

Tuesday - March 5, 1996 - 3:00 p.m.

Worksession

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Barbara Field; Councilman M. Charles Cloninger; Councilman Edward C. Hay Jr.; Councilman Thomas G. Sellers; Councilman James J. Skalski; and Councilman Charles R. Worley; City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

FIVE-YEAR AGING PLAN

Mr. Cleve Mathews, Past Chair of the Aging Coordinating Consortium Steering Committee, said that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners have approved an updated five-year aging plan for Buncombe County. This plan provides the guidelines for allocating funds to meet the needs of the elderly and for setting policies that affect them. Naturally the plan affects residents of Asheville.

He outlined the 1995-2000 strategic plan priority goals, those being: (1) to make essential transportation services available to all the elderly who need them; (2) to develop a comprehensive communications/education program on aging issues; (3) to expand and augment public and private programs of in-home services; (4) to insure that volunteers are used effectively to aid in providing services for the elderly; (5) to strengthen housing and related programs which enable independent living for the elderly population; and (6) to prepare for a quick response to sudden new demands for such services as adult day/adult day health care.

He then briefed Council on the impacts that the goals would have for the City. (1) Transportation. Money for medical transportation ran out and had to be supplemented by the County. Most of this transportation is handled by the BOOST system, but the transit system of Asheville is also important to the elderly. (2) Information about Services. The City's centers that serve the elderly for recreation and meal sites are key spots for improving information about services to the elderly. Those centers will feel the pressure from the increasing numbers of older adults. (3) Volunteers. There needs to be better coordination of the various volunteer programs and better orientation of volunteers about the variety of services available to the elderly. Continuing financial constraints will impel the City to consider greater use of volunteers. (4) In-Home care. Even though the funding is not the responsibility of the City, when such care helps more elderly people continue to live at home, that impacts on police and fire services, traffic, access to shopping and demands for improving sidewalks and streets. (5) Housing. Since most older people want to live at home instead of in nursing homes or group homes, this increases the need for remodeling homes to handle wheel chairs, make access easier, and make living easier. When the elderly can no longer live on their own, but are not ready for nursing homes, they will turn to group homes. There will be a need to start a communication program about group homes in order to educate the neighborhood. This education program should also include information on locating day care facilities for older adults.

Mr. Mathews, and others, answered various questions from Council as they related to state cuts for transportation; health care providers; and since the number of older people are growing, will the number of younger people decline.

Mayor Martin, who started a program in which he recognizes citizens reaching 100, said that he was glad that these problems are being addressed now and hopefully, with proper planning, some can be avoided in the future.

Vice-Mayor Field emphasized that housing is very important issue and feels like there are several items that the Council can work with the County Commissioners on.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRESENTATION

Ms. Beth Maczka, Executive Director of the Affordable Housing Coalition, stated that the Affordable Housing Coalition's mission is to use the talents and resources of the Coalition member agencies and the Asheville-Buncombe community in promoting a wide range of affordable housing options which lead to thriving, safe neighborhoods and individual and family self-sufficiency. She then explained what affordable housing was, who is in need of decent, safe and sanitary housing, and what the benefits are of investing in affordable housing. She stressed the need for affordable housing is great and it will only grow. She thanked City Council for their support and hoped that Council will continue to recognize this need.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Field, Ms. Maczka explained that two studies are in progress - one regarding the number of homeless in shelters and the number of homeless on the streets and the other being housing preferences for people with special needs.

When Councilman Skalski asked if the Affordable Housing Coalition would be willing to do a presentation similar to this for the Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods, Ms. Maczka indicated that they are scheduled to do one in April.

FLUSHING PROGRAM

Mr. Mike Holcombe, Water Resources Director, familiarized City Council with the planned water system flushing and its impact on residential and commercial water customers in Asheville and Buncombe County.

He said the water system has not been flushed in over 15 years and as a result, years of accumulated sand and sediment results in muddy water to customers when a water line breaks or has to be shut down. It's now time to clear the system under controlled conditions in order improve water quality. This will be done in two phases. First the main lines will be cleaned during the third and fourth weekends in March. Then on April 1st, flushing of smaller lines will begin and continue for 6 weeks.

The Management Flushing Team has worked for more than a year to minimize the effects of the upcoming flushing. An aggressive advertising and public education program developed by the team is now underway to give water customers the facts about flushing and help them prepare for the event.

He felt this presentation would prepare the Council to answer questions and offer suggestions for minimizing the effects of the flushing on City residents.

When Vice-Mayor Field inquired on why the City waited so long to flush their lines, Mr. Holcombe felt that perhaps prior administrations didn't have the knowledge of just how essential flushing of the lines

-3-

were for good water quality and also at that time there wasn't sufficient hydraulic capacity.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Field about if there will be a rebate on the water bill, Mr. Holcombe replied that the question was brought to the attention of the Asheville-Buncombe Water Authority. The decision was that there would be no rebate; however, the Authority felt that since citizens would not be using the water during those weekends, their water bills would be lower.

Councilman Cloninger commended City staff for their work on this program and felt the Grove Park Inn should be commended for their offered assistance.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Cloninger about the type of feedback the City is getting from restaurants and hotels about the flushing, Mr. Holcombe replied that by and large, there is tremendous support - a lot due to the fact that the City has given them several months advance notice.

When Mr. H.K. Edgerton inquired about the cost of this program, Mr. Holcombe said that combined advertising and operational costs will exceed \$100,000. All expenses are budgeted for and will be paid from the bills that the water customers pay.

REQUEST FROM GERBER CONCERNING CITY'S PARTICIPATION IN SEWER LINE UPGRADE

Mr. Doug Spell, Assistant City Manager, said that in October of 1995, Gerber Products of Asheville sent a formal request to the City for assistance with sewer line improvements. The request was that the City construct sewer line improvements (public) necessitated by and in conjunction with other waste water system improvements (private) being conducted by Gerber. The public improvements which the City is being asked to assist with will become part of the Metropolitan Sewerage District system. The estimated cost of these infrastructure improvements is \$36,500. Buncombe County has been asked to participate in the funding of these improvements. The County staff will recommend to the Commissioners that the County pay for half of the improvements with the expectation that the City would pay for the other half. The total cost to the City would be \$18,250.

Mayor Martin read a letter dated February 27, 1995, from Mike Eisenlchr, Vice President and General Manager of Care-Free Windows, which updated Council on the progress of their goals. The letter read in part "Sales increased by 46% over 1994 and this successful year provided a needed basis from which to expand our outlook for 1996. We spent \$600M on capital improvements during 1995. In addition, we hired 24 people for production during the year. We also utilized 24 temporary employees during our peak season from September through November. As you may recall, we started the year with 100 employees in the company. Of the 24 new hires we have had a turnover of 8 netting to 16 new employees. There were also increases in the office which resulted in total staffing of 122 employees. Two new product lines were introduced in 1995 and accounted for most all our sales growth. During 1996 we will be introducing two additional lines and as with 1995 we project these introductions to comprise the greatest share of our new sales growth. Our plans for 1996 include capital spending of \$2.4MM and a sales increase of 64% over 1995. Expected new hires will be 72 this year of which 30 will likely be temporary employees to cover the higher seasonal demand. This would bring our peak factory employment of 188 employees with an additional office sales staff of 43 making total

employment reach 231 employees." Mayor Martin said that this is a success story resulting from the City's assistance.

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

DISCUSSION OF NEXT JOINT CITY/COUNTY MEETING

City Manager Westbrook said that the Buncombe County Commissioners have suggested either April 16 or April 23 as the dates they would prefer for the next City/County joint meeting.

A letter received from County Manager Bill McElrath states that since there are many City/County cooperation issues, the Council and the Board will have the opportunity to discuss and even jointly approve or disapprove these issues.

City Manager Westbrook said that the City will be the host of this meeting and even though there is not a set agenda at this time, he felt the general topic would be the areas of cooperation between the City and the County.

It was the consensus of Council to have the next joint City/County meeting on Tuesday, April 16, 1996. The time will be coordinated between the City and County Managers.

CONSENT:

Quarterly Minority Business Report

Summary: This report is for the quarter ending December 31, 1995, for the certified vendors only and for all vendors claiming minority status for certified and non-certified.

Mr. Larry Fisher, Finance Director, answered various questions from Council stating that the numbers in this quarter have improved over the previous quarter, reflecting most improvements are in the reporting process. They are also trying to track efforts made to use minority businesses as well. The Minority Business Commission Chair has suggested a retreat to focus on better ways to accomplish their goals. The retreat will be at a minority site and will utilize minority businesses.

Councilman Worley suggested that the Commission hold their retreat with reporting back to the City Council in mind. Then, after the retreat, the Council can schedule a worksession to discuss items coming out of that retreat.

Ms. Marilyn Bass, Minority Business Coordinator, responded to questions from Vice-Mayor Field regarding goals and how those goals were arrived at for the disparity study.

Mr. E. X. Edgerton stated concerns of the Minority Business Commission makeup.

Mayor Martin stressed that the City Council is committed to make improvements related to this program.

Award of bids to purchase vehicle for the Asheville-Buncombe Arson Task Force

-5-

Summary: Sealed bids were received to furnish one 1-ton commercial 4-wheel drive outaway van for the Fire Department, Arson Task Force. Two bids were received. Staff recommends that the award be made to the low bidder, Matthews Ford, Asheville, N.C., in the amount of \$39,702 for the purchase of one 1996 Ford E350 cab and chassis with a Reading FV74-148AP body. The following bids were received:

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Net Cost</u>
Matthews Ford, Asheville, N.C.	\$39,702
Parkway Chevrolet, Asheville, N.C.	\$41,894

Funds for this purchase are appropriated in Account Code 20-420-40-475-00-5741.

Establish Fair Reuse Value for Certain Disposal Parcels in the East Riverside Redevelopment Project

Summary: Certain disposal parcels in East Riverside have been appraised, the appraisals reviewed and it is necessary to establish the Fair Reuse Value in order to market the property.

The disposal parcels are located in the area formerly known as the Clingman Avenue/Valley Street Connector right-of-way. Consisting of two tracts and comprising approximately 2.4 acres. The Connector right-of-way has been subdivided into seven commercial and two residential parcels.

Each disposal parcel was appraised by David Moore, MAI. The appraisals were reviewed by Francis Naeger, MAI, who concurred and recommended the appraised values as the Fair Reuse Values.

The disposal parcels and fair reuse values are as follows: 1A - \$79,400; 2A - \$16,850; 2B - \$117,400; 3A - \$3,600; 3B - \$4,665; 4A - \$16,852; 4B - \$12,730; 50A - \$6,181; and 52A - \$5,394.

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

OTHER BUSINESS:

YMI Cultural Center

Mayor Martin appointed Vice-Mayor Field and Councilmen Hay and Skalski to review information received by Mr. L.C. Ray regarding the YMI Cultural Center. Vice-Mayor Field said that after the committee reviews the request, they will contact him.

Chamber of Commerce

It was the consensus of Council to invite Mr. Ernest Ferguson and Mr. Jay Garner from the Chamber of Commerce, to meet with City Council at a worksession. The Chamber has some ideas about how to bring the City back "into the fold" regarding economic development, since it chose not to participate in the Economic Development Commission. City Manager Westbrook said that he would contact the Chamber in order to receive some factual information that staff could work on prior to meeting with the Chamber representatives.

Outward Bound

It was the consensus of Council to schedule the Outward Bound program on May 10-12, 1996.

Big South Conference

Mayor Martin announced that the City would bid to host the 1997 and possibly the 1998 Big South Conference Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament which would be held on four consecutive days.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:10 p.m., Councilman Worley moved to go into closed session as authorized by C.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) to consider the performance of an individual officer or employee. This motion was seconded by Councilman Sellers and carried unanimously.

At 5:40 p.m., Councilman Worley moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilman Sellers and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Magdalen Boulson
CITY CLERK

[Handwritten Signature]
MAYOR

