



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
January 24, 2006

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 5:04 p.m. by Mayor Esquivel in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Joseph Esquivel
Vice Mayor Larry Van Nostran
Council Member Steve Croft
Council Member Diane DuBois
Council Member Todd Rogers

MONUMENT/ENTRANCE SIGNS

Community Relations Manager Sheryl Musicant-Stewart displayed slides and gave a presentation based on the report in the agenda. She introduced the consultants for this project: Keith Slover and Julie Kinsbursky of Slover and Kinsbursky, and John Temple and Dennis Lee of Hunt Design Associates. She briefly reviewed the current status of signage, noting that the existing monument signs were severely deteriorated and that the existing pole signs did not match each other or any other City signage. She reported that since sign content had previously been approved by the City Council, there were three final designs that the consultants would be presenting this evening.

Keith Slover advised that the project concept was for the signage to project a defined message and for the final design to address environmental issues such as weather and graffiti.

John Temple presented the three final designs, in both monument and pole versions, noting that durability and vandal-resistance had been incorporated into the designs. Design A was a concrete sign with metal lettering attached to a sandstone pilaster; design B was more contemporary with a color background; and design C incorporated the roof-line design utilized in the Pillars of Community artwork.

Council Member Rogers stated it would be helpful to understand the reasoning behind the number and placement of the existing signs. Ms. Musicant-Stewart responded by stating that due to the cost of the project, the original goal of the project had been merely to replace existing signs due to their poor condition. Staff had not analyzed the feasibility of any additional locations.

Council Member DuBois questioned the impacts an increase in the number of signs would have on the project budget. Mr. Temple responded by stating that projected costs were not fixed amounts and that there would be economies of scale were the City to decide to add additional locations.

MONUMENT/ENTRANCE SIGNS - Continued

Vice Mayor Van Nostran stated that rather than replace only the existing monument signs, where feasible, all main arterials should have monument signs. He also noted that there were currently no monument signs located in the eastern portion of the City, and that it was important to include the whole City in the project.

Public Works Director Lisa Rapp stated that consideration must be given to where city boundary lines were located, since at some entrance locations the street was either shared with or completely controlled by a neighboring city.

Responding to a question from Mayor Esquivel, Mr. Temple stated that the expense of the signs was not in the design, but rather related to the materials used to construct the signs.

Council Member DuBois inquired if the City's seal on the signs could be rendering in color to match its use elsewhere, such as on City letterhead and on City vehicles. Mr. Slover stated that the bronze seal would convey an impression of permanence.

Council Member Croft stated he would like the seal to be larger so the individual elements could be seen. He also requested that staff provide a study of traffic patterns to assist in the determination of where additional signs might best be located. He noted that one of the considerations for project scope should be that the project represented a one-time investment that would serve the City for many years.

Council Member Rogers stated he concurred with the need for a traffic study and that it was important to look at the project symbolically, especially showing the City's eastern boundary as a key entrance point to Lakewood.

Mayor Esquivel determined that the consensus of the City Council was a preference for Design C.

Mr. Slover verified for the Council Members that the proposed designs were based on the size of the existing monument signs.

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Van Nostran, Mr. Lee stated that the signs could be treated with an applied sealer as a graffiti-guard.

INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT

Water Resources Director Jim Glancy advised there were two regional water issues to be presented at this time. He introduced William Kruse, an attorney representing the Central Basin Water Association. Mr. Glancy advised that one pending issue within the regional water community was the matter of groundwater storage, an issue vital to Lakewood which relied on groundwater for 100 percent of its water production. He reported that groundwater pumping rights in the basin were controlled by a 1965 court judgment and that the current points of dissension involved water storage and conjunctive use. He further reported that the

INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT - Continued

Water Replenishment District had established rules for groundwater storage in the basin causing questions to arise among Central Basin water pumpers regarding storage by water purveyors outside the Central Basin.

Mr. Kruse responded to a question from City Manager Howard Chambers by stating there had been no reason for anyone to challenge the rules set forth by the WRD to date and since, as the Central Basin was an adjudicated basin, this was more of a legal matter.

Mr. Kruse confirmed for Council Member Rogers that the parties involved in this issue were actually more in agreement than not, and the final determination would have to be made by the court system.

Mr. Glancy reported that a letter was expected from the California Department of Water Resources advising that they had appointed a new facilitator and requesting all parties to come back to the negotiating table to discuss conjunctive use issues.

Responding to a question from Council Member Croft, Mr. Kruse stated that there was concern that someone outside the Basin would be allowed to fill all of the groundwater storage space, thereby leaving no space for the local water pumpers.

Mr. Glancy also gave a brief presentation based on the memo contained in the agenda reporting on the formation of a regional group to meet eligibility requirements for grant funding under Proposition 50. Grant applications which had previously been reviewed by the California Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board would now only receive consideration if prepared and presented by a regional group. The proposed Integrated Regional Water Management Group for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River Watershed would develop projects on a regional level to increase water reliability and protect regional habitat. It was the recommendation of staff that the City Council authorize staff participation in the Integrated Regional Water Management Group in coordination with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments and the Southeast Water Coalition and direct the Director of Water Resources to represent the City.

Council Member DuBois stated that she had attended the Gateway COG meeting where this new regional board had been discussed and noted that not only was Mr. Glancy to represent the City of Lakewood, but he would be speaking on behalf of the Gateway COG, as well. She commended Mr. Glancy, recognizing the confidence in his expertise demonstrated by this appointment.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROGERS MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER DUBOIS SECONDED TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Van Nostran, Croft, DuBois, Rogers and Esquivel

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

CIVIC CENTER MASTER PLAN

Community Development Director Chuck Ebner reported that the top three designs for the proposed civic center master plan were ready for presentation. He noted that each design included a 40,000 square foot municipal building with 470 parking spaces.

Randy Meyer, project architect, displayed the proposed plans showing different footprint configurations incorporating a two-story city hall municipal building with a separate parking area that could be utilized for future expansion should it ever be necessary.

Council Member Croft expressed concern about the distance between the library and the public parking area in Design 3.

Mr. Meyer responded to a question from Vice Mayor Van Nostran by stating that Design 1 was laid out to make the city hall building more prominent and to provide a larger buffer for the adjacent residential neighborhood.

It was the consensus of the City Council that Design 1 would best serve the intended uses.

Mr. Ebner stated that staff would proceed to work with the architect to develop a Civic Center Master Plan document incorporating Design 1.

Mayor Esquivel requested that the City Council Members be provided with copies of the selected design.

At 6:26 p.m., Mayor Esquivel called for a brief recess. At 6:31 p.m., the meeting reconvened with all members present.

ON- AND OFF-STREET PARKING

Council Member Rogers, as Chairman of the On- and Off-Street Parking ad hoc committee, stated that since the committee was not able to reach a consensus on an action plan, he felt it was appropriate to explore proposals from the entire City Council.

Council Member Croft stated that there was an obvious need for action as he was constantly asked by residents about what could be done.

Council Member DuBois, noting the City's long harmonious past, advocated proceeding in a deliberate and careful manner taking care not to act rashly and polarize the community.

Mayor Esquivel acknowledged that the parking issue was one that had been raised a number of times without any satisfactory resolution being found. He stated he was interested in hearing any new ideas and also noted that several other cities had experienced some success by starting with a removal of detached trailers from on-street parking.

ON- AND OFF-STREET PARKING - Continued

Vice Mayor Van Nostran also noted that there had been previous unsuccessful attempts to address this problem. He pointed out that the design of the majority of Lakewood properties did not lend itself for storage of trailers, campers, boats or recreational vehicles. He also noted that there were not many opportunities locally for off-site storage of such vehicles. He suggested placing a measure on the ballot for the voters to decide a preferred solution.

Responding to a question from Council Member DuBois, Deputy City Manager Sandi Ruyle stated that while there were a number of trailers, boats and recreational vehicles parked within the City that were not registered to Lakewood residents, a majority of them were owned by relatives of Lakewood residents.

Council Member Croft cautioned that as surrounding cities banned these types of vehicles from parking on their streets, Lakewood would become the only place left to legally park these vehicles.

Council Member Rogers stated that this was a major issue in many communities and that although it was a relatively small number of discourteous vehicle owners causing the problem, it was an emotional issue for many people. He stated he would not support placing such an issue on the ballot and acknowledged that this was an issue that could not be resolved quickly or easily. He advised that he supported the adoption of an ordinance similar to the Los Angeles County statute that would prohibit detached trailers from on-street parking and would like to explore an option for a permit parking procedure for these types of vehicles. He also stated the Council should take another look at City-wide posting for street sweeping and consider retaining additional staff to enforce the existing 72-hour parking regulation.

Council Member Croft stated that he also felt timing was a critical issue, and that since it was a measure that could be implemented immediately, he would support the suggestion to step up enforcement of the 72-hour parking regulation, observing that if parking on the street were to become more inconvenient, some may choose to park their vehicles elsewhere.

Mayor Esquivel inquired about the implementation of a permit parking process and related costs. The City Manager responded by stating that an analysis of costs had not yet been done and that the enforcement for such a program could be done either by City parking control officers or by Sheriff's deputies, noting that the program may be received better if enforced by Sheriff's deputies.

Lieutenant Terry Benjestorf confirmed that Sheriff's personnel could take on responsibility for the enforcement of a permit parking system and that he would also expect residents to respond more favorably to the deputies.

Responding to a question from Council Member DuBois, Accountant/Deputy Treasurer Doug Butler stated that when the overnight parking ban had been instituted around the City parks, most trailers and recreational vehicles previously parked there had moved back into the surrounding neighborhoods, although some had just gone away.

ON- AND OFF-STREET PARKING - Continued

Council Member DuBois noted that the Southern California Edison Company had expressed little interest in utilizing the open space under their transmission lines into any type of vehicle storage space. She stated that although she felt it was important to take action on this issue, she would prefer to take small steps and begin with increased enforcement and possibly permit parking.

Council Member Rogers stated that if the County ordinance were adopted, it would be vital to have a specific plan.

Council Member Croft noted that even on the web site for the recreational vehicle enthusiast group, the Good Sam Club, members were advised not to store their vehicle on the streets. He stated that eventually, the ability to store the vehicle must become a factor in anyone's decision to purchase a trailer, boat or recreational vehicle. He concurred that any changes must be precise, clearly spelled out and easily explainable.

Council Member DuBois, noting that with such a difficult issue it was important to be open, suggested taking a proposed program to the residents at a community meeting before any "official" action by the City Council.

Council Member Croft suggested retaining an additional parking enforcement officer in the near term and the adoption of the County ordinance on detached trailers.

VICE MAYOR VAN NOSTRAN MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER DUBOIS SECONDED TO APPROVE THE RETENTION OF A 30-HOUR PER WEEK PARKING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER TO ENFORCE THE 72-HOUR PARKING REGULATION AND A BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR SAID POSITION. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Van Nostran, Croft, DuBois, Rogers and Esquivel

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

Council Member Rogers stated he would support a community workshop format with two Council Members present at which the community would be advised that the City Council was looking into solutions for the on-street parking issue and that proposed solutions included adoption of the County ordinance on detached trailers and a permit parking process that would eliminate non-resident parking on Lakewood streets. Such a meeting would provide an indicator of the residents' support for such programs.

The City Attorney advised including a substantial phase-in period to allow vehicles owners sufficient time to find alternate parking.

Mayor Esquivel appointed Council Members Croft and DuBois to serve as an ad hoc committee to develop a policy for a community workshop.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Esquivel adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC

City Clerk