

Tuesday - August 15, 1995 - 2:00 p.m.

Room 623 - City Hall Building

#### WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Chris Peterson; Councilwoman Barbara Field, Councilman Gary McClure (arrived at 2:44 p.m.), Councilwoman Leni Sitnick, Councilman Joseph Carr Swicegood (arrived at 2:35 p.m.) and Councilman Herbert J. Watts; City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

#### FLUSHING PROGRAM

Mr. Mike Brookshire, Civil Engineer in the Water Resources Director, said that the Asheville-Buncombe Water Authority is planning to flush the City of Asheville's water system in November, 1995. The water system has only been flushed once in the past 30 years. Flushing a water system is an activity that is normally accomplished a minimum of once a year. Asheville has not flushed that often and as a result, muddy water is routinely experienced when a water line breaks. This also guarantees that throughout the flushing of the water system, customers will experience water that ranges from slightly discolored to muddy. While the long term positive effects of flushing will far outweigh the temporary negative customer impacts, during the flushing the temporary impacts will be significant. He then gave examples of possible customer impacts.

He then went into detail of the phases of the flushing effort, noting that Phase I (system-wide flushing) will be conducted on November 11 & 12 and November 18 & 19. Phase II, which is localized flushing, will be conducted November 27-December 20.

Beginning in October a massive public education process will begin explaining to customers the ways to prepare for the flushing effort. By informing customers in advance so that they can prepare, the Water Resources Department hopes to significantly decrease the confusion and inconvenience that flushing will cause.

There will also be a hot line and a customer service station set up in City Hall to answer any questions that the public may have concerning flushing.

By cleaning the water system, the Water Resources Department can assure the highest quality of water possible to our customers.

Mr. Brookshire answered several questions from Council which include, but are not limited to, what the sediment is made up of, is there anyway to re-capture the water, why the flushing program is at this time of year and on the weekends and why not pig the lines first (a process that breaks off tubercles inside the water lines).

Ms. Robin Westbrook, Water Efficiency Coordinator, explained the education process which has already begun in the hotel/motel, restaurant and industrial areas in order that they can begin preparing in advance for the flushing effort.

#### OUTSIDE AGENCY GRANTS

Mr. Bob Wurst, Audit/Budget Director, said that the City Council, during the

fiscal 1995/96 annual operating budget deliberations on -2-

outside agency funding, requested that such agencies not be dependent on funding from the City and such funding be in the form of a "grant".

The agencies are as follows: Chamber of Commerce - \$90,000; Asheville Area Rescue Squad - \$11,250; Community Relations Council - \$60,000; Crimestoppers - \$18,000; Community Arts Alliance - \$20,000; and RiverLink - \$4,000.

These agencies which receive funding entered into an annual contract with the City for services to be provided in exchange for the funding. If City Council concurs, a paragraph will be added to the 1995/96 contract as follows: "The \_\_\_\_\_ (agency name) hereby acknowledges that the funding provided under the terms of this contract is granted for services provided through June 30, 1996, that said funding is subject to annual appropriation by City Council and that there is no commitment on the part of the City to continue said funding beyond June 30, 1996." This language when included in the agreement should put such agencies on notice that future funding is not guaranteed.

Vice-Mayor Peterson requested that the contract spell out how the money will be used and also a requirement in the contract that financial reports be prepared for the City. Mr. Wurst stated that those items are already included in the contracts.

It was the consensus of Council to include the above language in future outside agency contracts.

#### REVISION OF CERTAIN USER FEES

Mr. Bob Wurst, Audit/Budget Director, said that the User Fee Committee was established to study and recommend establishing or increasing user fees. It has been City Council's policy that costs for services which benefit individuals or companies should be recovered through user fees. This policy minimizes the taxpayer's subsidy to fee based services and allows the City to fund important services without raising tax rates.

During 1994/95 a number of new fees, along with increases in some old fees, have been approved. Revenue from these fees allowed City Council to adopt the fiscal 1995/96 budget with no tax increase and still increase funding for street resurfacing, sidewalk construction and storm drainage improvements.

Additional fees for certain activities in Public Works (estimated \$77,000 in new revenues), Parking (estimated \$26,000 in new revenues), Privilege Licenses (estimated \$25,000 in new revenues) and certain other fee increases are being proposed. These fees are comparable to fees in other cities or local businesses. For example, parking garage monthly rents of \$38 are equal to the rates in private downtown garages.

Upon inquiry of Councilwoman Field, Mr. Wurst said that the prior parking deck fees varied because of where the space was located (top deck with no roof, for example), but now that the decks have waiting lists for spaces, the City doesn't feel the need to continue with the varied rates.

Councilwoman Field suggested that an option, and associated fee, be established for a company to request a review of development plans after hours.

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Upon inquiry of Councilman McClure about why there was a maximum tax on manufacturers selling at retail, City Attorney Slawter said that state statute

requires the maximum tax.

Councilwoman Sitnick requested another Fees & Charges Committee in the near future, at which time the Committee will consider Councilwoman Field's suggestion of after-hour reviews.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action.

#### EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

In response to requests for information by City Council, Mr. Paul Benson, Urban Planner, summarized a report covering the authority and procedures for extraterritorial jurisdiction ("ETJ"), the purpose of ETJ, the ETJ situation in Asheville, and advantages and disadvantages of ETJ regulation for the City of Asheville.

Mr. Benson answered several questions from Council which include, but are not limited to, why the City doesn't automatically extend into the ETJ area after an annexation has taken place, the number of areas that the City could extend their ETJ into at the present time and the need to be clear with the ETJ boundaries.

Councilwoman Sitnick brought out the point that almost 1/3 of the Planning & Zoning Commission members and 1/4 of the Board of Adjustment members are County appointees who vote on City zoning matters - stressing that we are spending City tax dollars for County participation. She wondered if the County appointees should only vote on matters in the ETJ area. She stated that the County is not contributing financially to the City's staff time when they deal with ETJ matters. She feels it is unfair to have City taxpayers paying for County benefits.

Mayor Martin felt that having authority to regulate in the ETJ is a definite advantage for the City because if the area is annexed, problems such as poorly constructed roads, inadequate utility systems, and inappropriate development, will be diminished. Also, if the City doesn't regulate the ETJ area, City residents would be subject to whatever is built next to them in the County.

Upon inquiry of Councilman McClure, City Attorney Slawter said that County residents in the ETJ areas do not pay City taxes nor should they vote.

Councilwoman Sitnick asked for a copy of the State law that requires cities who exercise ETJ to provide county representation on their planning commissions and zoning boards of adjustment. She suggested another discussion on whether it is fair for County appointees to be ruling on matters within the City limits.

It was the consensus of Council to wait before taking in anymore ETJ areas until the UDO process is finished. However, Council instructed staff to include the areas available for ETJ in the mapping process of the UDO. Staff was also instructed to obtain the cost figure of the City's regulation in the ETJ areas and to provide to Council a map roughly showing the one mile area.

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#### CITY HALL ROOF REPAIR

Mr. Irby Brinson, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that the flat roof areas of the City Hall Building were resurfaced when the interior of the building was renovated in 1991. At that time, additional problems were found with the exterior walls. In 1992, Jerry Stockbridge of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., who is a specialist in historic building restoration, and

John Cort, with Cort Architectural Group, were hired to advise the City as to the best approach for resolving problems with the exterior brick and terra cotta tile repairs. Based upon Mr. Stockbridge's recommendation, the vertical wall of the southwest corner of the building was tuckpointed and three lentils were replaced. At that time, open joints in the brick were examined and it was found that steel shelf angles supporting the brick work on the 7th floor were rusting to the extent that the rust was displacing the mortar and causing cracks in the brick work.

In addition, Mr. Stockbridge examined the terra cotta tile on the roof and parapets and indicated that repairs should be made in these areas. Through this investigation, it was determined that pieces of the terra cotta tile were cracked and posed a safety hazard due to the possibility of the tile coming loose and falling to the ground.

The Parks & Recreation staff recommends hiring Mr. Stockbridge and Cort Architectural Group to phase the repair work of the vertical walls and the repairs of the terra cotta roof.

Mr. Dick Meehan, Parks Superintendent, went into detail explaining the complexity of this project and how the project could be phased in which will be cost effective for the City.

Vice-Mayor Peterson suggested the City putting out for bid the architectural work out to bid. He also suggested looking for state grants that might help fund this project since the City Hall Building is a local historic landmark.

It was the consensus of Council to contract with Mr. Stonebridge, to prepare a Request for Proposals for the architectural services, and to look for state grants.

#### PHASED I ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Mr. Ron Fuller, Transportation Planner, said that the NC Department of Transportation (NC DOT), in conjunction with the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have been working on a new approach to the planning, public input and selection of transportation improvements. NC DOT has requested that each of the participating member of the MPO review the document and concur with the findings by resolution.

The three main goals of this new planning process are (1) to place more of the public input up front rather than after a corridor or improvement has been selected, (2) involve the various local, state and federal agencies charged with reviewing plans earlier than in the past, and (3) identify corridors that need to be protected from encroaching development. The document identifies five problem areas within the Asheville Urban Area and offers preferred alternatives for each. The five areas are (1) Smokey Park Bridge/Patton Avenue Area and Northwest Connector, (2) Central Business District, (3) Biltmore Village Area, (4) Merrimon Avenue Area, and (5) US 25 in Fletcher. The only corridors upon which concurrence is being requested are (1), (3) and (5) since these involve new locations of improvements. -5-

This analysis is an initial environmental screening of alternative alignments to thoroughfare plan improvements. The result is the selection of preferred corridors for each problem area. Once the project becomes programmed for funding, more detailed documentation will be completed according to National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) guidelines in the Phase II Environmental Analysis: Project Planning. It is also at this stage that decisions regarding mitigation, if necessary, will be made. Both the additional documentation and the mitigation decisions will be conducted on the preferred

corridor.

Discussion from Council surrounded the need, or lack thereof, of Smokey Park Bridge/Patton Avenue area project.

Mr. H. K. Edgerton felt that a great deal of local people are shut out of the process when contracts are let for construction on State highways.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next Council meeting.

#### MINORITY BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Larry Fisher, Finance Director, said that in his efforts to have quarterly reports made to City Council on minority business participation, a trial report in a new format was introduced for the quarter ending March 31, 1995. The report did not contain construction data due to the fact that subcontractor payments are not identified in the accounting system. The system identifies payments to the prime contractor, therefore we had to design a supplementary system to identify subcontractor payments. With the February 1 implementation of the Amended Minority Business Plan requiring documentation of subcontractor payments by primes, this data will be identified. The Finance Department's Purchasing, Accounting and Information Services Divisions, working in conjunction with the MB Coordinator have refined the existing quarterly report. The report now more accurately and efficiently reflects MB participation since prime contractors are now required to supply a form with their payment requesting documenting payments to minority subcontractors. This form is the source of the construction information included in the report.

Mr. Fisher then briefed the Council on the report which identified participation by (1) certified minority business in four classifications, and (2) minority businesses, both certified and non-certified in those same classifications. Each classification identifies the amount of participation and goal attainment by each minority category. City goals were set by the Amended MB Plan.

When Mayor Martin asked about how the City Council could help the City achieve it's goals, Mr. Fisher replied that helping maintain a fully functional Minority Business Commission would help. Also, Mr. Fisher noted that he would be distributing a list of certified minority businesses to all City department heads. He will request them to encourage their staff to utilize the services of these companies, particularly in the \$200 or less purchases which do not go through the Purchasing Division.

Ms. Marilyn Bass, Minority Business Coordinator, answered various questions from Council regarding the idea of a joint City/County Minority Business Commission.

When Mr. H. K. Edgerton suggested that the City develop a bond guarantee program which would help minorities start their businesses, -6-

Mr. Norwood Dunn, Purchasing Director, said that City Council already has the authority to waive bonds and they have done that in the past. Mr. Edgerton also felt that the financial institutions should work closely with the African-American community regarding financing.

#### AMENDMENTS TO MINIMUM HOUSING CODE

Fire Chief John Rukavina said that during the 1995 session of the General Assembly, two laws were passed that require amendment of Asheville's Minimum

Housing Code.

The first, N. C. General Statute sec. 143-138 contains provisions for smoke detectors in rental property that are different from the smoke detector provisions of the Minimum Housing Code. Amendment of the Minimum Housing Code is required, so that rental property owners aren't asked to comply with two different standards.

The second, N. C. General Statute Chapter 113, provides authorization for the City to adopt an ordinance providing for a 30-day demolition period for dilapidated houses meeting certain criteria. This authority was requested of the Buncombe County legislative delegation by the City Council as part of its 1995 legislative request package.

Finally, questions have been raised about the responsibility of the owner of a condominium-type dwelling for Minimum Housing Code violations in that part of the dwelling owned by a homeowner's association. The Minimum Housing Code is not clear with regard to this issue; an amendment is recommended to clarify responsibility.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

#### BILTMORE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION

Fire Chief John Rukavina said that during the summer of 1994, the City of Asheville submitted a proposal to the Town of Biltmore Forest for delivery of fire protection and emergency medical services to the Town by the Asheville Fire Department. At that time, the Town chose not to pursue this offer. But in April of 1995, Town representatives asked that the City review the possibility of such a fire protection/emergency medical service agreement.

The agreement provides for delivery of fire protection and emergency medical service delivery to Biltmore Forest by Asheville "to the same extent and in the same manner as the City provides such fire and emergency medical services" to persons and property in the City. In return, Biltmore Forest agrees to reimburse Asheville in the amount of \$245,247.31 for the service period September 1, 1995, through August 31, 1996. In subsequent service periods, that reimbursement would increase by the estimated annual increase in real and personal property valuation in Biltmore Forest, but never less than \$250,000 per service period.

The agreement would be for a term through August 31, 2008. This term includes a three year notice period for Biltmore Forest to re-establish its own fire protection EMS capabilities, should either Biltmore Forest or Asheville choose not to maintain or renew the agreement.

If they choose, Biltmore Forest's five present firefighters could join the Asheville Fire Department, subject to personnel and Civil Service provisions of Asheville's Code of Ordinances, Personnel Policy -7-

and Civil Service rules. These firefighters could fill five present vacancies; execution of this agreement would not require an expansion of the Asheville Fire Department's firefighting forces.

The City would assume responsibility for service delivery, including minimum staffing at Station 5 (Hendersonville Road and Caribou Road, the station that would be the primary responder for Biltmore Forest emergencies), firefighter training, fire response and maintenance of Asheville's present ISO rating.

Biltmore Forest would retain responsibility for fire protection water supplies, water system maintenance, provision of accurate maps to City firefighters and notice of new construction in Biltmore Forest to enable Asheville firefighters to "pre-plan" emergency actions at such new structures.

Fire Chief answered various questions from Council as they related to agreement. Some being, who determines the property values in the Town; how does the single-button transfer capability for transfer of E-911 calls work; why, if the Town's firefighters become City employees, is their sick leave that was accrued when they were employed by the Town, being brought forward and credited to them as City employees; how will the Civil Service process work with the five Town firefighters; if the City's ISO rating exceeds 6%, how will it affect the \$250,000 minimum annual payment; why does the nondiscrimination guarantee reads as it does; and, how was the duration of the contract decided.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

#### CLASSIFICATION STUDY

Ms. Pam McGrayne, Personnel Director, said that the City's classification plan is six years old. Given the numerous reorganizations, reductions in staff and increases/changes in City services over the past several years, a significant portion of the City's workforce is misclassified. This is causing management and employee morale problems. There are also legal risks if the plan is not updated; specifically that the City may not be in compliance with the Equal Pay Act, Fair Labor Standards Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

A request for proposals to conduct a comprehensive City-wide pay and classification study was sent out in late 1994. After reviewing the proposals received, staff recommended that an agreement be executed between the City and David M. Griffith & Associates Ltd ("DMG") to conduct a comprehensive City-wide pay and classification study. At that time, staff negotiated with DMG to conduct the study at a reduced cost by utilizing a committee of City employees to help conduct interviews. Funding was not available and the study was not approved.

Funding for a City-wide classification study is included in the Fiscal Year 1995-96 budget. To reduce costs the pay study will be done by Personnel staff. DMG is agreeable to conduct the classification study using the employee committee at its 1994 price.

Ms. McGrayne answered various questions from Council, some being, but not limited to, the number of full-time and part-time employees, if there were any grievances filed as a result of employees working out of classification, and what the City's employee turnover rate is and why.

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Upon inquiry of Councilman Watts, Ms. McGrayne said that after the classification study is completed, staff will begin working on a performance appraisal study.

On a 5-2 vote, with Councilmen McClure and Swicegood voting "no", this matter was placed on the next Council's agenda for appropriate action.

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

Intent to close an alley off Lodge Street at McDowell Street and setting a public hearing for September 26, 1995

Underwriters for Water Revenue Bonds

Summary: At the Council's annual retreat on January 14 and 15, 1995, Council approved the issuance of Water Revenue Bonds to construct new water intake facilities on the Mills River.

Mr. George A. Raftelis of Raftelis Environmental Consulting Group, Inc., has already been engaged by the Water Authority to provide the Financial Feasibility Study that will be required in order to market these bonds. At Council's worksession on March 28, 1995, Council authorized the engagement of Mr. Donald P. Ubell, Esquire, for municipal bond counsel services related to this sale. At that time, it was reported that this sale will also require the engagement of underwriters. At that meeting Council authorized selection of underwriters utilizing a request for proposal process. That process has been completed. The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council as underwriters the firms that ranked highest in the selection process.

The RFP was mailed to 16 firms, 14 responded. All responses were reviewed independently by Mr. Raftelis, Mr. Ubell and Mr. Larry Fisher. Each of these evaluators selected, independently, the same seven firms for a "short list" of oral interview candidates. Oral interviews were conducted with representatives of each of the seven firms in Charlotte, N.C., on July 17, 1995. Mr. Raftelis, Mr. William Schaefer, the City's Capital Projects Coordinator, and Mr. Larry Fisher, conducted and evaluated the oral presentations. Pre-prepared evaluation forms containing evaluation criteria were used by each evaluator. The consensus recommendation of all three evaluators, with concurrence of the municipal bond counsel, is: Alex. Brown & Sons Inc., NationsBank Capital Markets Inc., The Robinson-Humphrey Company Inc.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate actions regarding the Consent Agenda items at the next formal meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

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CITY CLERK MAYOR

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Tuesday, August 15, 1995

Buncombe County Courthouse

5th Floor Criminal Superior Courtroom

Joint Meeting of the Buncombe County Commissioners and Asheville City Council

City Council -

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



Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

County Commissioners -

Present: Chairman Dr. Gene Rainey; Commissioners Patsy R. Keever, C. Thomas Sobol, David W. Young; County Attorney Joe A. Connolly; County Manager William E. McElrath Jr.; and County Clerk Kathy Hughes

Absent: Commissioner William H. Stanley

Chairman Rainey and Mayor Martin opened the meeting at 6:04.

Chairman Rainey said that since this meeting will only contain discussions between the City Council and the County Commissioners, there would be no public comment taken.

OLD BUSINESS:

Future Meetings

It was the consensus of both bodies to have semi-annual joint meetings. It was agreed that at any time a special meeting was needed, the two boards would meet.

Councilman McClure suggested inviting the other governmental entities in Buncombe County to our joint meetings. The County Manager was instructed to poll the other towns to see if they would be agreeable to a joint meeting.

When Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern about both bodies meeting on the same day and virtually at the same time, Commissioner Keever felt that no changes should be made until after the election in November.

When Councilwoman Sitnick suggested taking comments from the public at the end of this meeting, Chairman Rainey said that he would take that under advisement.

Joint City/County Building - Parking

County Manager McElrath said that the County did not have any interest in a joint City/County building at this time. However, the County does have an interest in perhaps trading some land, perhaps behind the City Hall Building, for County parking.

City and County staff were instructed to meeting to discuss parking around the City Hall Building and the Courthouse. -10-

City's Animal Control Ordinance

City Manager Westbrook reported that the City has updated its animal control ordinance using much of the language from the County ordinance, where possible.

When Councilwoman Sitnick questioned if the County's ordinance was hard to enforce, County McElrath said that since the enforcement function has been transferred to the Sheriff's Department enforcement seems to have been easier.

Consolidation Issues

County Manager McElrath stated that the County is very much committed to consolidating where possible.

(1) Parks and Recreation consolidation. The County was going to have to pay \$250,000 to consolidate and decided not to consolidate with the City.

(2) Flood control is an issue that might be looked at in the future.

(3) Schools consolidation. Mr. McElrath summarized the three ways which the systems could consolidate. He said the most cost effective way would be to have the City School Board dissolve itself. The State Board of Education would then develop a plan for the community.

When it was mentioned that there is no financial savings to consolidate the schools, Commissioner Keever stated several areas in which consolidation would be beneficial to the schools. She stated that saving money is not the only reason to consolidate.

Commissioner Sobol said that there is no consolidated government in North Carolina and only two in the southeastern United States.

Councilwoman Sitnick suggested a meeting with both Schools Boards and both governing bodies to open up the process of consolidation. Commissioner Sobol felt the meeting should be initiated by the two school boards and should be just between the two school boards.

Chairman Rainey suggested a letter be written from him and the Mayor suggesting the two school boards meet.

Commissioner Keever felt that the two school boards might feel like they are forced to meet and preferred to wait until the study is done by the League of Women Voters, which should be completed around May 1996.

Councilman Swicegood said that he would consider the League of Women Voters study, but would not base his decision to consolidate solely on it. He didn't see a reason why the two boards should not meet.

Commissioner Young thought it was a good idea for the two boards to meet, if only to discuss other areas in the school systems which might be beneficial to consolidate.

Chairman Rainey said that he and the Mayor would draft a letter to the two school boards suggesting they meet. However, prior to sending the letter, they will solicit comments from both governing boards. -11-

Chairman Rainey said that the County would look at the consolidation issues at their upcoming retreat.

(4) Joint development of properties for parks and recreation activities. Councilman McClure mentioned that the City is in the process of compiling a list of City-owned properties available for sale. He suggested coordinating this list with the County to see if some of these properties or some of the properties in the County, which they have no use for, could be jointly developed for parks and recreation facilities.

Councilwoman Sitnick stated that the City is looking at tax lots that are not developable. The City is looking at ways to donate those pieces of land to non-profit agencies, such as Affordable Housing Coalition, Magic Gardens, etc., in order to get these properties back on the tax base rather than just spend maintenance dollars. She wondered if there were any County owned lots in the City that have no great value that might have some potential for this idea.

City Manager Westbrook said that he would furnish the County Manager with a

copy of our list, when compiled.

(5) Consolidation of emergency communication centers. Councilman Swicegood felt that consolidation in this area would be very beneficial to the City and the County.

(6) Purchasing. It was suggested that purchasing of bulk material might be an area for consolidation. Co-fueling is another possibility. Councilwoman Sitnick presented an article on community sharing tub grinders and hoped the City and the County could share in equipment.

(7) Consolidated governments. Vice-Mayor Peterson felt that the City and the County should seriously consider the idea of one form of government.

Councilwoman Sitnick suggested at the next joint meeting an item be placed on the agenda for discussion of federal spending cuts and how they affect our local governments.

Chairman Rainey said that the consolidated government issue has not been looked at in some time and perhaps this is a good time to bring it back up.

(8) Outside Agencies. Councilman McClure suggested comparing outside agency requests to see if there is any duplication of funds for any given agency. Chairman Rainey suggested that the City and County personnel who work on the outside agencies meet and report back to the joint bodies.

It was the consensus of Council to discuss the items of consolidation only at the next joint City/County meeting.

#### Youth Council & Programs

Ms. Wanda Greene, Assistant County Manager, briefed the bodies about the progress the County has been making in the area of the Youth Council and programs for the youth.

The County has now hired a full-time person devoted only to the Youth Council and his goal, among others, is to increase participation in this area. -12-

Councilman Watts suggested involving more teachers on the Youth Council.

#### City's Participation in Economic Development

City Manager Westbrook said that since the City declined joining the County in the Economic Development Commission funding, the City has since adopted its own economic development policy, and is funding industries in concert with the Chamber of Commerce and the County which are located within the City limits. The Council's policy has been that they could have a more effective economic development program operating jointly with the Chamber of Commerce and the County. This ensures that any funds spent were specifically for industries within the City limits.

Commissioner Young and Councilman McClure felt that MSD has been left out of the economic development scheme, even though they greatly benefit from economic development. They suggested a joint City/County resolution be prepared encouraging MSD to participate in and be more responsive to economic development, including adoption of an economic development policy.

Councilman Swicegood suggested the County meet with their MSD board appointees, as did the City, to urge them to run MSD as effectively and as cooperatively as possible.

City Manager Westbrook was directed to draft the joint resolution for Council and Commissioner review.

Councilwoman Sitnick stressed the need for sustainable economic development by visiting not only large industries in the area but the small businesses too.

#### Newspaper Ad - Joint Venture

County Manager McElrath felt this was an excellent idea, however, the County did not have the funds for this project.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that the City didn't have the funds, but found them. She encouraged the County to find the money in order to let the public know what's going on in their area. She stated that the City Council is committed in keeping the public abreast of who they are and what they're doing.

Mayor Martin suggested the County keeping this matter open.

#### City's Flow Control and Recycling

City Manager Westbrook said that the City and County have been working on this for some time and thinks they have arrived at a reasonable position. Due to the hiring of Mark Combs, the new Public Works Director, the process has slowed down waiting for him to get up to speed on things and take over this particular negotiating process. Mark's expertise is recycling and sanitation. Mark has already made contact with the appropriate County employees.

Mr. Westbrook said that flow control and recycling are a top priority.

#### County's Participation in Civic Center

County Manager McElrath said that the City declines to participate any further in the Civic Center. Their obligations, pursuant to the -13-

Water Agreement, are being fulfilled. The County pays the City for space occupied by the Asheville Symphony.

With the County paying \$100,000 a year for McCormick Field, they don't feel they want to participate in funding anything more at the Civic Center.

Chairman Rainey pointed out that the Asheville Tourists pump approximately \$2.5 Million a year into this community.

At the suggestion of Councilwoman Field, Chairman Rainey said that perhaps the County should revisit the possibility of privatizing the golf course. Commissioner Young noted that the golf course is only one out of many which is self-supporting.

#### Joint Minority Business Commission

Ms. Wanda Greene, Assistant County Manager, stated that the County is beginning to explore its various options regarding minority business functions. It has set up an African American Business Task Force which will be identifying problems and making recommendations on how the County should be involved in the Minority Business Commission. These recommendations should be available in early 1996.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

#### Tax Collector's Reorganization and Progress

Mr. Jerome Jones, Buncombe County's Programs Manager, reported on the re-engineering of the Tax Collector's Office. Tax Collector Elizabeth Taylor has completed the major portions of a complete reorganization of her office. She has reduced her staff by 32% by privatizing collection and billing operations, through the effective use of computer technology and through realigning employees. She has increased her collection rate by .55% compared to Fiscal Year 1994. The 1994 collection rate was 96.30 and the 1995 collection rate is 96.85 - the highest in the history of the Tax Collector's Office. He projected a 98% collection tax rate next year.

Mr. Jones then summarized the tax collection re-engineering project and the community impact.

#### Aston Park

Councilman Watts asked that the City consider letting the City operate Aston Park. A proposal has been sent to the County and the City hopes the County will act favorably on it.

#### Buncombe County Health Department

Councilwoman Sitnick said that in distributing Community Development Block Grant funds, many citizens stated that they did not feel comfortable in going to or using the Buncombe County Health Department. She said that even though the City didn't have any money for neighborhood based clinics, they were sensitive to the issues. She asked the County to assess why those feelings are so widespread in the City, noting that it's not only in one area. Rather than duplicating efforts of the Health Department, we would like for the County to investigate these concerns and let the City know what you find out.

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Commissioner Keever said that she was a member on the Board of Health and will check into this concern and report back to Council.

#### Noise Ordinance

Councilwoman Field suggested the City and the County work together on a noise ordinance.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The joint meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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CITY CLERK MAYOR

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