

**CITY OF SANTA FE
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 5, 2011 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
12002 HWY. 6
SANTA FE, TEXAS**

MINUTES

Mayor Stenzel opened the workshop at 6:00 p.m.

Those present: Mayor Ralph Stenzel
Mayor Pro-tem Joe Carothers
Councilmember Jim Abney
Councilmember Bubba Jannett
City Manager Joe Dickson
City Secretary Janet L. Davis

Those absent: Councilmember Jeff Tambrella, excused
Councilmember Pat McCrary, excused
City Attorney Ellis J. Ortego, excused

Also present: Police Chief Kenneth Campbell
Library Director Brenda Cheatham
Barry Cook
Bobby Wright
John Cambiano
Leigh Wall
Robert Cheek
Frank Marabella
Robert Bear
Fritz Barnett
Daniel Woitena
Dennis Wagner
Wanda Wagner
Commissioner O'Brien
Louis Pauls (County's bond advisor)

Workshop: Discussion of bond initiative for municipal complex

Mayor Stenzel turned the workshop over to City Manager Joe Dickson. Mr. Dickson said we need to hear from the community about plans for a municipal complex. He asked if we should pick up where we previously left off, start over, or postpone. Santa Fe ISD Superintendent Leigh Wall said there is no question that a facility is needed, but timing and promotion are issues when pursuing a bond referendum. She stated community input into the design and layout is crucial to successful bond election. Mr. Dickson

read a letter from Councilmember Jeff Tambrella, who could not make it to the meeting tonight, stating that he feels this November is not a good time to pursue a bond issue, basically because of the unstable economy. Mr. Bill Reitmeyer, a member of the Civil Service Commission, expressed similar sentiments by phone today. However, both feel that a facility is definitely needed.

Commissioner O'Brien said he is pro development and we desperately need a new police department as well as other city facilities, including library expansion and City Hall. He said construction costs are only going to increase, and he entertained the idea of selling the current facilities to offset the costs of the proposed facilities. He feels we can knock on doors, explain the need, ask citizens to vote for a bond issue, and they will step up and support it.

Mayor Stenzel asked for input about the facility design, the number of buildings, the layout, the timing, the cost, pros, cons, etc. Civil Service Commission Chairman Dennis Wagner said people are questioning the amount of the bond. Barry Cook reminded everyone that we live in a hurricane area and construction needs to meet those building requirements. Chief Campbell asked Mr. Pauls if he knew of any grant funding we may qualify for, and Commissioner O'Brien suggested we contact the county grant coordinator, Connie Nicholson, for assistance.

Santa Fe Economic Development Corporation President Robert Cheek said he favors one facility for police and court, but he doesn't feel like November is the proper time to solicit the bond issue. He thinks we should continue to pursue a facility design and then go back to the voters when the committee feels the time is right. Former Police Chief Barry Cook said he also feels the timing is not right. He said the county and the school were able to successfully pass a bond referendum probably because those affected kids and roads. He prefers to wait for a better economy since bonds are funded by a tax increase. Bobby Wright, former councilmember and Executive Director for the Emergency Communication District said he agrees with Mr. Cook and Councilmember Tambrella. The timing is wrong and he said the people he has talked to are not supporting a bond right now. He said in his business where grant funds are utilized, he has not heard of any funding available for facilities. Most grants are more geared for the actual response mechanisms and equipment rather than facilities or people. Mr. Wright also said Fire Chief Tommy Anderson, who couldn't be here tonight, said we should go for a facility housing all city facilities and we should go for it in November. Mr. Wright suggested we at least place a sign on the property we purchased on FM 646 N advertising the future home of the Santa Fe Police Department.

Chief Campbell said the facility could be downsized but we would probably outgrow it before we paid for it. Mr. Cheek suggested we consider building the exterior shell but only build out a portion of the interior at first. Mr. Frank Marabella said metal buildings are much cheaper and can be dressed up to look nice.

Mr. Robert Bear said the community was involved in designing the school buildings and that was a driving force for its support. He feels 2012 may be a better time to address a bond. Mr. John Cambiano agrees that this is not the right time, based on his interaction with members of the community this past tax season. He said there are just no extra funds after gas prices, etc. and people are in a hold pattern, not willing to take a loss buying or selling investments. He has also heard that \$4.5 million is just too much for a police

facility. Mr. Fritz Barnett agrees that a facility is needed, but he thinks we need to start over with much more community input. He agreed that we should put a package together and then decide when the time is right to pursue a bond.

The consensus of the group was to solicit community input and promote community cohesiveness and ownership. They agreed that more involvement makes for a better and more successful project. There was a brief discussion about what time of the year, May or November, is better for a bond election, but that decision would be made at a later time.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

RALPH STENZEL, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Janet L. Davis, City Secretary