

**FIFE CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION
MINUTES**

**Fife City Hall
Council Chambers**

**Date: April 17, 2007
Time: 7:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER AND
ROLL CALL**

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards called the study session of the Fife City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Godwin, Johnson, Edwards, Kelley, Cerqui, de Booy, and Roscoe (7:05 p.m.)

Staff present: Worthington, Reinbold, Smith, Blount, Forbes, Marcotte, Blackburn, Richards, and Recording Secretary Jessica Tate.

**PLEDGE OF
ALLEGIANCE**

Councilmember Godwin led the pledge of allegiance.

STUDY SESSION

Gathering Place Update

Director Smith reported the Gathering Place Task Force met on April 13, 2007. He distributed and reviewed a handout of the vision statement. In attendance were Councilmember de Booy, Planning Commissioners Gerald Albertson and Jeffery Brown, Melanie Reimer, Assistant City Manager Reinbold, and Director Smith. The task force reviewed a draft vision statement for the Gathering Place, as well as comments from the March 31, 2007 public meeting and comments from task force members.

The intent of the task force is to create a unique area that will invite visitors from across the region. The space will represent environmental excellence, set a good example of sustainability, and be a model to others. The space will be used in a flexible manner for a variety of events such as fairs, sports tournaments with temporary fields, and antique car shows.

The task force would like to consider a modest size convention center and perhaps a small lodging facility. Members also suggested building a small commercial area to assist with funding and maintenance for the site.

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards inquired about the possibility of a joint meeting with the task force or having the task force continue to move forward without meeting with the Council. City Manager Worthington suggested convening the Council's May 1, 2007 study session at 6:00 p.m. to include a facilitated discussion with the task force.

Councilmember Godwin expressed concern about costs for the project because of the uncertainty of property on the opposite side of

the street. It would be appropriate to solicit willing investors prior to embarking on the project. Councilmember Johnson agreed. City Manager Worthington indicated the property across the street from the site is zoned commercial.

Councilmember Johnson expressed a preference to have a joint meeting with the task force. Mayor Kelley agreed and indicated he would also like to see some retail shops on the site.

Councilmember Cerqui said a joint meeting would be beneficial to discuss all options. A marketing analysis is most likely the next step in the process.

Councilmember de Booy commented that a facilitated joint meeting would be preferable to help determine what is feasible for the project. She expressed support for having a facilitator conduct the joint meeting. Councilmember Roscoe said she also prefers a joint meeting.

City Manager Worthington reported staff will schedule the joint meeting on May 1, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. Dinner will be provided.

**Financial Recap First
Quarter**

Interim Director Marcotte reported as of March 31, 2007, the City had a total of \$37,998,867 in cash and investments from its various funds. This amount is sufficient to meet the City's cash flow requirements. The City's revenues and expenditures are tracking reasonably well with budget projections. After the first quarter ending in 2007, the City's current expense fund (General Fund) collected 19% of the revenue budgeted for the year. Based upon revenue collection patterns for the past three years, the City should expect to collect 20% of revenues by the end of the first quarter, which creates a variance of \$99,261 or approximately 1% of budgeted revenues. The City has expended 20% of its budget for the current expense fund budget. Based on the spending pattern of recent years, the City should expect to expend 20% of its current budget. Generally, expenditures are tracking consistent with budget projections.

For purposes of revenue analysis, \$900,000 that was budgeted to be received from the Puyallup Tribe was excluded because the revenue was not included in the City's historic revenue pattern. No portion of that amount has been collected to date, but it is anticipated to be collected timely for expending in the current budget year.

Revenue collections for both water and sewer utilities are tracking ahead of projections. The water utility has a favorable variance of approximately \$43,000 or 2% of budgeted revenues. The sewer

utility has a favorable variance of approximately \$211,000 or 7% of budgeted revenues. A similar analysis for the storm sewer utility was not performed, because it is a fairly new utility and lacks a three-year base of revenue collection.

Interim Director Marcotte indicated no negative issues were identified.

City Manager Worthington advised that a financial report will be provided on a quarterly basis to keep the Council updated.

Councilmember Godwin complimented Interim Director Marcotte on the readability of the report. Councilmember Johnson agreed and also expressed a preference for the Council to receive a quarterly update.

Councilmember Cerqui agreed with Councilmember Johnson's comments. He asked about the 1% variance of budgeted revenues. Interim Director Marcotte explained the revenue analysis focuses on three main revenue sources; property taxes, sales and use taxes, and building permits. When revenues due from the Interlocal Agreement with the Puyallup Tribe is considered with the other three largest current expense fund revenues, they account for 80% of current expense fund revenues. The variance is small, but is within smaller revenue sources, which diversifies risk.

Councilmember Roscoe asked about GFC revenue. Interim Director Marcotte indicated GFCs are not considered operating revenue. He said he will include GFC revenue in the next quarterly report.

Value Engineering – 20th Street Project

Director Blount reported the key issue involves the roadway section within the intersection area of 54th Avenue E and the necessity to purchase the existing Shell gas station.

The City of Fife received a Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) grant for the 20th Street East Improvement Project in November 2003 in the amount of \$3,020,499. Since then, the scope and complexity of the project has significantly changed from the original proposal. Robinson Engineers is providing the preliminary design services. The design is approximately 30% completed. The TIB requires a value engineering (VE) study on projects exceeding \$2 million.

A key benefit of the project is the addition of another lane for westbound 20th Street approaching the intersection of 54th Avenue East. The additional lane permits the separation of left turning and through movements, increasing intersection capacity. Another

major benefit is fixing the offset lane configuration facing westbound traffic, reducing confusion, and increasing capacity and safety. The original design was prepared based on a goal of preservation of Fountain Memorial Park, which forced the right-of-way acquisition to the north, where it conflicted with underground tanks, a pump island, and other features in the Shell gas station. The cost of relocating those features and other damages was such that the most cost-effective way to implement that option is to purchase and demolish the gas station, build the street project, and sell any surplus property. The purchase of the Shell station would have the additional benefit of a slip ramp to I-5 built on the property to permit traffic to “U-turn” from westbound 20th Street to northbound I-5, before reaching 54th Avenue East. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is not favoring the slip ramp proposal.

The cost of additional right-of-way needed to construct the additional lane, with a full roadway section, has been a source of concern with staff and consultants as the project progresses. The VE team determined it to be the key issue to study and formulate a recommendation.

The first option to avoid purchase of the Shell gas station requires purchase of approximately 12 feet of right-of-way from the Union 76 Station and the vacant property to the west and conversion of an 18-foot wide strip at Fountain Memorial Park for street use. This option nets a saving of approximately \$1.3 million. The change in alignment would not require a deviation from adopted City standards.

Several of the other options would require a reduction in street standards, including the use of 14-foot outside lanes instead of 12-foot lanes plus 5-foot bike lanes and omission of planting strips in the intersection area.

The other major cost-saving recommendation is substituting the 14-foot outside lane section over the entire project length instead of a 12-foot lane with a separate 5-foot bike path. Staff considers this option viable but should only be considered in the context of a decision to revise the street standard throughout the City.

Staff recommends proceeding with design adjustments on the 20th Street East Project by avoiding the purchase of the Shell gas station and using a portion of Fountain Memorial Park.

Councilmember Johnson expressed concerns about potential liability issues with the high school on 20th Street regarding bike lane standards.

Councilmember Godwin indicated he does not favor purchasing the Shell gas station. Instead, he said he favors utilizing a portion of the Fountain Memorial Park and suggested reducing bicycle lanes to three feet. Additionally, it difficult to imagine children using 20th Street in the future because of the increase in traffic.

Councilmember Johnson said he does not favor the purchase of the gas station as well.

Mayor Kelley commented about the lack of funds to purchase the gas station. He agreed with the option of reducing the bike lane to three feet.

Councilmember Cerqui said he favors the Fountain Memorial Park alternative rather than purchasing the Shell gas station. Children bicyclists will most likely not utilize 20th Street in the future because of increased traffic.

Councilmember de Booy expressed a preference to utilize a portion of Fountain Memorial Park rather than purchase the Shell gas station. Perhaps the sidewalk could be across the park as a cross over from 20th Street.

Councilmember Roscoe asked whether alternative bike routes are planned on Valley and 70th Avenues. Director Blount confirmed the routes are planned, but neither are fully constructed. Councilmember Roscoe said she preferred the Fountain Memorial Park option and revising bike lanes.

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards spoke in favor of shifting the roadway away from the Shell gas station. The Council has been working on creating a pedestrian friendly community. Reducing bike lanes does not move that goal forward. A 3-foot bike lane is very narrow and pushing bicycles onto the sidewalk in some areas is not pedestrian friendly. The City must enforce safety for children walking or riding bicycles to the pool.

Councilmember Godwin indicated he does not like the idea of reducing bicycle lanes, but does not see another option.

Councilmember Johnson said he would like to see a shortcut route to the pool developed for children.

Mayor Kelley referred to the planting strip issue. Planting strips create maintenance issues. Perhaps grass should not be planted in some strips to reduce maintenance issues. He suggested the Council

should review the planting strip standard. Director Blount clarified that revising the standard would require an ordinance revision.

Councilmember de Booy said she appreciated Mayor Pro Tem Edwards' comments. However, some situations must be addressed to the extent possible and often do not result in an optimal solution. Bicycle lanes should be provided and are best provided with this option.

Councilmember Roscoe agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Edwards' comments regarding the walkability of the City. However, in this situation the City must make an accommodation for the situation.

Police Chief Blackburn expressed concerns about bicycle safety. There are not many experienced bicyclists in the City. It is hard to enforce bicyclists walking their bikes in some areas. The option will create a similar situation on north Levy Road east of 54th Avenue, where 12-foot roadway lanes were reduced to nine feet.

Councilmember Johnson said implementing two lanes for trucks would facilitate traffic.

Director Blount indicated the Council will also have to determine whether to have consistent 3-foot bicycle lanes along the entire length or limit the narrow widths at intersections.

Councilmember Godwin said he prefers consistent 3-foot bicycle lanes and that he understands bicycles have the right-of-way in traffic, but that they often impede traffic.

Councilmember Johnson said it would depend on whether the focus of the Gathering Place is still for a pedestrian friendly community. If not, then the bicycle lane should be reduced consistently. He suggested the Planning Commission should review the issue.

Mayor Kelley said he doesn't have a problem with consistent 3-foot bicycle lanes.

Councilmember Cerqui said he still has safety concerns regarding 70th Avenue and is not comfortable making a decision at this time, as he would like further information regarding the impacts of reducing bicycle lanes. Five-foot bicycle lanes are warranted near schools.

Councilmember de Booy said she prefers 5-foot bicycle lanes where possible. The narrowing of bicycle lanes might warn all traffic to reduce speed in certain areas.

Councilmember Roscoe commented that the safest option must be provided to the community. She said she would like to see additional information regarding wider bicycle lanes.

City Manager Worthington indicated there might be time to address the issue during the Transportation Plan Update.

Councilmember Johnson indicated that planting strips make sense in pedestrian friendly areas. However, he suggested years ago to move away from planting grass due to maintenance issues.

Street Construction Projects Update

Director Blount reported it has been one month since the last update:

- Signalization of the intersection at 23rd Street East with 54th Avenue East should be completed before the new school year begins.
- Federal Express is eager to begin street frontage improvements.
- 26th Street is anticipated to be completed in May 2007. Opening the street will be a condition of occupancy.

Councilmember Godwin said he understood Ashley Parks is approaching its five-year deadline to complete and open its street. Director Blount said he will look into the issue. A new owner, who gave verbal commitment to open the street by June 2007, now owns the property.

OTHER BUSINESS

City Manager Worthington reported on the following activities and issues:

City Manager Worthington reported four Council seats are up for election. He asked Councilmembers to consider informing the community about their decision to seek reelection at least 30 days prior to the filing date.

The new Assistant Police Chief completed the competitive hiring process and will begin work on May 1, 2007.

A park survey will be included in the next utility billing cycle.

Registration for Association of Washington Cities (AWC) conference is in June 2007. The Council should contact staff for registration.

Councilmember Johnson referred to the Torre Property. The path by

the pond is still washed out. Ideal planting time is now. City Manager Worthington acknowledged the concern.

Councilmember Johnson asked about staff's understanding of the Council's direction regarding an underpass or overpass. Director Blount replied staff is currently working on a cost estimate for the 2008 project. Councilmember Johnson said he understood the Council's direction was to begin the project this year. City Manager Worthington indicated staff understands the project is a goal for 2008. Mayor Kelley affirmed that the Council directed staff to investigate the possibility of beginning the project this year. Councilmember Cerqui said he understood the project was a goal for the 2008 budget.

Consensus

The Council directed staff to provide information to initiate discussion of the underpass/overpass project in 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Edwards adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Steve Marcotte, Interim Finance Director

Prepared by Jessica Tate, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services