meeting reconvened with all members present as before.

**8. Consideration and Action to Approve Ordinance # 83-08; Redesignating Property Located at 638 Bonham Street, Block 37, Lot LT PT S-8-10; Said property to hereafter be wholly within District R-3 Day Care Facilities District.**

Councilwoman Frnka moved to approve Ordinance 83-08, redesignating property located at 638 Bonham Street, Block 37, Lot LT PT S 8-10; said property to hereafter be wholly within District R-3 Day Care Facilities District. Councilman Schonenberg seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**9. Consideration and Action to Approve Public Use Right-of-Way Agreement from AT&T Communications.**

Mr. Meisell explained the Agreement from AT&T. He said franchise fees have been declining assumedly due to less people having landlines. He said the current contract is a 20-year contract. He suggested Council renew the contract for two years. Councilman Richardson moved to approve the Public Use Right-of-Way Agreement from AT&T Communications for two years. Councilman Tesch seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**10. Consideration and Action to Approve a Request from Colorado County Fair Association to Permit a Parade within the City of Columbus on Portions of Milam and Walnut Streets Between the Hours of 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. on Saturday, September 13, 2008.**

Councilman Tesch moved to approve a request from the Colorado County Fair Association to permit a parade within the City of Columbus on portions of Milam and Walnut Streets between the hours of 8:00 am until 12:00pm on Saturday, September 13, 2008. Councilman Schonenberg seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**12. Consideration and Action to Approve Amount of Certificates of Obligation, Series 2008.**

David Meisell reviewed the items that the Certificates of Obligation, Series 2008 would cover. He was confident in spending \$2.2 million. To cover the \$1.150 million for City Hall renovation and \$300,000 for gas system rebuild. Also included would be \$750,000 for water improvements.

With further discussion, Council decided that the other projects were also needed including \$50,000 for fire department windows, new water well for \$500,000, a new water plant for \$670,000 and an additional \$500,000 for water improvements. Cost of issuance of the certificates of obligation is estimated at \$60,000.

Councilman Tesch moved to approve \$4 million for the Certificates of Obligation, Series 2008. Councilman Wagner seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Richardson, Schonenberg, Tesch, Wagner  
Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

Councilman Richardson left the meeting at 8:55pm for personal family illness reasons.

**11. Discussion of Budget Workshop.**

Expenditures, including personnel were discussed. Mr. Meisell discussed cutting one person in the parks department and outsourcing the mowing of the Parks. Others items that were not budgeted included the code enforcement officer and the TMRS unfunded liability payment of \$25,000.

Councilman Wagner said the City Manager had not received a raise since he began working in 2004 and would like to increase Mr. Meisell's salary.

Several other items were discussed including Police Department requests.

**15. Items from Councilmembers.<sup>2</sup>**

Councilman Wagner – no comment.

Councilman Tesch – no comment.

Councilman Schonenberg – no comment.

Councilwoman Frnka – no comment.

**16. Announcements.**

There were no additional announcements.

**17. Adjournment.**

There being no further business, Mayor Heffley declared the meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

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Mayor, Richard Heffley

ATTEST:

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Patti Glaeser, City Secretary

<sup>1</sup>During this agenda item, citizens may comment for the record on items which are not on the agenda. However, the Council may not participate in discussion or deliberation on any item that is not on the agenda. Citizens may request that a topic be added to a future agenda.

Citizens who wish to comment on a posted agenda item may do so when that item is addressed by the Mayor. Citizen's comments are limited to five minutes.

<sup>2</sup> Limited to statements. Issues raised by councilmembers under this item cannot be deliberated by Council. The Open Meetings Act does not allow Council to deliberate items that don't appear on the agenda.

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