

Minutes of the Regular Work Session of the
Board of Mayor and Aldermen, City of Kingsport, Tennessee
Monday, May 18, 2009, 4:30 PM
Council Room – City Hall

PRESENT:

Board of Mayor and Aldermen

Mayor Dennis R. Phillips

Alderman Valerie Joh

Vice-Mayor Benjamin K. Mallicote

Alderman Larry A. Munsey

Alderman Patrick W. Shull

Alderman Jantry Shupe

City Administration

John G. Campbell, City Manager

J. Michael Billingsley, City Attorney

James H. Demming, City Recorder

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** 4:34 p.m., by Mayor Phillips.
2. **ROLL CALL:** By Deputy City Recorder Gilbert. Absent: Alderman Charles K. Marsh, Jr.
3. **WORK SESSION TICKLER.** No comment.
4. **REVIEW OF LONG-TERM FINANCING.** City Manager Campbell went over various charts representing the City's long-term financing such as *BMA Approved Debt Level and Charter Debt Level*. Mr. Campbell explained that Alderman Shull had asked for additional debt service information during BMA discussion and consideration of the FY2010 budget. The City Manager explained that most of the information had been provided at various time over a period of time but this was more concise and also included the 17-year history of funded general fund projects which had not been covered before.
5. **DISCUSSION OF FUNDING DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS.** At this time, Mayor Phillips invited representatives from the Downtown Business Alliance (DBA) to come forward to speak about this newly formed downtown organization because there were several citizens and business' owners in attendance regarding this discussion and public comment.

Doug Beatty spoke on behalf of the DBA, which currently has over 75 members, and provided background on the formation and need for this organized group of merchants and property owners. He wanted to clarify that the group's intent is not to compete with the Downtown Kingsport Association (DKA), but rather to support and work with DKA to benefit downtown businesses, property owners and the citizens in general. He and others have met with members of the DKA to discuss ways to incorporate and integrate

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DBA members into the membership and board of the DKA. To date, the DBA has been completely self-funded and staffed by volunteers and would now like to request funding assistance from the City.

Mr. Kanishka Biddanda, a DBA member, spoke about the many avenues taken by members of DBA to promote the downtown, including initiating the "explore downtown Kingsport" branding, launching a website that lists every downtown business and, in the near future, publishing a 16-page color publication touting the benefits of the downtown area, all while providing these promotional services at no cost to the City.

Mr. John Vachon, owner of Urban Synergy, added that he and his wife, Angela, own several buildings downtown and see a huge amount of room for growth as they attempt to recruit more young professionals to the area. He believes the two downtown groups can work together, having the downtown interest represented by members of both organizations on one governing board. Mr. Vachon offered to provide each Board member with a copy of the 50-item action plan for the downtown area.

Next, Mr. Larry Crawford, President of the DKA Executive Committee, was invited to address the BMA and audience, on behalf of DKA. Mr. Crawford began by stating that DKA is agreeable to working with the DBA but, currently, the organizations bylaws will require amendment to allow additional board members, as requested; this could be accomplished when DKA board elections are held. He complimented the DBA on the retail and revitalization that has taken place, with DBA input, and emphasized that DKA's goal is and has always been keeping what's best for downtown as its priority.

Further BMA discussion covered the impact to the DKA of dividing the City's funding between it and the DBA and what community activities might be adversely affected by doing so. Due to the current economic climate, private contributions to DKA have also decreased causing further funding difficulty.

Mayor Phillips explained that the City also has to be mindful of limited funding and, in wanting to be supportive of both organizations, believes it best to providing funding for each and encouraged them to work together to accomplish one goal.

Alderman Shull expressed his discomfort with the City continuing to support two downtown groups and suggested the Mayor appoint an advisory panel to report back to the BMA about a plan moving forward. Vice-Mayor Mallicote opined that he would like to allow some time for the groups to work together before requiring a committee report.

Ms. Mary Glenn Lively of *Finer Things for Her*, a new Broad Street business in the last year, said she is a member of both DKA and DBA and mentioned the need for the business promotion being provided by DBA.

6. REVIEW OF SITES FOR WATER PARK AQUATIC CENTER. Assistant to the City Manager Chris McCartt introduced Mr. Chris Camp, President of Lose and Associates, Inc. regarding proposed City site evaluations for this aquatic center. Mr. Camp provided Board members with a handout as he went over the information

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contained therein. The data addressed the various components, including three options his company was asked to consider in the process for evaluating and recommending the most favorable site out of four proposed: Grocery Row on West Sullivan Street, Foundry property between East Sullivan Street and Main Street, Meadowview near the Conference Center, and the current Legion Pool site between Fort Henry Drive and East Center Street.

Mr. Camp's presentation described square footage needs and illustrated possible layouts at each site. He identified positive and negative aspects of each, including parking needs and accessibility.

Mr. Russ Hickman of the City's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee shared details about his visit to a comparable facility in Gainesville designed by Lose & Associates. While it was not co-located with the YMCA, he commented on how busy it was when he visited, particularly, by the number of senior citizens lap swimming. The visit convinced him further that the Meadowview site will allow the City to construct a facility that will allow the features desired, as well as having room to grow in the future.

Mr. Paul Vachon stated that he and his wife, Amber, own and operate Appalachian Medical Massage Associates and, in this context, often work with the elderly and see this facility as a great avenue for rehabilitation.

Some Board members discussed the need to finalize the site selection in order to move this project ahead expeditiously and revisited the vote taken earlier that resulted in a four to three decision for the Meadowview site based on recommendation from the advisory committee formed to research the various sites.

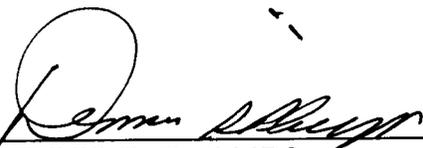
Alderman Mallicote, as one of the three who originally voted against the Meadowview location, stated his reasons for continuing to believe that the downtown site at Grocery Row is superior, including accessibility and redevelopment of an area in need of upgrading. He concluded by recognizing the need to move ahead with the project and indicating his support, with the caveat that some water feature is constructed on the current Legion pool site.

7. REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS ON MAY 19, 2009 REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA. City Manager Campbell, members of staff and community members provided a summary or presentation for each item on the proposed agenda.

8. ADJOURN. Seeing no other matters presented for discussion at this work session, Mayor Phillips adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.


 ELIZABETH A. GILBERT
 Deputy City Recorder




 DENNIS R. PHILLIPS
 Mayor