



**June 18, 2014 Meeting Notes**  
**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**  
**Willie Hinton Neighborhood Resource Center**

At 11:40 AM the ninth meeting of the LRcent Committee was called to order by presiding Co-Chair Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton.

Committee Members present during the meeting were: Peter McKinney O'Connor, Chrystal Gray, Dr. Anika Whitfield, Steve Strickland, Musheerah Tharpe, Donald Shellabarger, Charles Blake, Khayyam Eddings, Troy Laha

Committee Members Not Present were: Kyle Demilt and Kenneth Gill

Also present were: City Manager Bruce Moore and other City Staff

Dr. Hampton started the meeting by recognizing the following individuals who are retiring or leaving the City:

Don Flegal, Human Resource Director – Retiring  
Stuart Thomas, Little Rock Police Chief – Retiring  
Bryan Day, Assistant City Manager – Resigning to become the Executive Director of the Little Rock Port Authority

**Approval of Minutes:**

Dr. Hampton entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2014 meeting. Mr. Strickland made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Laha, the minutes were approved without objection.

**General Financial Report**

Finance Director Sara Lenehan gave a summary update of sales tax revenues through March 2014 and expenditures through April 30, 2014. Mrs. Lenehan highlighted that a total of \$11,192,263 had been collected year to date which was down by negative 0.50% as compared to last year. Since the collection of the tax began in 2012 a total of \$104,428,305 has been collected. A total of \$67,677,731 has been expended.

Mr. Strickland asked how behind overall sales tax collections are at this point over the ten years and if adjustments would need to be made in the overall plan. Mrs. Lenehan indicated that it is difficult to tell until a few more months of sales tax receipts come in. While the projected revenue is lower than the previous year at this point, the hope is that things will get better.

City Manager Moore indicated that he is tracking the revenue numbers very closely and made the LRCent Co-Charis, the Mayor and City Board aware that some decisions will need to be made mid 2015 as to whether adjustments will need to be made moving forward if sales tax revenues do not increase as projected.

Mr. Blake asked how they came up with a 2% projected growth rate. Mrs. Lenehan explained that 2% was actually conservative, but with hopes of the economy slowly recovering and new businesses coming into the City there would be an increase in revenue collections.

Mr. Shellabarger asked if consideration would be made to cut any of the \$22 million allocated to the Little Rock Technology Park and also asked about \$95,000 that had recently been authorized by the City Board to go to the Technology Park Authority. Mr. Moore stated that the City Board has had some discussion regarding specifics on how the money will be used and that in the future the Technology Park Board will need to provide an explanation.

He further clarified that the \$95,616 that was requested and approved by the City Board on May 6, 2014 was not part of the \$22 million allotment. Instead it was coming from an adjustment to the 2014 Budget.

### **Departmental Updates: (Not every department had updates to report at this time)**

#### **Department of Public Works**

Public Works Director Jon Honeywell reminded the group that the City board approved a list of Capital Projects for 2013-2015, each ward has been allocated \$2,600,000. Staff is currently working to select design engineering firms and public meetings have begun to allow for citizen review and comment.

Mr. Honeywell handed out a list of all of the 2013-2015 which indicates the current status of each project.

#### **Questions:**

Dr. Hampton asked if there were any plans to cap the natural spring that is off Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. Mr. Honeywell indicated that they had no plans to cap it but to divert the water in a different direction.

### **Little Rock Police Department**

Police Chief Stuart Thomas reported that the public safety radio system upgrades have been completed and are fully operational and that the City board has approved the purchasing of furniture and computers for the Communications Center and 12<sup>th</sup> Street Station. He indicated that the draft agreement with the Pankey Community Improvement Association, Inc., to establish a West Little Rock Police Station was moving forward at which time he handed the document over to the City Manager.

Chief Thomas also said that the Department continues to recruit applicants for twenty (20) vacant position and that the Main Police Headquarters & Courts are in the initial design concept.

### **Department of Community Programs**

Community Programs Manager, Barbara Osborne reported that the re-entry program has expand into other City Departments which now includes Public Works, Fleet, the Little Rock Zoo and Housing & Neighborhood Programs. Thirty (30) individuals have been hired to be trained.

She also noted the success rate of two service agencies that have received funding. As of June 1, 2014 Our House Inc. has enrolled 137 participants and placed 76 in employment. Goodwill Industries of Arkansas Transitional Employment Opportunities) has enrolled 161 participants and placed 107.

Mrs. Osborne also reported on the evening career center where participants are working to complete certifications in GED, Computer Assisted Design, Welding and Auto Mechanics. She and her staff are working with private industry to employ the top participants when the have completed the program on June 19, 2014.

### **Department of Fleet Services**

Fleet Services Director Wendell Jones briefly went over a list of fleet purchase so far in 2014 which included two large purchase amounts for one (1) Pumper Truck for the Fire Department and fifteen (15) Patrol Cars for the Police Department.

Question:

Mr. O'Connor pointed out the cost of \$22,316.00 for a Toro Mower for the Parks Department which he thought was expensive.

Mr. Strickland asked why the Police Department decided to change the color of the patrol cars. Chief Thomas indicated that they stand out more and that there is more of a national trend to go to black and white.

Follow-Up:

Parks Director Mr. Truman Tolefree indicated that he would provide the specifics on the piece of equipment after the meeting.

### **Little Rock Zoo**

Zoo Director Mike Blakely handed out a map of the Little Rock Zoo and highlighted the projects that have been paid for using the sales tax which includes the opening of the Diamond Express Train.

### **Other Items**

City Manager Bruce Moore stated that running the City and coordinating these projects is a team effort and asked all of the support staff present to stand and introduce themselves. The following individuals were recognized:

Donna Facen – Budget Analyst, Department of Finance  
Rene Tyler – Fleet Special Program Coordinator, Department of Fleet Services  
Jim Foster – Administrative Services Manager, Little Rock Police Department  
Susan Altrui – Fundraising/Public Relations Coordinator, Little Rock Zoo  
Richelene Irby-Harris – Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation  
Mark Webre – Parks Manager, Parks & Recreation  
Scott Carter – Special Projects Coordinator, City Manager’s Office  
Joe Gray – Division Chief, Little Rock Fire Department  
Frederick Gentry – Special Projects Administrator

He then thanked Human Resource Director, Don Flegal, for his years of service to the City and wished him well in his retirement and introduced his replacement Stacey Witherell. Mr. Moore also announced that the new Police Chief, Kenton Buckner, would be arriving by the end of the week and would be sworn in on June 30, 2014.

Dana Dossett, who will be the new Director of the Department of Community Programs, will begin on July 1, 2014 and that today was Assistant City Manager, Bryan Day’s final day with the City. So far he has received 160 applicants for the position, in the meantime his has named Caran Curry the Interim Assistant City Manager.

Dr. Hampton asked the group to look at an article that was handed out that praised Little Rock’s sidewalk re-entry program. Because of the success of the program the City won the 2013 Arkansas Business City of Distinction for Workforce Development.

Dr. Whitfield wanted to know why in some neighborhoods when sidewalks were repaired or new ones put in only a section was done and the rest undone. Mr. Honeywell indicated that previously it had been a policy of repairing a portions of sidewalk in front of an

address if they received a specific request. That has since changed and now they are doing a whole blocks instead.

There were no further questions or comments and the meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm. Everyone was invited to take a tour of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Station.