

Tuesday - January 31, 1995 - 2:00 p.m.

#### WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Chris Peterson; Councilwoman Barbara Field, Councilman Gary McClure, Councilwoman Leni Sitnick, and Councilman Joseph Carr Swicegood; City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: Councilman Herbert J. Watts (death in family)

#### APPROVAL OF SCHOOL BOARD SCHEDULE AND NAMING OF INTERVIEWEES BY COUNCIL

It was the consensus of Council to have a preliminary interview of the following people for the two vacancies on the Asheville School Board: Hugh McCullom, Roy Harris, James Baten, Brian Weinkle, Wayne Purcell, Larry Wilson, Robert Dungan, Carol Collins, Dorothy Stickney, Linda Eubanks, H.K. Edgerton, Susan Clay and Marsha Bate. Said interviews will be in Meeting Room No. 1 of the Asheville Civic Center beginning at 1:50 p.m. on February 14, 1995.

#### AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE - NON-CONFORMING SIGNS

Ms. Julia Cogburn briefed Council by saying that on December 7, 1994, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed and approved with a vote of 4-3 a proposed wording amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding nonconforming signs. This wording amendment was prepared by staff at the request of the Asheville City Council. The wording amendment grandfathers in all nonconforming signs which comply with the regulation of the City's Sign Ordinance which was adopted in October of 1977. Currently, these signs are subject to coming into compliance ("amortization") in 1997.

The draft approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission also recommends that language be added which allows for repainting, changing the message, or changing the panels on all nonconforming signs. Currently, signs must come into compliance when such changes or alterations are made.

The draft ordinance would grandfather 96 off-premise signs and 733 on-premise establishments.

Discussion surrounded the out-of-date 1990 survey information.

Ms. Cogburn stated that she would try to update the information on off-premise signs and let Council know how many of those were billboards.

Ms. Cogburn stated that the zoning ordinance currently allows standards for an historical sign designation.

At the request of Vice-Mayor Peterson, Ms. Cogburn said that she would poll other cities to see how they regulate signs on bus weather facilities. She would then initiate the process of amending the zoning ordinance to allow the City to proceed in that direction.

#### REPORT TO COUNCIL ON CONSULTANTS, ENGINEERS AND PROFESSIONALS

Audit/Budget Director gave an extensive report on why the City uses consultants, why and when we don't use City staff and how we select consultants, noting that the City does pay special attention to minority consultants. -2-

City Manager Westbrook recommended the following to keep Council more informed when consultants are necessary: He would provide a list of all contracts entered into on a quarterly basis and the reasons why a consultant is necessary; any matter that exceeds \$25,000 will come to Council (as it has in the past) with a check-off list (why city staff was not used, mandated, whether there is any local citizens group that could do the work, etc.); and bring issues to Council at an earlier date when consulting services might be required.

Councilman McClure asked that any issue on financing be brought to the Council with the procedural steps.

Discussion surrounded at what amount the City Manager should be authorized to execute a contract without having to take formal Council action (current policy is \$25,000).

City Manager was directed to give Council his recommendations.

Water Resources Director Mike Holcombe briefed the Council on the procedure he uses in contracting with consultants for the Asheville-Buncombe Water Authority, noting that the Authority has authorized him to execute a contract up to \$30,000.

#### TRANSIT FACILITY/Pritchard Park Planning Sequence

City staff discussed with Council the conflict with neighboring property owners concerning the Transit Authority's proposed bus facility on Aston Street and the adverse affects on the planning and execution of the bus facility and the redevelopment of Pritchard Park.

Mr. Harold Talbert, property owner in the area, spoke to Council of his concern with the moving of the facility to Aston Street.

At 5:15 Vice-Mayor Peterson moved to go into closed session to discuss a legal matter. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Field and carried unanimously.

At 5:40 p.m., Vice-Mayor Peterson moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Field and carried unanimously.

It was the consensus of Council to authorize the City Manager to proceed with schematic designs of the Transit Facility and suspend further planning on Pritchard Park. It was the direction of Council for City staff to work with the property owners in the area. The schematic designs are to be brought back to the Council in approximately 30 days.

#### RECYCLING OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Vicki Heidinger, Executive Assistant in the Audit/Budget Division, briefed the Council on the County's actions regarding closing their recycling drop centers. At the County Commission meeting being held that night, the Commissioners might vote to keep two centers open in the City limits - one in North Asheville and one on Tunnel Road at the Wal-mart.

Since much of the south will be without a center, it was the recommendation of Ms. Heidinger and the consensus of Council to locate one center in that area. However, if the Commissioners do not agree to keep two centers open, staff was directed to prepare a budget amendment, in the amount of \$22,500 that will support ABC Recycling's "low bid" -3-

proposal for two additional blue building recycling drop centers over the next

six months, and providing some funding to advertise the locations. The City sponsored centers shall be in each main area of the City.

OTHER - YOUTH UPDATE

Councilwoman Sitnick updated Council on her activities for a centrally-located, safe hang-out spot.

Mr. Ben Wax and Mr. Marshall Logan, representatives from the Parks and Recreation Department, explained to Council their planned approach of traveling to the schools and listening to exactly what the youth want. Then an adult forum would be held and the brainstorming would begin with the many representatives from several different organizations and interested individuals in the community.

WORKSESSION AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 14, 1995

Council directed the City Manager to start obtaining specific information on the following topics and then place these topics on upcoming worksessions: Festivals, CDBG funds, fees and charges update, economic development, sidewalks, pride in our City, City Operations Advisory Commission, moving forward with UNC-A interns, implementation of EZ/EC programs, Adopt a Street Program, filling vacancy on Stormwater User Fee Committee, any interest in sponsorship of Javelin thrower Olympic Hopeful Marilyn Senz, licensing of tree trimmers, increase amount of appeals fee to the Board of Adjustment from \$25 to \$100, open discussion items left over from the retreat, Stormwater, MSD policies, 10 highest complaints in Inspections Division and Ways to Resolve them, Broadway update, Water Agreement and innovative affordable housing strategies.

It was the consensus of Council to place the items dealing with renegotiation of a franchise agreement with TCI Cablevision back onto the next formal meeting. The items would contain a budget amendment in the amount of \$75,000 for a consultant and a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with the consultant firm.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Martin adjourned the worksession at 7:15 p.m.

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CITY CLERK MAYOR

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