

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA  
AUGUST 21, 2006

Pursuant to notice as required by law, the Ponca City Board of Commissioners met in regular (work) session at 2:00 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  
Stan Paynter, Commissioner  
Gary Martin, City Manager  
Kevin Murphy, City Attorney  
Marc LaBossiere, Finance Director/City Clerk

Others Present: Rob Dick, Don Bohon, Craig Stephenson, Bill Bridges, Chris Henderson, Tana McKinley, Jim Sindelar, City staff; Shane Harland, Ron Stevens, Link Cotham, Carrie Head, Earl Ball, YMCA; Leslie Rardin, Don Keathly, Forest Mertz, Troy Lewis, Richard Winterrowd, citizens; Rolf Clements, news press.

1. Mayor Stone called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. DISCUSS PATH FORWARD FOR JOINT PROJECT WITH CITY AND SCHOOL FOR HUTCHINS AUDITORIUM AND NEW EVENTS CENTER.

Mayor Stone began by reviewing recent discussions regarding a possible partnership with the Ponca City School System to build an expo/performing arts center collectively. Stone expressed this as an opportunity for both the City and schools to address needs and fund via tax neutral measures. The need at this time is to decide whether or not to move forward with the proposal or not. Stone expressed support for the project, and a feeling that it is a good opportunity for both entities, at a good time, with good projects.

Commissioner Anderson agreed that it is a great opportunity, but added that it may not be what the majority of citizens want. Anderson relayed citizens input she had received that was both positive for the school and the expo center and also feelings that it may not be a good fit and that maybe the City is moving too fast. Anderson summarized that the Commission should explore the needs and assure that any proposal attempts to meet all needs.

Commissioner Krueger expressed disappointment with the joint meeting held with school board members, where no board members spoke on the matter. Krueger relayed citizen input he received that requested options on what projects to fund and at which locations. Krueger then outlined various choices that he would like to see as ballot questions, including continuing the ½ cent public facilities tax to build a center like the Vision 2020 recommended with an endowment to operate. Also, Krueger would like a second choice for a new ½ cent tax to locate the facility downtown and contain funds for a streetscape. Krueger described a desire for a larger facility that could do more, and perhaps give the Hutchins land to the schools for them to construct a stand alone facility. Discussion ensued with the City Attorney

outlining what form of questions can and cannot be asked on a ballot.

Commissioner Paynter relayed citizen input that was positive on a partnership with the schools and having two governmental entities working together. Paynter expressed that he would like total buy in from the schools as well as language on the ballot to address what happens if one issue passes and another does not. Paynter clarified that he would also like to see the issue put out for a vote to let the people decide, and given the timing opportunities with the school bond election and the expiring City tax it is a good opportunity to do so, now.

Commissioner Foxworthy concurred with Paynter, and stated that a high percentage of citizen feedback he had received was positive. Foxworthy relayed a few concerns regarding operational details, and reviewed a list of those issues.

Stone noted that as the Commission is finding some agreement, he would like to move forward to get some answers. Stone questioned school board president Don Nuzum where the board was on the decision making process. Nuzum stated that the board had a meeting that evening, and that bond council would be coming in to discuss options. Nuzum stated that so far, citizen and board input on the project have been positive. Discussion ensued.

3. RECEIVE AND DISCUSS REQUEST FROM YMCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO CONSIDER A SPORTS COMPLEX.

Carrie Head addressed the Commission as Vision 2020 co-chair, YMCA board member, and community pool fund raising co-chair. Head qualified that Vision 2020 came together with a charge to examine Ponca City assets and community needs. The group identified three major needs, including an outdoor sports complex. The three facilities recommended by Vision 2020 best met the goals they had set.

Head clarified that she came before the Commission to present a proposal for an indoor and outdoor sports complex. Head explained that the City could construct the project and the YMCA could operate it for the community. Head iterated that the Vision 2020 group determined an indoor and outdoor sports facility is critical for the community and why.

Head continued with a list of reasons why the partnership makes economic sense and would be good for residents. Head clarified that taxpayers can expect to fund construction of the facility only, after which time the YMCA will fund operational costs through memberships and daily use fees. This scenario would not add to the City budget. Head then gave large statistics where this public/private partnership is currently working across the United States.

Head then deferred to their architects, from Schaefer Johnson Cox Frey (SJCF). Brad Little and Jason Van Hecke of SJCF, began, noting they were hired initially to study the pool. Currently they were asked to continue with a hypothetical plan of what an outdoor and indoor sports facility could look like. Van Hecke qualified that what will be presented is purely conceptual and an attempt to meet Vision 2020 goals, put them on a site, and see how components fit together.

Van Hecke then reviewed major parts of plan and the footprint, including a walking track, parking, future growth areas, four lighted adult fields, four lighted junior fields, two football fields, a soccer field, a ¾ mile walking track, a skate park, and a playground area. Van Hecke stated a belief that all could be placed on 42 acres of land. If there is a possibility that the site would be the future home of a rodeo grounds, an additional 10 acres would be necessary. Van Hecke stated a rough cost estimate at this time for the facility as drawn would be \$16.5M, including the \$4.0M pool to be funded by the YMCA. This would leave approximately \$12.5M to be funded by the City. Discussion ensued.

YMCA Board President Ron Stevens addressed the Commission, emphasizing the pervasiveness of the YMCA in the community. Stevens stressed there is a fairly narrow window of opportunity for this project as the YMCA has made a commitment to the community to build an aquatics center, and if a recreational complex is not probable they will need to proceed at the current site. Stevens stressed that the YMCA is committed to reversing national health concerns locally and being strong on the preventative side of health care.

David Myers, Executive Director of the Ponca City Development Authority (PCDA), stated that in general both projects being discussed would be attractive for economic development in Ponca City. Myers discussed a need for employers to have a workforce, and that projects enhancing quality of life in Ponca City will also help attract people to move here. Myers encouraged the Commission to go ahead in one or the other of the proposed projects.

Chamber of Commerce President Kelly Johnson, noted that the Chamber has discussed the projects and are completely in support of them. Johnson encouraged the City Commission to take some bold steps and push the City in a positive direction.

Dave Bishop, Chairman Ponca City Main Street and Vision 2020 Board member, stated that Main Street supports the Vision 2020 document and encouraged commissioners to think as a community what would have best chance to spur economic growth and private investment, in deciding where the best placement of a facility would be. Discussion regarding ballot question options and timing continued.

4. CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS.

City Manager Gary Martin referenced construction work occurring behind City Hall, where a 12-inch long, 5-inch wide piece of concrete was removed from the sewer line serving City Hall. Martin noted that while it is unknown how the concrete came to be in the sewer line, it is probable it occurred during construction and the estimated cost of repair is \$7,000.

Martin then informed the Commission that the Mayor received a letter from our sister city in China. A small delegation of five will be visiting Ponca City in September 2006, with one item on their agenda to work with NOC on distance learning initiatives. Martin then relayed a request from OMPA to eliminate the City diesel electric generation units from being covered by them for insurance purposes, as is provided for in the City/OMPA contract.

Next Martin updated the Commission on essential air service, and a move by the federal

government to end subsidies, thus resulting in the end of air service to and from Ponca City. Martin noted that a group called The Regional Aviation Partners, are fighting very hard to keep essential air service subsidies in place. Martin then read a position letter from the group.

Martin noted that the City is continuing work on pandemic planning. City staff has attended a session in Tulsa recently on the topic, presented by the State. Basically the City is on their own if a pandemic occurs, as the State does not have resources to care for all of Oklahoma's cities, towns, and rural areas. Martin then reminded the Commission that the franchise agreement with Oklahoma Natural Gas expires next year, and gave some possible options to move forward.

Martin then reference articles in the Ponca City News regarding the proposed landfill cell expansion in the permitted site, and noted that a meeting has been set for September 11, 2006 with a Federal mediator and representatives from the Ponca Tribe. Martin informed the Commission that a Technical Review Committee (TRC) would meet in the coming week for a proposed expansion of Willow Creek elderly housing on Princeton, where current units are all full and there is great demand.

Martin notified the Commission that he and City Attorney Kevin Murphy would be going to Stillwater in the coming weeks for a meeting to discuss a joint project on a Kaw Lake raw waterline replacement project that they are planning. Next, Martin noted that a serious bicycle/pedestrian accident had occurred downtown, and that he would pursue enforcement of existing laws prohibiting bicycle riding on sidewalks in the area.

Martin concluded by informing the Commission of a City project to convert some corners on South Avenue to handicap accessible.

5. COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Krueger expressed a feeling that it had been a great session. Commissioner Foxworthy questioned the number of nuisance abatements in the past month, given a new "sweep" effort. City staff responded that the next month's numbers will be up significantly. Mayor Stone expressed appreciation to commissioners for their hard work on the many issues at hand. Stone concluded by informing commissioners that the Chamber had invited him to speak at Pancakes & Politics on Friday, August 25, 2006 at 7:00 a.m., and requested any available commissioner to attend as well and express any input they may have.

6. ADJOURN

Mayor Stone adjourned the meeting 4:55 p.m.

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MAYOR

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CITY CLERK

