



# City of Grand Prairie

City Hall - Briefing Room  
317 College Street  
Grand Prairie, Texas

## Minutes - Final City Council

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Tuesday, July 23, 2013

5:00 PM

City Hall - Briefing Room  
317 College Street

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### Call to Order

Mayor Jensen called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**Present** 8 -

Mayor Ron Jensen; Mayor Pro Tem Greg Giessner; Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Ruthe Jackson; Council Member Jorja Clemson; Council Member Richard Fregoe; Council Member Tony Shotwell; Council Member Jim Swafford and Council Member Jeff Wooldridge

**Absent** 1 -

Council Member Bill Thorn

*Mayor Jensen noted that Council Member Thorn would not be able to attend the meeting.*

*City Manager Tom Hart stated that the CIP is in an enviable position with \$20 million in bonding capacity beyond what is already pre-funded in the next three years. He said there is a significant cash reserve fund with some funds that are unrestricted and some with restrictions. Mr. Hart told Council Members that if there are projects they would like to fund and it is allowed within either the restricted or unrestricted uses, this is where those projects would be funded.*

### Items for Individual Consideration

1

Debt Service, Capacity for Future Bond Sales, and Summary of Cash Position - Presented by Kathleen Mercer, Budget Director, and Tannie Camarata, Cash and Debt Manager

*Tannie Camarata, Cash & Debt Manager, explained the debt service model. He said they are projecting future growth in tax values this year at 2.5% and future years at 1.00%. He explained that the TIF contribution went down this year because of closing out part of TIF 3 but increases next year because of the decrease in value of TIF 2. In 2015, the TIF contribution goes down again partially as a result of potentially closing TIF 2. Mr. Camarata said that taking all of that into account, the projection for bond capacity this year is \$14,655,000, and \$29,760,000 in 2015, then \$12,000,000 per year for FY 2016, 2017 and 2018. He said the resource balance is being drawn down in order to accomplish this because there the cash balance is too large and this will allow the city to complete needed projects.*

*Kathleen Mercer, Budget Director, went over the cash summary. She stated that the Capital Reserve Fund has a balance of \$7.1 million and the Capital Lending and Reserve Fund has a balance of \$9.8 million. This fund allows for loans for one-time*

projects and is paid back with interest. Ms. Mercer stated these are unrestricted funds and if Council Members have projects which require cash funding, this would be the source for those funds. The Sports Corporation Cash Balance is \$8,324,374. Ms. Mercer then went over reserves in various restricted use funds with a total of \$12,879,430. Mr. Hart noted that this was not the total of cash that is available and there were some funds not listed in restricted funds. He called attention to the footnote at the bottom of the restricted funds which stated that the city is \$4.2 million short on the MacArthur Project but that project has already been funded and that amount was pulled out of the contingency fund and moved over to the MacArthur project.

Mr. Hart said over the last two to three years the Sports Corporation has been giving money to the city and it has been saved over the last several years and now amounts to \$2.3 million. In response to a question from Council Member Fregoe about the Street Capital Projects Fund Risk Transportation Contingency, Mr. Hart explained that in the past there had been several projects (i.e. Lake Ridge, MacArthur, etc.) that the city did not have complete control over so he put \$5 million in contingency for cost overrides on those projects since many of the cost estimates for these projects were several years old. He said there was a big hit this year with an overrun of \$4.2 million on the MacArthur project.

Mayor Jensen asked about how much of the \$25 million in cash would the city want to spend. He said this cash reserve is a cushion for projects that come up. Mr. Hart commented that it is impressive to show to bond raters.

Council Member Shotwell how confident staff is about getting \$2.2 million from the County. Ms. Mercer said they have filed for reimbursement and are waiting for a check. Jim Sparks said he was very confident this amount will come from the county.

Ms. Mercer referred back to the \$2.3 million received from the Sports Corporation over the last few years and listed projects that are proposed from that cash including: Citywide Art Projects; City Hall renovations; Lynn Creek/Prairie Lights Pavilion; Turner Park Pavilion; and the Downtown Main Street Project. Mr. Hart said he would like to move the Turner Park Pavilion to next year and use the \$225,000 for Lake Parks. Mr. Swafford asked how much use the Turner Park Pavilion actually gets. Mr. Herold replied that it gets used quite a bit but it has gotten run down. Mayor Jensen commented that we spend millions on state-of-the art buildings and was not sure he wanted to wait until next year to replace the Turner Park pavilion. Council Member Swafford suggested doing a cleanup rather than a replacement. Mayor Jensen asked to look at options. Council Member Shotwell stated when Sports Corporations funds are used for a one-time project we need to be careful to have funds in the General Fund to maintain it and staff it. Mayor Jensen agreed.

Council Member Swafford asked if the property tax numbers had been received. Diana Ortiz, Chief Financial Officer, said she had not received numbers yet from Tarrant County, but Dallas County numbers were up 2.4% from last year. Mr. Hart said he was projecting that Tarrant County numbers would come in higher than what they have projected for this year based on past years projections.

Ms. Mercer referred to the 5-Year Spending Plan which showed there is \$14,631,376 of proposed projects in 2014 with available bond capacity of \$14,655,000. She said if Council had projects they would like to include in the bond package for 2014, one of the proposed projects would have to be eliminated, or one of the projects could be pushed to 2015 where \$19,932,640 has been identified for proposed projects with a bond capacity of \$29,760,000, leaving \$9,827,360 available to sell.

**2** Street and Transportation Projects Update - Presented by Jim Sparks,  
Transportation Director, and Bill Crolley, Planning Director

*Bill Crolley, Planning Director, went over proposed street projects. Mr. Hart clarified that none of the street projects being discussed would be done with street sales tax money. Mr. Crolley proposed removing Great Southwest Parkway from Avenue K to Fountain and taking that money for Day Miar at SH360 to improve Day Miar and tie it in to SH360 making a large piece of property in that area more desirable for economic development projects on the Grand Prairie side. The total cost of the project would be \$7.5 million with \$1.5 million reimbursable from Tarrant County. Mr. Hart said that he felt the Tarrant County Commissioner's Court would approve moving the money from the Great Southwest Parkway project to this one. He said he would bring the six landowners together over the 160 acres to discuss the road project to make this site viable for a big box store. Mr. Crolley said if the landowners do not want the project, the city would back off. Jim Sparks, Transportation Director, went over the proposed SH360 ramp reversal and the proposed locations for the entrance and exit. He said he had a meeting scheduled with TXDOT and the NTTA about the location of the exit on the SH360 toll road.*

*Mr. Crolley said the Ragland Road rehab would consist of milling and an asphalt overlay at a cost of \$1,000,000. He said that after the design is completed, they may not straighten out the sharp corner at Mirabella Blvd. if the cost is too high. Mr. Hart said this would be eligible for the street sales tax but because of the size of the project he left it on the CIP.*

*Mr. Crolley reviewed the Freetown Road projects from Carrier to SW Third, Phase III, at a cost of \$2.2 million. Oakdale from Roy Orr to SH161 would be done in two phases with the Phase I to be started in 2014 at a cost of \$2 million and Phase II in 2018 at a cost of \$5,000,000. Mr. Crolley stated on the west side of SH161 there is only Rock Island, future Wildlife Parkway and Trinity, so circulation on the west is not great. These projects would enhance economic development prospects in this area.*

*Mr. Crolley went over sidewalk projects on Main Street from Center to NW 2nd Street in the amount of \$713,000 and on the west side of Great Southwest Parkway from Forum to Sara Jane at a cost of \$200,000.*

*Mayor Jensen recessed the meeting at 5:50 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.*

**3** Non-Transportation Projects Update - Presented by Staff

*Ron McCuller, Public Works Director, informed the Council about Coliform bacteria and the amount allowed in the water supply before a public notice would be required to be sent out.*

*Mr. McCuller then went over the sidewalk repair/replacement policy. Council Member Shotwell stated that when tree roots cause tree roots to heave, it is not always the homeowner's responsibility since the tree may not have been planted by the homeowner (i.e. trees in city rights-of-way). Mr. McCuller said many streets do not have curb and gutter but have bar ditches. He reviewed the bar ditch policy that prohibits filling in the ditch unless permitted by the Engineering Department so that it would not adversely impact other properties.*

*Jim Sparks, Transportation Director, went over the LED lighting program at HWY 303 and SH161 to the west City Limits; fiber network extension from Camp Wisdom from Matthew to Lake Ridge; intersection improvements at Carrier and Corn Valley to*

install a right turn lane on Carrier. Mr. Sparks went over the Camp Wisdom project from Carrier to FM1382. Council Member Shotwell asked if this was in the City of Dallas and Mr. Sparks replied that it was. Mr. Hart asked if the city was capped on the funding for this project. Mr. Sparks said the city is not capped but Dallas County has the project in their CIP. Mr. Hart asked if the city was capped on Wildlife Parkway and Mr. Sparks replied we are not.

Romin Khavari, City Engineer, went over proposed storm drainage projects. He said the city has a master plan that helps to identify needs and to prioritize projects. Mr. Khavari presented a listing of current project rankings. He said the first project being proposed for 2014 is the Main Street/Jefferson Street Railroad Culvert Crossings at a cost of \$1.4 million. Other projects include Martin Barnes Road at Garden Branch; Skyline Drive at Henry Branch; E. Main Street at the railroad bridge; and Great Southwest Parkway at Prairie Creek. Mr. Khavari stated that there is an annual city-wide study for outfall rehabilitation to identify those that have been buried or washed out.

Anna Doll, Deputy City Manager, reviewed the Airport projects including the runway lighting project which is funded 90% by TXDOT and 10% by the city and has a 3-4 year return on investment. The current FBO office space and hangar is in need of improvement and \$450,000 has been proposed for those improvements. She said the RAMP Project is a 50/50 split with TXDOT for the parking lot. Ms. Doll went over the remaining projects with a total proposed funding of \$1,330,000. Mayor Jensen said that some of the revenue for the airport is generated by the gas well at the airport. Ms. Doll commented that this airport is one of the few municipal airports to operate in the black.

Ms. Doll went over the library projects CIP for 2014 which is Phase III for lighting and Phase IV for carpeting. Council Member Fregoe asked about the possibility of a new branch library. Mr. Hart stated he would like to get the new director on board before making decisions like that. Council Member Shotwell stated he did not think he could support a stand-alone library because of the past success of including libraries as part of other buildings. Mayor Jensen said he agreed.

Robert Fite, Police Chief, stated that during his first four months at the city he analyzed data to see if there was a need to reorganize. Station 10 came out of this analysis because of the number of homes there plus additional commercial development. The station would be built at the corner of Balboa and Grand Peninsula. He said he had met with the Mansfield Fire Chief to discuss a partnership. He said there will be a Quint on the north part of town and on the south part of town. He said the fire station partnership with Cedar Hill will remain but that funding may need to be reconsidered. Council Member Swafford asked if there will be EMS at Station 10. Chief Fite said Station 7 has EMS so there would not be EMS at Station 10. Mayor Jensen said he would defer to Chief Fite on the need for EMS or not at Station 10. Chief Fite said the \$370,000 would cover design and engineering of Station 10. Mr. Hart said that operations of the station would be discussed in the next few weeks. He said it takes 18 people to open a station. Council Member Swafford said that with the number of homes on the peninsula he thought there should be an ambulance at Station 10.

Chief Fite said the purchase of defibrillators has been spread over three years with \$257,100 proposed for 2014. He said there will be one on every truck and ambulance in order to get one of these to the citizens' front door in four minutes to provide critical advance life support prior to arriving at the hospital. The software in the defibrillator allows the transmission of the EKG directly to the hospital.

Chief Fite said as part of the department's reorganization, a Quint will be purchased to replace Engine #4 at a cost of \$705,000 which is actually less than the cost of the truck because of the significant trade in value received for Engine #4. He said that every year there would be engine replacements included in the CIP because they are on a 12-14 year work cycle. Mayor Pro Tem Giessner asked Chief Fite if Engine #4 and Engine #E4 were the same. Chief Fire said they are the same. Chief Fite showed the locations of the fire stations and commented that he intends to have a very good relationship with neighboring cities. Mayor Jensen commented that mutual aid and automatic aid are very different. Council Member Shotwell commented that the area of Dallas at Skyline is a mess.

Police Chief Steve Dye said that the outdoor warning sirens were built 20 years ago and are in need of replacement at a cost of \$700,000. This allows for 18 sirens which can be zoned and they can be tested remotely. Chief Dye said the second CIP item is for radio replacement at a cost of \$13 million. He said he spoke with the city of Arlington to see if they wanted to partner in a radio system and they agreed. Arlington will go ahead in Phase I because their system is 25 years old and this will allow Grand Prairie to defer payments until after October of next year so this is being moved to 2015. Chief Dye noted that the radio system will be for all city departments that utilize radios and features interoperability. He said he is proposing a radio manager position in the General Fund.

Rick Herold, Parks and Recreation Manager, went over the Municipal Facility Projects including a roof and HVAC replacement program and building infrastructure and the various projects that would be accomplished with these funds. Mr. Hart went over the update of City Hall facilities to remodel the City Manager's Offices, enlarge the Briefing Room to accommodate more seating, and rearranging the lobby area to make it more secure. Council Member Shotwell asked to have the design brought back for Council review.

Mr. Hart said there are four projects for the downtown area included in the budget, including Phase II sidewalks, Phase III sidewalks (proposed at \$731,000), but the engineering estimate for sidewalks may be as low as \$300,000. This will free up funds in the street budget. He said the façade program will be continued into the next block.

Mr. Herold said \$100,000 is proposed for the gun range roof and it also includes HVAC and mechanical issues.

Mr. Hart said he put \$300,000 in the budget last year and this year for electronic signage to communicate events and important information to citizens. Tom Cox, Deputy City Manager, said the signs would be wireless or optic cable to display different messages. The signs will be placed at strategic intersections throughout the city. Mr. Hart said he would like to keep funding these signs in future years if discretionary funds are available. Council Member Shotwell said the Development Committee had been discussing the kiosk signs and these may be utilized in place of "bandit" signs. Council Member Swafford noted that one of the sources of funding for the facility projects includes Sports Corporation funding in the amount of \$1,538,413. Mr. Hart replied that this was part of the \$2.3 million that the city had received that had been unallocated until this year.

Mayor Pro Tem Giessner stated the I-20 and Carrier intersection is a main entrance to the city but the slopes near the frontage roads look very trashy. Mr. Herold said he would look at this with the new landscaping and beautification crew. Mr. Hart said since one of the new electronic signs is scheduled to be erected at this intersection, they would look at some possible landscaping to beautify that area. Mayor Jensen

mentioned the area at Carrier Parkway heading west along the railroad tracks and he asked whose responsibility it is to maintain those areas. Mr. Herold said Tammy Chan had done some cleanup all along the railroad right-of-way. Council Member Fregoe asked about the progress on the beautification of I-20 and Great Southwest Parkway. Mr. Hart said he would ask Ms. Chan to do an update on this project.

Mr. Herold reminded Council that a cabin at Loyd Park had been funded last year and some work had been done on a cabin. He said \$225,000 from this project was moved back to the Lake Park Fund. The proposed Lodge at Loyd Park would sleep 24 people and would be broken down into a dormitory wing and an open area. He said the Special Event Pavilion for Lynn Creek cannot be done by Prairie Lights opening, so he would like to put a hold on this project. He said the Lake Equipment line item would be for a 50 amp unit to accommodate large RV's. Mr. Herold said the lease property on Lynn Creek would be for two restaurant sites. He said he would also like to add golf cart rentals at the campground. Mr. Herold said that Good Sam had just given the park one of its highest ratings.

Council Member Shotwell asked Mr. Herold to talk a little bit more about the Lodge at Loyd Park. Mr. Herold said it would include a dormitory and an open area with a large kitchen. It would sleep 16 people plus a master bedroom. He said this has a great rental potential. Mr. Shotwell asked about the progress of the camp store. Mr. Herold said the camp store will include a recreation area and Laundromat. The project will be bid and will open any day. He said he plans to operate the store with volunteers.

Mr. Herold explained that the Park Infrastructure Fund helps to fund projects that come up during the year. For example, the school called about the condition of the tennis courts and the refurbishing of the courts came from this fund.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Jackson pointed out that the Turner Park Texas sign was named for Vernon and Ruthe Jackson and her garden club put a lot of work into that area and she asked for it to be maintained.

Mayor Jensen recessed the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Mr. Herold stated that the restrooms at Mike Lewis Park and in many other parks need to be renovated. Other projects include a new liner in the natatorium; the Summit fitness equipment will be funded at \$55,000 every other year to keep equipment in good shape; and the parking lot restriping is important because it is a first impression of the park system.

Mr. Herold said that some land had been left available for lease at Central Park for development. The original plan had a water park in the corner but it will be relocated. The park trails will be continued and will feature both hard and soft trails. He said he is proposing bike rentals on the trails near Verizon and at the city for employees to ride on breaks or lunch hour. Other projects include fiber network for Dalworth Recreation Center; Veterans Memorial sculptures (currently has eight pieces and will continue adding pieces); Tangle Ridge Clubhouse repairs; Prairie Lakes entrance enhancement to continue the "Wow" appearance and the addition of new restrooms at Prairie Lakes.

Mr. Hart said the original Central Park master plan shows a recreation center and an aquatic park. The new plan has changed the location of the water park because the property on the corner is too valuable and can be developed on the private side. He said the plan is for a mega center (to be named "Epic") to include a recreation center,

*an aquatic park (large part of which will be inside) and finishing the amphitheater and trail. There will be a mega outside playground which will be handicapped accessible. Mr. Hart said to pay for this huge project he is proposing to use a ¼ cent sales tax at the end of Summit and QT sales tax payoff. He said he is working on a schedule for these payoffs which will need to be carefully orchestrated. His plan would be to go to voters in May 2015 to revote the two 1/8 into ¼ cent to pay for this facility. He said there will be a very detailed impact analysis of what it will cost to operate and the plan is to use a small portion of the sales tax to operate it. He added that he wants to keep it affordable for our residents. There will be many opportunities to raise revenue in this venue. The 1/8 cent sales taxes will end 9/30/2015 and the new one would begin. He said at this time there would be funds left in both of these projects. There would be over \$1 million in the Summit that will be used to address infrastructure issues there. QT pays off sooner and this would provide \$3 million in cash and \$200,000 will be used for the sound system and possible parking for QT and Verizon. Mayor Jensen explained that more sales tax revenue allows for additional payments on the bonds to allow early payoff of the bonds.*

*Mr. Hart said he thought the voters would approve this premier facility. Mayor Pro Tem Giessner asked if there was a timetable for this facility. Mr. Hart said the QT bonds would pay off next year but he is artificially holding those bonds open until the following year so that the bond election can be held in May 2015 for the ¼ cent. Mr. Swafford explained that most of the ¼ cent would be going for debt service and a small amount for operating costs. Then when the debt service is paid, the remaining part can be used for operating costs. Mayor Jensen asked what would happen when the bonds are no longer paying operating costs. Mr. Hart said the sales would not have to end; it could be cut down to 1/8 cent and then do something else with the other 1/8 cent. He said that a plan would need to be put in place to pick up the operating costs in future budgets. Mayor Jensen said that in the 2015 election the information given to voters would include the fact that a portion of the ¼ cent would be used for operating costs and would be included for a number of years. Council Member Shotwell expressed concern about including operating costs in the bonds for this project. He also said that he was against using city money to build more parking at QuikTrip for Verizon's use. Ms. Doll said Verizon's contract said they "could" build parking, not that they "would" build parking. Mr. Hart said he met with Verizon officials yesterday and they are the one venue into which the city has not put money. The city has never paid a debt payment on the building. Verizon will be paying the city \$250,000 as the city's share of their profits. They have paid millions in infrastructure and they are one of the largest sales tax payers in the city. Mr. Hart said if Council was on board to go ahead with planning for the Central Park mega project, he would need to get it started very soon.*

**4****Discussion of Unfunded Projects for FY2014 - Presented by Tom Hart, City Manager**

*Council Member Shotwell said that nothing had been done to the old Hill Street Park in many years. He said he thought it would be a good idea to ask the people in that area what they would like to see in that park and put it in the CIP over the next few years.*

*Mr. Hart asked if there were any further projects that Council would like to be considered for the CIP. Council Member Clemson said she would like to see a quiet zone considered for the railroad crossing in the Hidden Creek area. Mr. Hart said he would move savings from one project over to this project.*

*Council Member Shotwell questioned the fiber optic cable projects that were funded and asked whether the city might not be better off going wireless. Bob O'Neal, Information Technology Director, said the Lake Ridge and Matthew project finishes*

off the loop. Mr. Shotwell asked about fiber optic at the Dalworth Recreation Center. Mr. O'Neal said the city was better off with fiber optic than wireless and it will have a long-term benefit to city.

Council Member Shotwell stated that the managed lane project at I-30 and MacArthur will close the off ramp for several months. Mr. Sparks said that NTTA and Dart and TXDOT are building a managed road. Because of this they will close the frontage road because of construction to move I-30 over slightly for detours to frontage road. He said this disrupts the marketability of land at Gifford and Bagdad. They will build a temporary off ramp until February 2015. However, the contract contains an incentive to get finished earlier.

Council Member Shotwell asked about grocery store in north Grand Prairie. Mr. O'Neal said he had been working with consultants to look at issues, to do surveys in north Grand Prairie to see where a possible site for a grocery store might be and to find out what requirements the various chains have.

## 5

### Strategic Planning and Discussion of Future Projects, Programs and Issues - Presented by Mayor Ron Jensen

Mayor Jensen said he wanted to allow the Council Members to discuss what their expectations are or any ideas they may have for the future of the city. Council Member Fregoe asked about public transportation. Mayor Jensen said he had met with Michael Morris earlier regarding high speed rail (Houston to Dallas) at a cost of \$20 billion. He said Grand Prairie is outside of DART and he had met with Arlington and the TRE and Arlington and DART, and with Arlington alone. Arlington is beginning a self-funded transportation program (UTA has to have public transportation to become a Tier 1 college). Discussion took place regarding public transportation. Council Member Fregoe said he thought the city made the right decision not to join DART, but asked if we want to still look into public transportation. Mayor Jensen said he would keep watching Arlington's self-funded program to see how it goes.

In reply to a question about Turner Drive off 7th Street, Mr. McCuller said he could put it in Street Sales Tax at \$300,000 not including \$500,000 for drainage.

## Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

## Executive Session

Mayor Jensen convened an executive session at 8:45 p.m. pursuant to Chapter 551, Subchapter D of the Government Code, V.T.C.A., to discuss a Section 551.072 "Deliberation Regarding Real Property"; and Section 551.087 "Deliberations Regarding Economic Development Negotiations" Mayor Jensen adjourned the executive session at 9:05 p.m.

## Adjournment

Mayor Jensen adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

*The foregoing minutes were approved at the August 6, 2013 meeting.*

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*Catherine E. DiMaggio, City Secretary*