

**MINUTES
ST. CLAIR SHORES CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING
JUNE 12, 2023**

City Council Workshop Meeting was held in the Council Chambers, located at 27600 Jefferson Avenue., St. Clair Shores, Michigan.

Present: Mayor Kip C. Walby, Council Members Peter Accica, John Caron, Ron Frederick, David Rubello, Candice Rusie, and Chris Vitale

Also Present: City Manager Dustin Lent, Assistant City Manager Michael Greene, Municipal Clerk Specialist Kendra Kroll, Directors Denise Pike, Henry Bowman, Rosemary Orlando, and Bryan Babcock, Interim Finance Director Renae Warnke, City Engineer Chris Liebert, City Assessor Teri Socia, Fire Chief Piper, Police Chief Allen, and Deputy Police Chief Plaza

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Walby called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Kroll, Municipal Clerk Specialist, called the roll, and a quorum was present.

2. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON AGENDA ITEMS (2 MINUTE TIME LIMIT) – None

3. ARPA

Mr. Lent said the main objection for this meeting is to discuss the ARPA funds. He said he is looking for direction on the Police Department project and he noted that they are 2 – 3 months ahead of the Fire Departments project. There will be an update on the Fire buildings and the Library projects. He noted that the Library was originally listed under ARPA, however, they recently received a \$1.5 million grant.

a. Presentation on Police Building by Partners

Mr. David Gassin from Partners in Architecture gave an overview of their process for the Police building options. He recapped their goals and objectives noting that they want to create a smooth workflow for the officers and for public interactions.

Mr. Andy Zelinsky from Partners in Architecture provided an overview of the existing site and exterior conditions. He indicated that the overall site is good but with adverse conditions. He said there are drainage and elevation issues which could be contributing to the leak in the basement. He summarized the existing interior functions and said overall it does not operate efficiently.

Mr. Gassin said essentially the building is old and worn. There are operational, programmatic, and, efficiency issues. He discussed the space program summary for the square foot comparison. As they were developing the program, they looked at keeping within budget while staying operational for years to come. He noted that there are thirteen major areas within the Police Department and he pointed out that the efficiency ratio is close in all three options. He said that concept 6 will be renovating the existing building and concepts 8 and 9 will be new buildings.

Mr. Zelinsky explained the infrastructure site utilities for concept 6. He noted that the sanitary line goes to Cedar Street south of the site and across the property to get to the main storm sewer on Eleven-mile Road, which is a challenge in all of the options.

Mr. Gassin said the utilities are a challenge. The telecommunication tower will not be moved in any of the options, although they tried. He summarized the pros and cons of concept 6 during and after construction. He noted the separate parking for officers and public access. There is the addition of the house for more space.

Mr. Vitale is concerned about how the fence looks around the building. He asked if the fence has to be up to Eleven Mile or if it can be pushed back to the parking lot.

Mr. Gassin said that could be an option and after the decision is made on which direction to go in then the fence can be discussed in detail. He noted that parking is important whether it is for the personnel or patrol vehicles.

Mr. Zelinsky explained that the second story addition is new and noted that the goal in concept 6 was to stay within the budget. They wanted to be efficient with the existing space and use the new build area for storage. He gave an overview of

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the floor plans. They will be able to waterproof the wall on the west face of the existing building. He said all of the concepts will have an elevator.

Mr. Gassin pointed out on concept 6 with the new two-story addition and the single story that goes west, they were trying to step it down towards the residential area. He said for the existing construction type there are limitations on what they could do for removal and modifications.

Mr. Gassin said concept 9 is achieving what we want and the cost will be what it is. He noted that a lot of the site plan is the same and he discussed the pros and cons. He said by removing the home there would be more public parking and there would be additional access points from the parking lots to Cedar Street or Jefferson. He explained the site plan, design, and layout of the floor plans. He said that with this concept it has increased operational function so you can get to where you need to in minimal time.

Mr. Gassin said on concept 8 the site ideas are similar to concept 9. He noted that the wall is on an angle off of Jefferson to reduce the square footage but maintain the functionality. They did not want to reduce the major circulation areas. The public parking would be smaller than concept 9. He said this concept is reduced in size but still provides functional operation at a reduced cost. Since this has a reduced floor plan, they reduced the pink area on the first floor, the purple area by the sally port, and the green area for records storage and clerks. The second floor is similar to concept 9 but they moved the training area and, in the basement, the fitness and locker rooms were reduced.

Mr. Gassin gave an overview of the estimated cost summary and comparison between the three options. The construction cost is an estimated cost of what we would get once it is bid out. The soft costs are other indirect costs fees, for example engineers, architects and legal fees. The owner contingency fee is there for the unknowns and he noted that concept 6 is higher due to using the existing building.

Mayor Walby asked how much more time for the design will be added to the construction schedule.

Mr. Gassin said once we have a solid plan it would be about 5 – 6 months on top of the estimated construction schedule.

Mr. Rubello asked if concept 6 has all of the things that a modern station would have.

Mr. Gassin said ideally yes, but there are limitations working with the existing structure so areas may be smaller.

Mr. Rubello asked if concept 6 will solve the flow issues.

Mr. Gassin said it will be better but not great.

Mr. Accica confirmed that the water coming into the basement will be fixed.

Mr. Gassin said in concept 6 they will excavate and fix the areas that they know of but water can be hard to predict.

Mr. Frederick is concerned about the parking lots not having multiple ways to get in and out.

Mr. Gassin said yes, they could look at options for the parking lots to have multiple entrances.

Mr. Lent said the options shown were the top three from the committee so Council could see the full packages. The funding needs to be spent by the end of 2026 and earmarked by the end of 2024. He is looking for guidance from Council to narrow down a concept so we can move forward.

b. Fire Building Update

Mr. Lent said the Fire building 3 months behind the Police Department. They are not close to having the concepts or designs. They just finished their programming phase and getting tentative cost points. He said there are 3 buildings and they are uniquely different.

Mr. Don Barry from A3C Architect provided an overview of the existing conditions and observations noting that all three buildings do not meet current codes for egress and life safety. He summarized the recommendations regarding the site, architectural, structural, and MEP for all three buildings.

Mr. Barry explained the current conditions for the central station and indicated that there was a single addition added in

Item #3b Continued

1997. They are recommending about 16,000 square feet to meet all of the needs upon completion and they are also recommending demolishing the 1997 addition and the second story living area. He discussed the proposed plans and layouts for the central station.

Mr. Barry said the south and north stations are similar square footage. He discussed the existing conditions for the south station noting that the current building is small and crowded. They suggest the north and west walls come down and put an addition on the west side. He said for the proposed plan they will be within 7,000 square feet after the addition.

Mr. Barry said the north station is the oldest building. They recommend demolishing the east and south walls in order to add on. He said they recommend relocating the bay doors to increase the operational function.

Mr. Barry summarized the costs for renovation and new construction for each of the stations.

Ms. Rusie asked what the justification is for demolishing the 1997 addition at the central station.

Mr. Barry said that they cannot build on top of the wood frame.

Mr. Vitale said the calculations on the square footage cost for the north and south stations are not correct.

Mr. Barry said he would have to look further into the numbers listed on the spreadsheet.

Mayor Walby said we can either complete just the central station or the north and south stations due to cost.

Mr. Vitale feels that all three Fire Stations should be done. We need to get the correct cost information.

Mr. Caron and Ms. Rusie expressed their concerns on why all three of the Fire stations should be done or at least to find a solution to alleviate the safety issues at all three buildings.

Mr. Rubello said the hot spots were discussed for all three stations at the fire meetings. They focused on the central station. He asked to see how we can split the safety needs up between the three stations.

Mr. Barry said if this is what Council wants then he will have to start over.

Mr. Lent said that we have about \$16 million remaining in the ARPA fund. It would be about \$24 million to do the Police Department and all three Fire Stations. We are fortunate to have this money and these buildings are in need of renovations or replacements due to safety and inefficiencies. We have a timeline we are going to be up against and he asked Council for their opinions or thoughts on how to come up with revenue.

Mr. Frederick said we should set priorities and create different phases to start with the most important issues.

Mr. Rayes said that it is not ideal to put in something new to fix it now and then tear it down later. He asked if Council wants to have three final plans plus a patch plan which will have more cost associated for design.

Mr. Vitale proposed some sacrifice on the capital equipment side. As an example, if we replace the police cars every three years then we go longer and take some of that budget money towards the bond. We can do all three stations over time.

Mr. Caron said we need to stay within the money we received from the state.

Mr. Rubello asked if we complete the central Fire Station under budget can we use the leftover money to put towards the north or south carcinogen issues or possibly to the Police Department.

Mr. Rayes suggested using risk option. This takes you to your maximum number based on your price. When you look at these options this helps to stay on target and help the process as opposed to using a general contractor bid project. We should use a construction manager at risk to work with the target we want and it is known before you start construction. This way they create to a final design based on the cost.

Mr. Lent said if we went with the manager at risk, we would have to bid out and then set up an interview process.

Mr. Gassin said if you bring the risk manager on during the design process, they are helpful regarding the construction, rehabilitation, and renovations for their methodology and phasing aspects. They will help to reduce time and they will be knowledgeable from the start.

Item #3b Continued

Ms. Rusie said it is a good idea to pursue the construction manager due to budget restraints. This will help us to stay in line with the projects. She said we need to concentrate on the safety of our staff for the Fire Stations.

Mr. Lent said at this point we need to do more work on the Fire Stations but we need direction on the Police Department. He asked Council if they want to move forward on the contractor at risk. He said that there are about \$700,000 to \$1 million of additional funds we can use towards the Police Department that we do not have for the Fire Department.

Mr. Caron said he was hoping to have a complete plan. He said we need to see the numbers for each project and show what we can actually do. He indicated that the Police Department is more straight forward where the Fire Stations may have to be done in phases.

Mayor Walby agrees with Mr. Caron that we need more information before making these decisions.

Mr. Lent said he recommends that we move forward with the Police Department and get started with the bid process. He thinks we should go with concept 8 due to this being a new building so it takes away the issues and the unknowns we have with the current building. It would be about \$2.3 million higher than concept 6 and he noted that if we use the contractor manager that there would be additional savings. He said that the central station has the biggest concerns and is the least structurally sound out of the three stations. The central station is the most utilized for training and administration.

Mr. Accica and Mr. Frederick agree on concept 8.

Mayor Walby and Mr. Caron do not agree with going over the \$9 million budget and especially when we do not know what the cost is going to be for the Fire Stations.

Mr. Vitale said he is concerned with material shortages for a new building.

Mr. Lent said he understands everyone's concerns but with concept 8 it is more about long-term reliability and function.

Mr. Barry said he can go back and look at the central station as the main investment and then see what can be done for the other 2 stations.

Mayor Walby said we need to see the plans for all three stations.

Mr. Barry said it will be about two months to complete the plans but he does not think that the central station cost will change enough to cover the north and south stations.

Mayor Walby said the project list needs to be updated and we need to know exactly where the money is coming from.

c. Library Update

Mr. Craig Borum from Ply Plus, said that they have reviewed the work that Daniels and Zermack have done and they are beginning to construct documents of the existing conditions. They are hoping to set up meetings soon to find out what the decisions and discussions were that generated the work from Daniels and Zermack so they can get started.

Mr. Lent said that Daniels and Zermack were hired before they received the grant money and they had met with the committee to come up with ideas. He indicated that we received \$1.5 million in grant money and a \$188,000 donation for the genealogy room. He said to stay compliant with the grant process they went out to bid. The committee felt that Ply Plus had some fresh ideas and approaches. He said the project will focus on a youth area and the genealogy room. He needs direction on going out to bid for a contractor manager at risk to interview and hire.

Ms. Rusie said that they are staying within the grant and donation money. They are making changes to the youth area and separating out a teen space. The changes will be more functional and better for future use.

Mr. Rayes said the contract has been submitted to Mr. Ihrie for review. He said once the contract is signed, he will notify the committee so they can start the next process.

4. WATER LOSS

a. Meter Replacement

Item #4a Continued

Mr. Lent said we are at a 12% water loss and when they analyzed the meters there are approximately 3900 that are out. The issue is that the cellular data from the meters to the sensors in the City are not recording the data. There are three collectors out of eight around the City that do not work. He indicated that they need direction on the meters that are being estimated and we have about \$1.4 million of outstanding debt. He is recommending that if someone does not pay their water fees, we put that amount on their tax bill even if it is an estimated cost.

Ms. Socia said that the \$1.4 million is not the true cost of what we transfer. She noted the 167 accounts that total about \$335,000 of delinquent bills and some have been estimated for years. They have reached out to these accounts but they have not paid. She said we need a plan to get the meters changed out in commercial buildings, most of which, are apartments. She asked if we can send shut-off notices to the residents that are in the building to prompt them to contact their landlord.

Ms. Rusie said residents have said that they do not know if a water bill is actual or an estimate. She asked if there can be a different color or something to stand out.

Ms. Socia said she can look into it but noted that there is verbiage that says it is estimated and to call.

Ms. Rusie asked when the rental certification needs to be renewed for the apartment complexes if we can add that the meters need to be updated.

Mayor Walby asked if letters were sent out letting people know that if they do not pay it will go on their tax bill.

Ms. Socia said yes, they sent letters. She said notices were sent for \$150 and over and for the estimates that were \$3,000 and higher they also received a phone call. She noted that most people did not call back.

Mr. Rubello asked how long do you go back if you were to replace someone's meter.

Ms. Socia clarified that these are not meter issues they are MTU issues. This is the device that lets us know what the meter is saying. She said once they can replace the device, they will know what is owed. Since there are 3900 not working, we do not know what is exactly owed.

Mr. Lent said per Council's direction we are passing on the fees for those that we are estimating. He said we may want to think about going back to adding a large dollar amount to the bills to get people's attention in the future. If there is a difference, they will be credited the amount.

Ms. Socia asked what we are going to do about the commercial meters that still need to be changed out.

Mr. Lent asked Council for direction on shutting off the commercial meters.

Council said this needs to be for non-residential only not apartment complexes.

Mr. Lent asked Ms. Socia to give him the list of residential meters so they can go back and reevaluate.

Mr. Caron asked about the MTU's.

Mr. Lent said that it will be costly to change out the MTU's and this will have to come back to Council.

Ms. Socia said the MTU's might be good and it is due to not having enough power to get them read.

Mr. Caron asked who else has these systems. He noted checking with other communities to see what they use.

5. COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE PROJECT

Ms. Pike said that they met with the condo president to discuss the project in February. She noted that this project involves retaining walls on private property. The condo presidents initiated the process but due to condo by laws, when you add more maintenance expense it needs to be approved by all of the residents. There has to be a certain percentage of residents in favor of the additional cost. She explained meeting with the condo presidents regarding a timeline for this large project and she indicated that we still need an answer on the sidewalks.

Ms. Pike asked for direction from Council if they want to eliminate the sidewalks completely and just do the road reconstruction or tell the condo associations to move forward with our process.

Item #5 Continued

Mr. Lent noted that they wanted us to force the sidewalks on the residents but we cannot do this on private property. Since we cannot get an answer on the sidewalks, he is recommending that we force them to have a vote and give us an answer. If they vote no then we do just the road, but if it is yes then we will put in the sidewalks. He noted that by the time we can move forward, we may have to rebid.

Mayor and Council agree with the City Manager's recommendation.

6. FIRE TRUCK

Mr. Lent said we ordered a fire truck about a year ago that was going to take two years to come in and now it will not be in until October 2025. He said that they received an offer for a demo fire truck and he cannot guarantee that it will still be available. He said that when we ordered the first fire truck, we did not purchase it, the \$724,680 was put in reserve in the motor pool. If Council approves the demo truck, it will replace the 1996 Sutphen with the money that is in reserve. He said then we have the next three budget years to save up the money for the new truck that should be here in 2025.

Chief Piper said the demo truck is from Spencer and is a 2024 with 985 miles. The same warranties apply. The demo truck would become the new engine two and then the old engine two would go into reserve status. When the new truck arrives in 2025 it would go to station 3 and then the current engine three would be the back up truck. This will bring all of the trucks current and we would get rid of both of the 1996 Sutphen trucks.

Mr. Caron asked why they are just now finding out about this and noted that the letter is dated June 1st.

Mr. Lent said that he and Chief Piper wanted to look into the offer first and they needed to check the current inventory and budget.

Mr. Caron said that Council needs a heads-up on these types of requests in the future.

Mr. Frederick asked if Spencer will be as good as the Sutphen truck.

Chief Walleman said that Spencer has a newer design on how they build the trucks. He said they have high-density plastic that will not rust. He explained some issues we have had with the 1996 and 2000 trucks. He noted that if we pass on this truck, when we need to order another Sutphen the prices are going up and it will still take 4 years to come in.

Chief Piper indicated that we are at the bottom of the list for the new truck.

Chief Walleman said the issues are with production, manpower, and with the chips.

Mayor Walby said to add this item to the June 19, 2023 Council meeting agenda.

7. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - None

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Council Member Frederick, supported by Council Member Caron to adjourn at 9:51 p.m.

Ayes: All-7


KIP C. WALBY, MAYOR


ABRIAL J. BARRETT, CITY CLERK

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