

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2007

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 26, 2007 at 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Lundberg, Ballew, Ralston, and Woodrow. Also present were Acting City Manager Jerry Smith, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Councilors Wylie and Pishioneri were absent.

1. Progress Report on the I-5 Willamette River Permanent Bridge Replacement Project.

Planning Manager Greg Mott presented the staff report on this item. This very significant project has been progressing towards selecting conceptual design options for several months. Numerous factors contribute to this important decision-point, including functional needs of the system, cost, aesthetics, environmental compatibility and community values among others. Tonight's presentation will highlight the steps that have occurred, and are yet to come, in this project including the next key milestone, the Environmental Assessment.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Bridge Delivery Unit, with assistance from Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners (OBDP), is responsible for the Willamette River permanent bridge replacement project. The project is entering the final stages of the bridge design options selection process so that the Environmental Assessment (EA) phase may be undertaken. The design options are intended to address the purpose and need for the bridge and incorporate the Goals and Objectives articulated by the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Project Development Team (PDT), and comments from the public via a number of public outreach mechanisms (see Attachment 1, page 5 Aesthetics, for example). A "build alternative" will be developed by the PDT that may include several "bridge type options" that fit within the environmental constraints on the project (The Council may wish to direct staff to schedule another update at this point to comment on the bridge type options). Once the "build alternative" is defined, it will become the basis for the EA that will be released for public comment, tentatively scheduled for this fall or early winter. At the conclusion of the public comment period the EA will be revised and published in time for a public hearing, possibly in January 2008. The EA will be finalized with an expected "finding of no significant impact" issued (by June 2008). Final engineering will follow and construction may begin as early as 2009. If significant impacts are identified, the process will switch to an Environmental Impact Statement evaluation and the timelines will change.

Mr. Mott introduced Ray Mabe, Bridge Delivery Unit Manager with ODOT, and Tim Dodson, Project Manager for the Willamette Bridge Project, also with ODOT.

Mr. Mabe said this bridge replacement was one of 365 of the bridges in the OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program and was the largest bridge in the program. ODOT was currently

performing the EA for this project. Mr. Mabe went through the power point presentation, which was included in the agenda packet as Attachment 3. He reviewed the history of the bridge, the temporary bridge and why it was necessary to build a permanent bridge.

Councilor Ballew asking what spalling meant.

Mr. Mabe said it meant pieces of concrete falling off or separating from the bridge.

Councilor Ballew asked about caps.

Mr. Mabe explained. He continued with the power point presentation. He noted that he could provide the Mayor and Council with a copy of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) list if they would like.

Mayor Leiken said he would like that provided to the Mayor and Council.

Mr. Mabe discussed the involvement with the CAG and the public. One of the goals of the OTIA III program was to consider the communities input and values. The CAG first met in January 2007 and would remain in place throughout the design and construction process. The decision making body for the project was the Project Delivery Team, with the CAG acting as the advisory group to that team. He discussed the next steps in the process.

Councilor Ballew asked if the EA was being conducted for state or federal requirements.

Mr. Mabe said it was for the federal requirement because the bridge received federal funding and was part of the national highway system, strategic highway network. He reviewed the key issues in the project. Any new issues would be identified during the process. He discussed aesthetics of the bridge and the different views of the bridge. This site lent itself to a lot of opportunity for something that reflected the values of the community and the natural beauty of this site. The EA should be published by the end of this year or early 2008. If no significant impacts were identified, a "finding of no significant impact" should be out by June or July 2008. Construction should start in early 2010 and finish in 2012.

Councilor Ballew asked why the temporary bridge went up so much faster.

Mr. Mabe said ODOT was able to work with the local agencies to streamline the permitting process and got some variances. That allowed them to get the bridge up quickly, but they would need to go through the regular process for the permanent bridge. It was in the interest of everyone to move the temporary bridge project along quickly. He reviewed the contact information for the bridge project and suggested visiting the websites for good information on the bridge. He discussed the evaluation of bridge types. Renderings of the different bridge types were displayed in the power point presentation. Mr. Mabe explained the different options as outlined in the power point presentation.

Mr. Mott asked about the distance of the span.

Mr. Dodson said the active waterway was about 800 feet.

Councilor Ballew asked about pedestrians along this bridge and whether or not pedestrians were allowed on the freeway.

Mr. Dodson said there were only a couple of places in Oregon, near Medford and Portland, where pedestrians were not allowed on the freeway. Normally a wide shoulder was put in to accommodate pedestrians or bicyclists.

Councilor Lundberg asked if all of the bridges being discussed met federal criteria.

Mr. Mabe said that was correct. The only difference could be how each would affect the environment and that would be shown in the EA.

Discussion was held regarding the aesthetics from the driver's perspective and from the community's perspective. The CAG was discussing the aesthetics of the bridge and how best to make it an attractive entrance into the community.

Mr. Dodson discussed the deck arch and how it would affect the budget by adding cost. A lot of other things, such as lighting and decorative columns, could be added that were more economically feasible that would make the bridge more attractive. He noted the beauty of the river.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not the river could be visible to drivers from the bridge.

Councilor Ralston asked if any of the designs accommodated an interchange going into Glenwood at Franklin Boulevard.

Mr. Mabe said the bridge would be built not to preclude that type of interchange in the future.

Councilor Ralston asked if funds saved from this project could go into an interchange project.

Mr. Mabe said it could not. The OTIA III funds used for this bridge replacement were specifically for replacement of the 365 bridges in Oregon and could not be used for other uses.

Mayor Leiken said there were a lot of other federal rules regarding placement of interchanges. He appreciated ODOT working with the City and County and allowing the option for a future interchange. Government should work together to adapt to the surroundings and remain flexible to change. He said this entryway could be the entryway into one of the more important transportation systems along the Franklin corridor.

Councilor Lundberg asked for the list of members on the CAG and also the Decision Team.

Mr. Mabe said he could get those lists to Council.

Councilor Ballew asked if this would have any impact on a possible redesign of Franklin Blvd.

Mr. Mabe said they were looking to accommodate growth on Franklin Boulevard.

Discussion was held regarding the height of the arches below deck and if it was restrictive to people canoeing or kayaking.

Mr. Dodson noted the area was very shallow and there would be little impact or restriction by either the arches or supports.

Mr. Mabe said the budget for this bridge was \$180M, with \$150M coming from OTIA III funds and \$30M coming from SAFETEA-LU (federal funding) funds. \$10M was earmarked for aesthetics. Mr. Mabe noted the types of bridges being considered for this project. He said ODOT would consider opportunities for additional funding from other sources for other aesthetic options. Timing was an issue and the bridge needed to be complete in 2012.

Mr. Mabe summarized his presentation.

2. Room Tax Allocation for Fiscal Year 2007-08.

Community Development Manager John Tamulonis presented the staff report on this item. With a hotel industry rebound, the City's portion of Transient Room Taxes increased over 20% last fiscal year and over 8% so far this fiscal year, but the conservative estimate for FY08 of Tourism Promotion Reserves is \$64,177 (see Attachment 1). These will likely grow with construction of the new Gateway Holiday Inn. Some Room Tax funds will likely be available for local projects as in the past. Several organizations have requested Room Tax funds, examples are in Attachments 2 (summary) and Attachments 3 and 4.

Staff is seeking Council's views of the projected use of funds for

1. Re-establishing prudent reserves,
2. Adjustments for annual cost increases;
3. Re-establishing a process for allocating Room Tax funds, or
4. Allocating funds through timely challenge grants to preserve major tourism facilities and investments before deterioration increases costs, restarting delayed activities and projects, and adding flexibility for small, unanticipated projects.

Attachment 2 indicates a possible list of projects and opportunities that Council could use to prioritize and target funds as they become available next fiscal year. At this time, an estimated \$64,000 would be available for activities and projects like those on Attachment 2. Note that the last Hayward Field payment of \$15,000 is July 2008, and these additional funds will be available annually thereafter. Commitments to the 2008 Olympic Trials are included in the City Manager's Economic Development budget.

Mr. Tamulonis noted several requests that had come in for possible use of the room tax funds.

Councilor Ballew asked who owned the Depot building.

Mr. Tamulonis said it was owned by the Depot Foundation and the land was owned by the City. He gave a brief history of the relocation of that building to its current site. In the past, the City had a Visitors Import Program (VIP) committee that used to review proposals and make recommendations. When the room tax dropped off, a state law revised the amount of money that local agencies could spend for particular uses. The amount was determined by what the City was spending on tourism related activities on July 2, 2003. On that date, the City was spending

approximately 25.82% of room tax funds on tourism eligible projects. Applying that percentage to the proposed FY08 income, the City would need to spend approximately \$196,635 on tourism eligible projects. He referred to the chart on Attachment 1, which showed the expenses. He explained those expenses. That left about \$64,000 that was not allocated that the Council could spend as they pleased.

Councilor Lundberg asked if the approximately 26% on tourism related activities was the minimum and the rest could go to the General Fund.

Mr. Tamulonis said the only designation in categories was the last two payments on Hayward Field and the approximately 26% that must be spent on tourism related categories specified by the State. The rest of the funds could be spent as Council wished. The \$64,000 could go into the General Fund or used for another activity.

Councilor Ballew said the room tax used to be a general purpose tax to reimburse cities for the wear and tear on streets, police, fire, etc. She would like to see Council use those funds for things that could attract tourism, such as downtown improvements. She suggested being conservative because of possible declines in City tax revenue. She said she didn't see a process to invite people to solicit. She would like to see the Council more focused on how to use the funds.

Mr. Tamulonis clarified that Attachment II showed items currently in the budget that addressed those needs. If Council wanted to keep funds available, an estimated \$64,000 would be left from the current budget.

Councilor Woodrow said he liked the idea of using these funds for downtown. He discussed the materials in the Museum, which the City owned, and thought \$15,000 to protect those items was a good investment. He said he was not sure about allocating money for the Depot repairs because the building was owned by someone else. He felt the murals should be maintained and he recommended supporting that amount.

Councilor Ralston said he was inclined to take the conservative approach and wasn't looking for ways to spend extra money. Building maintenance needed to be done, including the Museum. He felt there were more important projects to save money for. He said he was not in support of miscellaneous expenditures.

Councilor Lundberg said the Council was ready to support and focus on downtown. She discussed the process previously used. Council could set priorities for the funds and then look at this again once the new hotel had gone in and the increases in funds were known. Give people a chance at that time to go through a system that was fair and competitive. Set the money aside for now.

Councilor Ballew said all the Council was working in the same direction. She asked that staff bring back a proposal for taking a percentage or dollar amount to respond to small, individual projects, and also thoughts on what could be done downtown with the additional funds. It would be good to maintain some seed money for projects such as the Museum or maintaining City buildings, things that would be of value for tourism and the community. She would like some ideas for what the Council could accomplish with some start-up money to make downtown better.

Mayor Leiken said we needed a hook in downtown. He discussed Branson, Missouri and how they found a niche. He discussed the Simpsons' project and the possible impact that could have on our community. He said a reporter from Germany was going to talk with him about this project on Tuesday.

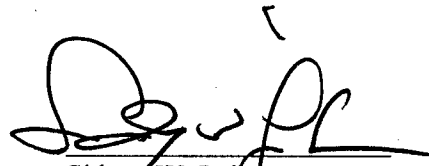
Mr. Laudati discussed the impact of the Simpsons in Germany.

Mr. Tamulonis said prior to 9-11, the City had over \$100,000 annually for various projects. There were priorities, criteria and process with application forms for those funds. Discussion regarding possible redevelopment in Downtown was scheduled for a Council work session in a couple of weeks, which could bring about additional ideas for these funds. He said there was no need to do anything regarding spending right now. He said staff could bring back more detailed information regarding the Museum's proposal, and perhaps at a later date some other seed projects for downtown. For now these funds would be kept in a reserve account.

ADJOURNMENT

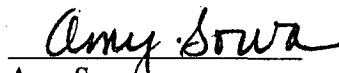
The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa



Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa
City Recorder