



**June 20th, 2012 Meeting Notes
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Willie Hinton Neighborhood Resource Center**

At 11:30 AM the second meeting of the LRCent Committee was called to order by presiding Co-Chair Gary Smith.

The following Committee Members were present: Co-Chair Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton, Steve Strickland, Kyle Demilt, Peter McKinney O’Conor, Mursheerah Tharpe, Donald Shellabarger, Charles Blake, Khayyam Eddings and Troy Laha and Chrystal Gray

Member Not Present: Dr. Anika Whitfield

Also present were: Mayor Mark Stodola, City Manager Bruce Moore and other City Staff

Staff Overviews:

BID Process and Exceptions

Finance Director Sara Lenehan was asked to give a brief overview on a memo that the committee received regarding the City’s bid process and when exceptions can be made. After Sara finished her summary the floor was open for questions.

Don Shellabarager asked whether or not the City gives preference to hiring of minority contactors. City Manager Bruce Moore indicated that staff is in the process reviewing the possibilities of putting a policy in place that would encourage the hiring of minority contactors. He noted that it is highly encouraged that during a bid process Little Rock contractors and minority contractors are taken into consideration. Mayor Stodola explained that there are other agencies such as the Airport and the Little Rock Convention Visitors Bureau that also encourage the hiring of minority contractors.

Steve Strickland request that the committee be provided with the ordinance regarding the Motorola contract for the communications system, the purchasing process for each project and if exceptions to the process are made.

Troy Laha asked if staff looked at pricing during the bid process. Sara explained that they do not look at pricing until later in the process and that any proposals that have prices included in the beginning are disqualified.

Gary asked for a report on recent sales tax revenue. Sara explained that so far she has received the numbers for January, February and March. So far projected revenues are four (4) and-a-half percent above projections.

Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (PIT) Update

City Manger Bruce Moore indicated that the City Board has given approval for him and the Department of Community Programs to move forward with the bid process seeking qualified organizations to provide services. He also explained unlike some departments any PIT funds that are leftover at the end of the year roll over into the next year. They do not go into the general fund.

Little Rock Technology Park

Gary Smith briefly reminded the committee in light of recent articles in the paper and other media outlets that they have no oversight over the Little Rock Technology Park Authority. He then asked Mayor Stodola how long he thought it might be before the City had enough money that it could even offer toward the park. Mayor Stodola indicated that he thought that it could be several years before there was enough sales tax revenue built up to put toward the development of the park.

Don Shellabarger asked how the rest of the funds were being raised by the other partners involved. Mr. Smith indicated that it was totally up to the Authority to determine how the additional funds are raised. City Manager Moore added that even when a site is selected there will need to be zoning changes to deal with the needs of a research park which would require multiple public hearings.

Departmental Presentations:

Public Works Department – Director Steve Beck and Assistant Director Jon Honeywell

Director of Public Works Steve Beck introduced himself along with Assistant Public Works Director Jon Honeywell. Jon covered the highlights of the public works presentation and then opened the floor for questions. Kyle Demilt asked who makes a final decision on what projects are done on the public works project list. Mr. Honeywell explained that there will be public hearing in each ward to narrow the list, but ultimately it would be up to the City Board to make that decision. Mr. Demilt indicated that he would like to know how many miles of projects would be covered using the \$72 million in infrastructure funds. He also requested that the committee be provided all of the projects currently on the master list.

Dr. Hampton asked how Public Works keeps up with all of the infrastructure complaints that are received. Mr. Honeywell explained that over the past several years the department has kept and continues to add to a running list of every complaint that is received regarding street, drainage and sidewalk repairs for the entire City.

Khayyam Eddings asked if there was a list of the most substandard streets. Mr. Honeywell and Mr. Moore both explained that the more substandard streets are generally located in the oldest parts of the City which includes wards one, two and three. Mayor Stodola also explained that there are growing drainage issues that need to be addressed in West Little Rock because of increasing damage to personal property. He went on to detail why it was very important that citizens consider the continuation of a mileage that could help fund the overall infrastructure needs in the City.

Mr. Honeywell briefly outlined the 2012 projects that would be done and talked about the sidewalk program that is being implemented with Community Programs to hire-at-risk youth. Mr. Laha asked whether or not a property owner had to be the person to report a sidewalk that needed repair. Mr. Moore indicated that anyone could report a sidewalk that needs to be repaired.

Little Rock Fire Department – Chief Greg Summers

Little Rock Fire Chief Greg Summers gave a brief overview of the impact that the sales tax increase will have on the Fire Department which included purchasing new fire trucks, equipment, hiring additional personnel, land acquisition, and building two new fire stations. He then opened the floor for questions.

Mr. O’Conor asked for more explanation on how long it would take to replace the aging fleet. Chief Summers referred to page five (5) of the presentation which was an estimated schedule to have all older vehicles replaced by 2017.

Mr. Demilt asked the Chief how quickly he thought the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating would be raised after the building of the new fire stations. Chief Summers explained that there are several other factors that must be considered. Even after the two stations are completed he indicated that there is still a shortage of stations in some areas.

Mr. Shellabarger asked where the South West Station would be located since ward two and seven both cover parts of South West Little Rock. Chief Summers said that he and his staff are still assessing the best central location that could most effectively cover the needs of that area.

Parks and Recreation Department – Director Truman Tolefree

Parks and Recreation Director Truman Tolefree gave an overview of how the sales tax increase would impact the parks department which included making improvements to several parks around the city, hiring additional staff to help with maintenance and building additional facilities. He specifically highlighted that contractors had been hired to begin designing for the Adult Leisure Center on 12th Street and construction will begin in July and that the Ottenheimer Community Center is nearing completion and should be open in July.

Planning and Development – Director Tony Bozynski

Planning and Development Director Tony Bozynski gave his presentation on how his department would be impacted by the sales tax. Since no capital funds were allocated

from the sales tax all of the funding will be spent on hiring additional staff to help carry out inspections and add to the efficiency of the department.

Information Technology – Director Randy Foshee

Information Technology Director Randy Foshee gave his presentation and the opened the floor to questions. Mr. Strickland asked who the provider is for the internal fiber ring and requested that the committee be provided with a copy of the contract and ordinance.

Human Resources – Employee Service Manager Stacey Witherell

Employee Service Manager Stacey Witherell gave an overview of how many positions the HR Department would be able to fill with revenue from the sales tax. She also explained that an estimated amount of \$3,918,000 would be used for pension plan improvements. Part of these funds will be dedicated to payouts for older officers who are in a closed plan.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 19, 11:00am to 1:00pm at the Hinton Center. Mr. Moore asked the committee to be thinking about what they would like to be added to the agenda. At that time there will be a report on how much revenue has been generate by the sales tax. In July the committee Co-Chairs will give their first report to the City Board.

There were no further questions or comments and the meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm.

Follow-up Items

Motorola Communications Ordinance and Description

List the BID Process for each project paid for by the sales tax

Approximant number of miles will be covered using the public works infrastructure funds

List of all projects on the public works master list

Fiber Ring Contract and Ordinance