

**JOINT MEETING MINUTES
STEVENSON CITY COUNCIL AND FIRE DISTRICT 2
November 20th, 2019
6:00 PM, STEVENSON CITY HALL**

PRESENT

Mayor Scott Anderson
Councilmember Amy Weissfeld
Councilmember Jenny Taylor

City Staff present

City Administrator Leana Kinley
Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

FD 2 Members present

Rob Farris, Chief	Tom Delzio
Karl Russell, Commissioner	Leonard Damian
Frances Heller, Secretary	Scott Griswold

Call to Order

City Administrator Leana Kinley opened the meeting at 6:08 p.m. Mayor Anderson was delayed. The early arrival of Councilmembers Weissfeld and Taylor was noted. There was no quorum of councilmembers present.

Discussion

The meeting began with City Administrator Leana Kinley presenting information from conversations she has had with a developer regarding public-private construction options for the proposed new Fire Hall. Public/Private projects may eliminate the requirement for prevailing wage to be paid, resulting in considerably less project costs. This would be the case if a portion of the building could be used for a private party or business. If the project were all for public use, prevailing wages would need to be paid. The developer has experience with similar projects, including one in Ridgefield, WA.

She provided details on scenarios regarding leasing and buy-back opportunities. One possibility provided for a ten-year lease, with a purchase option beginning at year three. The purchase price would be agreed upon at the beginning of the lease period. Administrator Kinley explained what funding sources could be obtained depending on the construction method selected. Grants, bonds, reserve funds, sale of existing firehall property and tax proceeds were all considered.

In order to arrive at an accurate cost estimate, an updated set of drawings will need to be made available. Tom Delzio agreed to help with that. The developer could likely have some clearer numbers on building costs to provide to the Council by the December 2019 meeting. A very rough estimate of \$300/sq. ft was suggested.

Councilmember Weissfeld expressed reservations at options that result in less than prevailing wages for local workers. She was concerned there may be public pushback regarding the absence of prevailing wage. She also requested the city staff do a reference check on the developer to verify his experience and satisfactory completion of work.

The possibility of issuing bonds from both the City and Fire District to help pay for the project drew considerable comments and discussion. Councilmember Taylor suggested floating a bond sooner than later to gauge public support. If it failed the City and Fire District would have time to seek other funding.

The recent passage of the local EMS levy was seen as a positive indication of public support for emergency services. Mayor Anderson highlighted the need to present a unified and consistent message with practiced talking points. He stressed the significance of having the Fire District be the lead in communicating to the public the importance of their support.

The consensus was to begin a campaign in early 2020 detailing the scope of the project in order to build support for passage of a bond or additional levy. Councilmember Weissfeld advised avoiding discussing public-private options since the details were not known yet. Talking with other developers as suggested at a prior meeting by Councilmember Muth was also considered.

At least one Open House would be held at the existing Fire Hall to reveal the building's structural problems. Informational sessions similar to the ones presented on the Park Plaza Project were suggested, with large poster boards on display detailing the project. Mayor Anderson spoke of a similar project in Steven's County that failed, but then passed when the Fire Chief took on the marketing. He stated he would contact people in Steven's County for more details and resources on holding Open Houses. FD 2 members noted that at the recent county fair the public showed little interest in the design of the building, with most questions about services and response times. Chief Farris reminded everyone the School District would be placing a bond on the ballot in 2021, so timing of any others is important to boost chances of passage.

The group agreed to another meeting on January 21st, at 6 p.m. at Stevenson City Hall.

Mayor Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Approved _____; Approved with revisions _____

Name

Date

Minutes by Johanna Roe