

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
October 3, 2016

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) Hanel, Cromley, Yakawich, Cimmino, Brewster, McFadden, Friedel, Swanson, Sullivan, Clark, Brown.

CM excused: Clark & Brown

No recording available

ADJOURN TIME: 9:50 pm

Agenda

TOPIC #1	St. Vincent DePaul TIF Grant
PRESENTER	Ernie Dutton
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Ernie Dutton – introduces project. Requests \$350,000 grant. St Vincent DePaul history on MT Ave. Mayor and Tina encouraged charity office relocation. Looked for other property, found Crane but listened to the S. Side residents and withdrew. Couldn't find other property, so reissued the offer for Crane bldg.
- Yakawich: did St V's sell the Grand Ave property? Yes.
- Cimmino: who lists the properties? Dutton: volunteering time but will take a commission from Ray. Taxes being paid on current property and Crane? Dutton: probably wash on taxes. 2610 Montana Ave will close at same time as Crane closes. Grand Ave. property is sold.
- Cromley: 2610 Montana Ave is the charity office? Yes. If TIF isn't granted, will sale still occur? Yes, but some planned services won't happen. Pending sale is a for profit firm? Yes.
- Greg Krueger: site comparison, St. V. project finances, impact on district finances, approval process,
- Brewster: legislators believe not all improvements are public purpose.
- Hanel: how long has Crane been vacant? More than 20 years.
- Brown: formula that DBP uses to come up with grant amount? 5:1 private to public minimum.
- Sullivan: several churches deal with homelessness; any been contacted about using their kitchen for service? Would like to see multiple non-profits pulling in the same direction.
- Krueger: agencies don't all work well together.
- Cimmino: grant, not loan? Yes.
- Brown: what other investment is being made?
- Clark: who is on board? Greg: will send it to you.
- Lisa Harmon: praise St V that wants to integrate services.

- Yakawich: disappointed with process. Concerned about impact on south side and no conversation with south side residents. 42 criminal offenses reported at St. V. last year. No discussion with s. side task force. Lisa: lots of social services in downtown and DBA has never moved nonprofit to the s. side.
- Sullivan: impact on PD? Need to plan and be ready to respond.
- Cromley: support TIF and will defend with St. Legislature. TIF well used in past. This property will go off the tax roll. Any similar instances? Lisa: YAM grant; urban renewal plan was amended to include transition campus.
- Swanson: \$900k available cash left in the TIF fund this year? This project takes 1/3 of it? Greg: hasn't been allocated but money is available. How much of current increment is committed to OBSC? None, it's all in the future.
- Ed Zabrocki, director of St. V DePaul, emphasis right now is on homeless, but handout states other services. 60% of spending assists S. side people.
- Brown: how long will it take to put in enhanced services? Ed: need kitchen, showers and more.
- Cimmino: amazed at outreach services provided.
- Sullivan: how much of the grant will go toward new facilities and services? Fundraising to meet additional needs. Campaign will be for \$1M.
- Yakawich: see the potential negative impacts? Yes, but the impacts could be good for south side. Steps to improve communications be OK?
- Jeanne Bender: volunteer attorney. Nondenominational serving everyone. Terrible facilities.
- **Public Comment:**
- Matt Lundgren: chairman of South Side task force. Spoke in favor of St. Vincent DePaul. Downtown efforts to serve poor and homeless are good. One concern about the process – no contact from proponents, learned about it from the newspaper. Moving across the tracks doesn't solve anything; need to work on the root problems.
- Connie Wardell, P.O. Box 21432, Billings, MT: Council needs to better understand TIF. Shouldn't be surprised that Council didn't hear about property transaction; they're usually private until concluded. Appreciate rental assistance. Crane bldg. is closer to people who need the help – that's a good thing. Lots of social services on the north side – south side isn't being picked on.
- Hanel: any objections to putting this on future business session agenda?
- Brewster: understand how TIFDs work. Wanted a public statement that this project is infrastructure. Concern about putting too many social services is old – at least from the 1990s. Not all going on the south side but perception is there; not a reflection on St. V DePaul.
- Clark: St V DePaul does great work. City didn't tell you to move – just a couple individuals.
- Sullivan: TIF is best community reinvestment tool that city has, so need to be careful about how we use the money. Postpone decision about this grant until after Legislature meets. Don't want to give Legislature ammunition.
- Swanson: city should get behind this project. Want to see TIF fund cash flow.
- Hanel: Billings only one city that uses TIF, so not concerned about Legislature. Want to see this on business session.
- Cimmino: want to move it forward soon.

- McFadden: often consider city problems in the abstract. This organization deals with real people with real problems.
- Hanel: consensus is to put it on the agenda.

TOPIC #2	Legislative Priorities
PRESENTER	Ed Bartlett
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Ed Bartlett: need guidance and discussion tonight. Final action requested in November. Discusses local option.
- Brewster: OK with tax if people vote, decide projects and sunset. Oppose revenue sharing.
- Cimmino: represent the Chamber of Commerce? Yes, Billings and Bozeman. Why will it be successful this time? Business association taking the lead but it will take statewide support.
- Volek: tentatively, Oct. 17 presentation from Chamber on local option.
- McFadden: MT is one a few states that don't have sales tax and that's the will of the people. Oppose the proposal.
- Sullivan: should include property tax relief.
- Clark: support citizens voting on it but favor resort tax format. Should not revenue share. Would like to see bill draft before putting a lot of effort into supporting it.
- Cromley: if it includes revenue sharing, might as well not have it.
- Bartlett: public incapacitation....
- Brown: we don't have jail space.
- Bartlett: minimum property standards
- Yakawich: abandoned building on State, Broadwater. When will we decide if legislation is required?
- Sullivan: need to assert our authority and get rid of abandoned houses
- Cromley: nuisance code violation a criminal offense? Brent: need to assure due process and court involvement.
- Bartlett: infrastructure funding – both Gov candidates support funding of \$200M, Legislature wants to see even more spending if budget allows.
- Brewster: support depends on bill specifics, such as where the money will be spent.
- Bartlett: Presumptive illnesses
- Bartlett: expand local option gas tax authority and state gas tax increase.
- Cimmino: animal cruelty limits on penalties – can we ask for the state to increase them?
- Brent Brooks, City Attorney: yes.
- **Public Comment:**
- Connie Wardell, P.O. Box 21432, Billings, MT: city should narrow focus to 2-3 issues and talk with legislators about them. Support local option as long as it has property tax

relief. Examine do-ability of proposals, for example local option should start July 1 2017 and propose it at the 2019 Legislature. Addressing abandoned buildings with minimum standards bill could be risky. Public incapacitation for substance abuse is better than last effort that focused on alcohol. City will get screwed on sharing state fuel tax.

- Dennis Ulvestad, 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT: progressive civil penalties for weeds. Local option tax won't work. Get rid of public safety tax and assess all properties including non-profits.
- Break at 8:50 and reconvene at 9:05

TOPIC #3	Community Conversations
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Volek: explains community conversations. Guidance from you on topics. Traditional or task force locations and times.
- Hanel: re-word the PMD1 subject. Leave the schedule alone.
- Volek: discussion would be around whether to vote or Council simply approve expansion.
- Cromley: don't talk about dogs in parks – already settled.
- Yakawich: agree to stick with schedule and do task forces next year.
- Sullivan: anecdotal responses on top 5 citizen survey topics; gain insight from them.
- 3 topics left: citizen survey results – top 3 issues; pay higher park assessments in order to improve parks sooner; MET funding (or projects?).
- Sullivan: if we talk about 9-1-1 center, also talk about Water Reclamation Facility (WRF).
- Do presentations first, then conversation with audience.
- **Public Comment:**
- None.

TOPIC #4	Holiday Schedule
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Volek: November: eliminate the 11/21 work session. December: work session 12/5 and business sessions 12/12 and 12/19, no meeting on 12/27.
- Budget session – Jan 21 (Sat. a.m.)
- **Public Comment:**
- None.

TOPIC #5	Council Discussions
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Volek: Tim Burton phone call about Legislative Resolution committee; Pitman was the representative. Clark interested and will attend the MLCT. Council approve that appointment? Yes.
- Clark: Council should review and set the committee memberships, example is community conversation and volunteer appreciation dinner. OK
- Hanel: city flag design info distributed?
- Volek: discussed same topic about a year ago. Previous process was a competition.
- Hanel: allow young men who proposed new flag to present to Council.
- Volek: will check on flag supplies, costs and est costs for changing logo.
- Hanel: invite the brothers to a work session? No, not a work session topic but they're welcome to informally present at a Council meeting.
- Clark: no lighting at new Grand Ave. roundabout – dark and dangerous. Lighting being planned?

TOPIC #6	Public Comment
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Dennis Ulvestad, 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT: reminder that Vets Day is nearing. Ask that display flags be in good condition.
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT: work session discussion about opening the landfill on Sundays during spring, summer and fall. Letter from Judge Fagg. 6 TIF bills to control you. Talked tonight about giving \$450,000 without anyone knowing about it.
- Volek: Mumford says that maintenance work is done on Sundays, scales, etc.
- Sullivan: suggest that PW use a weekday morning to replace the Sunday maintenance and open the landfill on Sunday.
- Volek: one Sunday per month.
- Brown: thought that the landfill put large dumpsters at the gate to use when the landfill is closed.
- Brewster: city ever considered operating a RV dump?