

ALAMOSA CITY COUNCIL
Wednesday, July 21, 2010
Minutes of the Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Alamosa City Council was called to order on the above date by Mayor Kathy Rogers at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present at roll call: Mayor Kathy Rogers, Councilors Charles Griego, Josef Lucero, Leland Romero, and Marcia Tuggle. Councilors Greg Gillaspie and Rusty Johnson previously requested to be excused. A quorum was declared. Also present: Assistant City Manager Don Koskelin, City Attorney Erich Schwiesow, and City Clerk Judy Egbert.

AGENDA APPROVAL. It was moved by Councilor Griego and seconded by Councilor Lucero to approve the agenda as presented and to excuse Councilors Gillaspie and Johnson. On the roll call the vote was ayes five, nays none. The motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENT

A. Audience Comments

Kris Steinberg offered the following:

- She spoke in support of the city complex facility, saying that the need has been known and discussed for at least seven years that she was aware of.
- Some of the objection seems to come from a general mistrust of government. That isn't the situation locally, and should not be a consideration.
- The City will be able to meet its other obligations, including levee funding.
- She expressed faith in the leadership and staff of the City.
- She has learned through her research that renovating an old building will cost more than building a new one.
- If the schools can't afford to continue operating in the old buildings, it isn't reasonable to think that the City could.
- This is a time where everyone is tightening their belts. Although the dollars sound big to an individual, this is not a huge portion of the City's budget.
- This is the right time to build. Interest rates are low, and bids are favorable.
- She is in favor of City facilities being located in one place for all the reasons previously discussed.

Bill Brinton offered the following:

- He thanked Council for its past support of the library, and said that he is looking forward to that continuing in the future.
- The library is necessary for education, information, and fun.
- A purpose-built facility is essential. Technology must be built in to accommodate in the decades to come.
- Refitting an older building is more expensive and would be outdated sooner.
- Voting yes could leverage other prospects in the City's budget.
- Sales taxes are paid by visitors and others who pass through in addition to residents.

Leon Moyer offered the following:

- He asked that the terms of any legal settlement be made public, and asked not to give the city away.
- The clocks in the library are off by 7 – 8 minutes, and he had to leave unnecessarily early.

- He had to personally repair the toilet in the ladies restroom at the library. Jeff Rilling told him that Jeff had asked Salai to fix it, but she shouldn't be expected to because she is a woman.
- There was a problem with a clog in the drain at the Recreation Center shower, which he also unplugged, and the wad of hair is still in the shower.
- The City should spend its money on toilets instead of a new facility.
- He encouraged a "no" vote until all the streets are good.
- He believes that Public Works keeps Hunt in disrepair so that they can point to it and say it is bad.

Ruth Brown offered the following:

- Thank you for repairing the asphalt in front of Alta Fuels, she feels much safer now.
- She agreed with Leon about the lack of public restrooms in this building. Last meeting when she needed to use the restroom, the Police Chief escorted her. She was embarrassed and shocked. All the offices were left unlocked, and they should be locked.
- The depot building on blocks is one reason she is opposed to the city complex project.
- She realizes that there is a form online to report it, but the street lights have been out since September.
- The handicapped sign on the side of the building is disgraceful.
- There is clover in the flower bed, along with piles of cigarette butts and trash.
- Why isn't this building kept up better?
- A police car recently sped down 6th and State very fast, and just barely cleared the crossing when the crossing arm went down. This is unsafe.

John Villyard offered the following:

- He supports the proposed city complex facility.
- So far he has sat back and watched. The City did all the due process; hired contractors to help make decisions, and made the right decisions.
- Council was elected to make these decisions, and he stands behind them.
- It is time to move forward with this project. The financing is correct, interest rates are low. People need work.
- Council made the right decision at the right time. The SLV Rural Electric Cooperative made a similar decision in 2002. This has been a good decision, with the building coming in under budget. Employees are more productive and members happier with a beautiful new building.

Preston Porter offered the following:

- He noticed that the July 9 news article only covered the objectors, listing one person in favor. The article did not cover the response made by Council or staff, and he felt that this should have been published. Council does listen and respond.
- There were 9 bids received for the project, ranging from \$5.9 million to \$8 million. Not \$10 million as stated. These facts should be pointed out.
- The \$700,000 annual payment is inaccurate. It is up to \$700,000. The actual amount would be closer to \$560,000.
- All the other issues raised are old issues – the congestion, location, old depot replica building, etc.
- He asked everyone to set aside their baggage and past issues with the City, and support police, fire, and library. He asked that citizens support building an ADA-accessible city hall so all those interested could participate.
- He asked citizens to support city leaders and vote yes on 2A.

- He thanked the City for street improvements, and for the countless hours Council has spent researching medical marijuana without asking voters to do it.

Dan McCann offered the following:

- The national economy will take five to six years to come back. Both political parties have some blame in this.
- Now is the time to move forward with the new project.

B. Follow-Up

Mr. Koskelin described the street light issue. There are numbers on each pole that, when reported, will give Xcel the information needed to get the repair done. He went out after the last meeting and found 17 lights out, 11 of which were in parking lots and belong to Xcel. Three on Main Street that belonged to the City have been fixed, as well as one on 6th Street. Negotiations are underway to bring all the lights under the City's ownership. Once that happens, the City will hire a contractor to keep all lights maintained. It's also important to note that any lights with an arm extending onto private property are likely to be privately owned. A reasonable response time once the report is made to Xcel is seven days. Mr. Koskelin added that the only means of following up is to physically go out and check them. He added that if lights cycle on and off it means that the bulbs are going bad, and it would be a good time to report it.

Mr. Koskelin said that he would check on the handicapped sign in question.

Councilor Lucero commented on the public restrooms, saying that it is necessary because there are offices with sensitive information in the area. Councilor Griego suggested locking the offices and allowing use of the restroom. Chief Jackson noted that it isn't possible to lock the court area, and the amount of traffic is too voluminous to control. Councilor Tuggle thanked Mr. Moyer for his comments, saying things happen and staff will continue to work on improving things.

CONSENT CALENDAR A. It was moved by Councilor Griego and seconded by Councilor Tuggle to approve Consent Calendar A as presented. On the roll call the vote was ayes five, nays none. The motion carried. Items:

- C. 2. a. June 2010 Monthly Expenditures
- C. 4. a. Permission to Apply for LSTA Grant
- C. 6. a. Accept EMS Provider Grant
- C. 6. b. Resolution No. 12, 2010, A Resolution Establishing the Current City Hall/Fire As The City's Primary Emergency Operations Center for Emergencies that are Local In Nature
- C. 7. a. Minutes of Regular Meeting July 7, 2010
- C. 7. b. Minutes of Special Meeting July 14, 2010
- C. 8. a. June 2010 Monthly Reports

REGULAR BUSINESS

C. Business Brought Forward by City Staff

7. City Clerk/Municipal Court

c. Board Appreciation Dinner Discussion and Direction

Council discussed various options for this event, and were generally agreeable to consider a change. Council agreed by consensus that the event should be moved away from the holiday season, and would continue to discuss options.

E. Committee Reports

Councilor Tuggle reported that the Recreation Board heard a request from an Eagle Scout for a disc golf project. The Board supported using the Ranch, and work will continue in this direction. Heinz Bergann told Council that the Scout project has been successful in raising funding for nine holes, with an additional nine planned for the future. The course will be designed to meet criteria of hosting tournaments.

F. Staff Announcements. None.

COUNCIL COMMENT

Lucero noted that residents near the greenwaste disposal sites are unhappy with the odor and visual aesthetics. There is a work session scheduled August 4 on this issue.

Councilor Tuggle suggested an informal session be held every fifth Wednesday to catch up on issues that need further discussion. Council agreed by consensus to pursue this.

Councilor Lucero again spoke about the traffic lights that are not synchronized. In response to a question from Council, Mr. Koskelin said that it was not legal to make a left turn on red, even though the turn is made onto a one-way street.

Councilor Romero reported that Council members have donated personal funds to buy yard signs encouraging passage of 2A. No public funds are involved.

ADJOURNMENT. The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Judy A. Egbert, City Clerk

Kathleen J. Rogers, Mayor