

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA
August 28, 2006

Pursuant to notice as required by law, the Ponca City Board of Commissioners met in special (work) session at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chamber at City Hall, 516 E. Grand with Mayor Stone presiding:

Present: Richard Stone, Mayor
Wayne Foxworthy, Commissioner
Paul Krueger, Commissioner
Diane Anderson, Commissioner
Gary Martin, City Manager
Kevin Murphy, City Attorney
Marc LaBossiere, Finance Director/City Clerk

Absent: Stan Paynter, Commissioner

Others Present: Chris Henderson, Craig Stephenson, David Keathly, Jim Sindelar, City staff; Dr. David Pennington, Ponca City Schools; Shane Harland, Troy Lewis, Richard Winterrowd, Lillian Taylor, Don Keathly, citizens; Rolf Clements, news press.

1. Mayor Stone called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.
2. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS

City Attorney Kevin Murphy began, reminding the Commission of the previous week's discussion on what to do with the Hutchins Memorial Auditorium. At that meeting proposals were outlined, including a joint schools and City project. Murphy iterated that Commissioner Krueger had proposed an alternative to the combined facility in park, with an option move it to Grand Avenue. Murphy clarified that direction at that time was for him to draft possible ballot questions for options, one by one.

Murphy then reviewed a series of possible ballot questions from a handout. Discussion ensued on pros and cons of different locations. Stone summarized that the efficiencies of shared parking, bathrooms and operating costs make the Hutchins site preferable, as well as avoiding condemnation lawsuits to take over land and being next to the railroad tracks if downtown. Stone clarified he is a proponent of partnering with schools for a joint facility on the Hutchins site, funded by a ½ cent sales tax for approximately 7 years.

Commissioner Foxworthy expressed a feeling that the sales tax is a better mechanism to fund the project and outlined reasons why. Commissioner Anderson concurred that sales tax funding is preferable, and affirmed citizen input she had received was positive on the project and the Hutchins site. Krueger noted that the downtown is a vital part of the community and expressed frustrations with communications of the schools and the Mayor not being passed on to City Commissioners.

City Manager Gary Martin clarified that he had been contacted by the school superintendent regarding a joint citizen advisory board to hammer out operational details and make a recommendation. Martin also clarified that he had communicated the idea to each commissioner by e-mail just after his conversation with the schools, in the previous week.

Discussion ensued. Martin stressed that time is running out, as the architect needs to work up a more detailed design and cost estimates. Stone appointed Foxworthy and Krueger to meet with two members of school board to work on relationship issues.

Regarding the recreation complex, Murphy relayed a couple options. Foxworthy noted it was a great presentation made at the previous week's meeting, and questioned if a 42-acre site is big enough considering future development. Stone confirmed that several sites have been identified and are large enough for a recreation complex. Regarding the complex itself, Stone qualified that Vision 2020 Co-Chair Carrie Head has sent the YMCA architects a wish list from what 2020 envisioned, and told architects to include in what they could in their drawing. Stone confirmed that the complex would be a City facility, and therefore could include whatever the City Commission want it to include.

Krueger expressed a desire to do something regarding recreation. Foxworthy recited sales tax rates in many similar sized Oklahoma cities, noting that as Ponca City has a lower tax rate than many, a tax increase would be in-line with others and would be a chance to move the City forward by extending the expiring tax for one project and initiate a new ½ cent tax for the other. Stone stated support of both projects and giving the community a chance to say yes or no. Anderson questioned whether the operating budget of the YMCA is sufficient to outsource operations of a recreational complex to them without subsidy, as they proposed. Stone confirmed he would get further detail.

Foxworthy noted that as with the Hutchins project, he would like to see a committee formed that could study other needs, such as in the senior community. Discussion ensued. City Manager Gary Martin summarized direction, specifically that the City would take a look at Hutchins site for joint operation, and has appointed two commissioners to meet with two members of the school board to work out details. Further, Martin qualified that staff would arrange for the YMCA to bring a set of plans to the Commission work session of September 18, 2006. Discussion continued.

3. CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS.

None.

4. COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS.

None.

5. Mayor Stone adjourned the meeting at 5:11 p.m.

PASSED IN SESSION AND APPROVED THIS 25TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2006

MAYOR

ATTEST: