



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
June 8, 2004

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 5:33 p.m. by Mayor Rogers in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Todd Rogers
Vice Mayor Wayne Piercy
Council Member Joseph Esquivel
Council Member Larry Van Nostran
Council Member Robert Wagner

Mayor Rogers announced that an item of business had arisen subsequent to the posting of the agenda which required the immediate action and attention of the City Council.

VICE MAYOR PIERCY MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER VAN NOSTRAN SECONDED TO ADD TO THE AGENDA THE CONSIDERATION OF OBSERVANCE OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING ON JUNE 11TH. THE MOTION WAS PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

RESOLUTION NO. 2004-28; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD DECLARING FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2004, AS A SPECIAL DAY OF MOURNING.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN NOSTRAN MOVED AND VICE MAYOR PIERCY SECONDED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2004-28.

City Manager Howard Chambers advised that due to the short time to prepare following the announcements by the President and the Governor, staff had not been able to provide a survey of other cities in the local area.

THE MOTION WAS PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES

The City Manager displayed slides and presented a summary of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2004-2005. He stated that the budget, as presented, although representative of the times in which we live, provided for no major cuts in services. He advised that if the deal with cities which was brokered by the Governor was approved by the legislature, it would mean a couple of lean years ahead, but without the need for Lakewood to cut services or impose fee hikes. He briefly reviewed the impacts of State Budget Cuts, impacts on the

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES - Continued

County of Los Angeles, the Governor's Proposal, the proposed "Triple Flip," and the VLF-Property Tax Swap. He stated the budget for FY 2004-05, as proposed, was \$50.8 million. He provided an overview of the budget focus areas including: Intergovernmental Relations; Economic Development; Street Maintenance; Water Quality Protection; Public Safety; Sheriff's Station Renovation; Education; Neighborhood Preservation; Information Technology; and Park Improvements. He also reviewed Revenues, Expenditures and changes from the previous budget year. He concluded by stating that the budget was balanced and realistic.

Captain Dave Fender, Commander of the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, presented an overview of the Public Safety area of the budget. He displayed slides showing an organizational chart for the "Team Lakewood" Policing Plan and indicated there were two growth positions. He also noted changes such as the Community Service Officers who would be recruited and work directly for the City, rather than the former officers contracted through the County. He also discussed the status of Federal grants and the State COPS grant. He reviewed deployment in the east side of the City, the Mall deputy program, and the new Fingerprint Technician. He provided a 2003 Crime Recap and noted Mall crime trends, including increased in-store security in some Mall locations that had led to an increase in reported petty thefts. He also touched briefly on the upcoming renovation of the Lakewood Station, noting that it was a pleasure to work with Public Works Director Lisa Rapp and Project Manager June Anderson on the project.

Responding to questions from Council Member Van Nostran, Captain Fender clarified the fingerprint verification process and stated a store-by-store breakdown on petty theft could be compiled to track increased monitoring. The Captain also noted that while the Grand Theft Auto number was still large, it continued to decrease and that the Station was working closely with the Mall to monitor.

Deputy City Manager Sandi Ruyle responded to a question from Council Member Van Nostran by stating that five part-time employees had been hired as Community Service Officers, that they had received training through the Sheriff's Academy, and that two of the CSO's would be field trained over the next month to collect information for reports.

Vice Mayor Piercy expressed thanks to the City Manager and to Finance Director Larry Schroeder for their work in putting together the budget and referenced the proposed budget as reasonable and conservative. He expressed concern about an appropriation for education stating he felt the process to improve educational delivery was not as open or inclusive as it should be. He stated that the Ad Hoc Committee had moved beyond the areas agreed upon during the last presentation to the City Council and that there was polarization among the Council Members on this issue.

VICE MAYOR PIERCY MOVED TO PULL PROGRAM 425 FROM THE BUDGET AND TO SCHEDULE THE ITEM FOR STUDY AT A FUTURE MEETING SO THAT THE WHOLE CITY COUNCIL COULD COME TO AN AGREEMENT. COUNCIL MEMBER ESQUIVEL SECONDED THE MOTION FOR PURPOSES OF DISCUSSION.

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES - Continued

Council Member Wagner noted that the item contained in the budget was just a placeholder. There had been no intention to commit the City to any specific actions, but rather to acknowledge that whichever course the City Council decided to take over the coming year, some funding would be required. He stated he was unaware of any polarization over this issue and that it was the intent of the Ad Hoc Committee to bring the educational delivery system improvement issue before the entire Council for discussion and to determine an appropriate course of action. He noted that there had been some urgency to make contact with the Paramount, Bellflower and Long Beach Unified School Districts to get reactions and feedback about the PUSD portion of the City before the end of the school year, rather than wait until the fall, so that possible directions could be formulated. He emphasized that there was no intent to move forward without significant discussion with the entire City Council.

Mayor Rogers stated he did not think any of the Council Members felt the educational delivery system was either all good or all bad, but rather that the fundamental issue was that the City Council intended to establish a higher standard for education in Lakewood. He noted that since withdrawing from the Paramount Unified School District had been the number one goal designated in the school consultant's report, there had been some urgency to meet with the districts. He agreed that the entire City Council would need to approve a direction before there was any expenditure of funds and that whatever direction was indicated, staff support would be needed. He noted that the community had expressed resoundingly its belief that a better educational system was needed in Lakewood.

Vice Mayor Piercy also expressed concern about presenting the public with a budget containing a placeholder item rather than a project plan. He stated he would prefer to have the City Council study the issue first and then amend the budget as necessary once a plan of action had been decided upon.

Council Member Van Nostran noted that the entire Council had previously agreed that it was in favor of improvements to the educational system and that higher standards for education were desirable. He stated that providing a placeholder in the budget did not commit the City Council to spend the entire amount or designate any definite path. He further stated that having to come back and amend the budget at a later date made it appear that there was inadequate planning on the part of the City Council.

City Attorney John S. Todd advised that a provision could be added that no expenditure could be made from the designated account without the explicit approval of the City Council.

Council Member Wagner stated that the City Council had already made the decision to become involved with improvements to the educational opportunities for Lakewood kids and improving educational opportunities would require more staff, whether employee or consultant. He noted that the budget placeholder had not been a recommendation of the Committee, but it was evident that no matter what future direction the City Council decided upon, more staffing would be needed.

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES - Continued

Council Member Esquivel stated that since the current Ad Hoc Committee had been formed with the objective of formation of a Lakewood school district and that was not possible, perhaps a new committee should be formed.

Mayor Rogers noted that the recommendation of the school consultant had been to retain the formation of a Lakewood school district as a long-term goal.

The City Manager reported that the placeholder item in the budget had been his recommendation, rather than to make an amendment later that could unbalance the budget. He stated it was a method of setting aside funds in recognition that additional staff assistance would be required regardless of the direction chosen by the City Council.

MAYOR ROGERS MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER VAN NOSTRAN SECONDED TO MAKE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION THAT NO FUNDS WOULD BE EXPENDED FROM THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT BUDGET CATEGORY WITHOUT CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Wagner, Esquivel, Van Nostran and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Piercy

Council Member Wagner stated that he was bothered by the level of detachment from the process and understanding of the proceedings during a recently settled litigation case which resulted in a feeling of lack of ownership. He stated he would like to see closer coordination between legal counsel and the City Council on litigation matters and would propose the establishment of a standing committee for that purpose.

The City Attorney advised that although the City Council could certainly form such a committee, it would not have significantly impacted the particular case in question. He also noted that there would be additional expense involved in any extra meetings with outside counsel.

Council Member Wagner stated that the proposed committee would meet periodically with the City Manager and the City Attorney to review the status of litigation cases.

COUNCIL MEMBER WAGNER MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER VAN NOSTRAN SECONDED TO ESTABLISH A RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AS A STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE CITY. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Wagner, Van Nostran and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel and Piercy

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES - Continued

Community Development Director Chuck Ebner presented a brief update on the Civic Center Master Plan process by stating staff had met with representatives from the U.S. Postal Service and that they were open to reconfiguration of the site to improve traffic circulation. He noted that the current building lease expired in 2014.

Frank Wein, URS Corporation, stated that based on interviews with city staff, surveys of the existing building, and tours of facilities in other cities, four options for improving work space had been developed. He briefly presented each of the four options, the pluses and minuses of each option and the related costs.

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Piercy, Mr. Wein stated that although no specific projections had been made, there was more than enough space on the Del Amo/Clark corner lot for new construction.

Council Member Van Nostran determined from Mr. Wein that expansion of the current building would not take away spaces from the west parking lot area.

In response to questions from Mayor Rogers, Mr. Wein stated that without a detailed plan for remodel of the existing building, he was not able to estimate how many years a remodel would add to the useful life of the building. Mr. Wein advised that not only could new construction be expected to have a life span of about 50 years, a newly constructed building would be completely ADA compliant and would meet current earthquake standards.

Council Member Wagner determined from the Director of Community Development that there were currently 84 people working in the 5050 Clark Avenue building and that all of the options included accommodation for an additional 30 people, which included people currently working out of other facilities due to lack of space and projected new employees over the next five to ten years.

Responding to a question from Council Member Wagner, Rich McDonald of URS stated that there were space planning benchmarks used for different kinds of occupancy and that the benchmark used for local government was 450 square feet per person. He noted that the costs had been based on the current market rate per square foot. Council Member Wagner expressed concern that factoring the size of building needed based on a single, generalized number could mean planning for a much larger building than was actually needed.

Mr. Wein stated that there would be much fine-tuning required before a plan could be finalized, which would involve looking at actual space needs of individuals and areas where shared facilities could be utilized.

The City Manager advised that the work done to date was strictly preliminary and had been accomplished with the minimum of staff and consultant time. He stated the purpose of the presentation had been to present the magnitude of the work to be done and to seek direction from the City Council about the available options before committing more resources to the project.

REVIEW OF BUDGET ISSUES - Continued

MAYOR ROGERS MOVED AND VICE MAYOR PIERCY SECONDED TO PURSUE FURTHER ANALYSIS OF NEW CONSTRUCTION OF A FACILITY AT THE CORNER OF DEL AMO BOULEVARD AND CLARK AVENUE.

Council Member Wagner stated he felt this action was premature without a Master Plan.

Mayor Rogers stated that the first step should be to make a decision about the City Hall building before the rest of the Civic Center could be determined.

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel, Piercy, Van Nostran and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ABSTAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Wagner

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Rogers adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC
City Clerk