



**Wednesday, March 18, 2015 Meeting Notes
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Willie Hinton Neighborhood Resource Center**

At 11:42 AM the tenth meeting of the LRcent Committee was called to order by presiding Co-Chair Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton.

Committee Members present during the meeting were: Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton, Chrystal Gray, Dr. Anika Whitfield, Steve Strickland, Kenneth Gill, Mursheerah Tharpe, and Troy Laha

Committee Members Not Present were: Peter McKinney O'Connor, Kyle Demilt, Donald Shellabarger and Khayyam Eddings

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

Introductions

Dr. Hampton welcomed Mr. Kenneth Gill who was attending his first meeting and also announced the resignation of Mr. Kyle Demilt who moved outside of the City limits.

Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Hampton entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the October 29, 2014 meeting. Mr. Laha made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Strickland. The minutes were approved without objection.

General Financial Report

Finance Director, Sara Lenehan give a summary update of new sales tax receipts for the month of December, collected in February. The total year-to-date proceeds were \$47,458,193 which was up by 1.42% from the previous year. She then briefly went over the capital expenditures as January 31, 2015. A total of \$62,975,026 has been encumbered and expended. \$5,681,064 of that amount was spent on Public Works Projects.

Mr. Strickland asked what the plan was to deal with the lack of projected revenue. Mrs. Lenehan explained that later in the year staff would take a look at potential cuts or adjustments. She noted that there will be no more short-term financing in the near future.

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

Department of Public Works

Public Works Director, Jon Honeywell reported that many of the projects approved by the City Board for the 2013-2015 schedule were now under design and public meetings were being held to allow citizens a chance to review and comment on the designs. Many of these have been bid and are now under construction. He also indicated that the Ward meetings have been scheduled for the next round of capital improvement projects for the 2016-2018 cycle.

Mr. Laha wanted to know what the holdup was on the Yarberry Lane project. Mr. Honeywell indicated that this is a very large project and requires a great deal of right-of-way acquisition.

Mr. Moore went into additional detail regarding the schedule for the Ward meetings. He explained that staff would be taking requests until May after which estimates would be tabulated for each project and another round of meetings would happen in the fall of 2015.

Dr. Hampton asked that staff make sure that they track each ward that the individual requests came from.

Ms. Gray asked for an explanation of the difference in the sales tax and bond money for Capital Projects. It was explained that due to the demand on construction crews to get the current projects done, the decision was made to use additional bond money in the third year cycle because the funds have to be expended within a certain amount of time.

Little Rock Police Department

Police Chief, Kenton Buckner, reported that the Public Safety Radio System Upgrade has been completed is up and running. He added that the architect for the West Little Rock Station was finalizing the construction bid document and preparing to advertise. The expected completion of the project is December of 2015.

Recruit School #81 graduated eighteen (18) Officers on February 1, 2015. They continue to fill 911/311 Communications Call Takers at the time of this report there were nineteen (19) vacancies.

Questions & Discussion:

Mr. Strickland asked about the mixed use space in the station and how that would be filled. Mr. Moore explained that the plan is to hold a public meeting to get input from the community to determine the desired needs, put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) or

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire a commercial real-estate consultant to do an appraisal and determine the market value of the space. They would also assist in marketing the space to potential tenants.

Department of Community Programs

Community Programs Director, Dana Dossett reported that the re-entry program that started with the Public Works Department has now been expanded to other City Departments such as Fleet Services, The Little Rock Zoo, Housing & Neighborhood Programs, Little Rock Police and Fire Departments. She also highlighted the results of the programs with Goodwill Industries of Arkansas and Our House, Inc.

Mrs. Dossett informed the group that the Youth Master Plan Consultants had been hired and were doing research which should be finalized in September, 2015.

Questions & Follow-up:

Mr. Strickland would like to know the percentage of turnover is for those working within the City Departments.

Dr. Hampton would like to know how many participants actually dropped out of the Goodwill and Our House programs. She would also like to know the number of men and women who participate in the Evening Career Center.

The group indicated an interest to hear some success stories from some of the participants in these programs and also the financial impact.

Mr. Strickland asked that the group have a report on how much was spent on each program and the success or failure rate, by the September meeting.

Ms. Gray asked how many other programs were like the City re-entry program. Mr. Moore indicated that we have a unique model, but would do some research.

Department of Fleet Services

Fleet Services Director, Wendell Jones briefly went over a list of fleet purchase since the last report given. From February-March those have added up to approximately \$895,705.40.

Mr. Gill asked how many Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles that City actually owns. Mr. Jones responded there are ten.

Department of Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Director, Truman Tolefree reported the dedication of the newly constructed soccer and lacrosse fields at the Natural Steps Ball Complex took place on November 15, 2015.

Department of Information Technology

Randy Foshee, IT Director, briefly reported that his staff is continuing the replacement of old equipment with 130 Dell PCs for a total cost of \$145,620.85. Firewalls were purchased for various locations around the City for \$96,146.21.

Housing & Neighborhood Programs

Andre Bernard, Director of Housing & Neighborhood Programs, gave a brief update on vacancies and positions filled and the Land Bank.

Questions & Follow-up:

Mr. Strickland asked how many homes were in the Land Bank. Mr. Bernard indicated that six (6) homes had sold and were occupied and that there are currently eighty-two lots are in the Land Bank.

Little Rock Zoo

Zoo Director, Mike Blakely reported that the Zoo plans to create a new Arkansas Heritage Farm exhibit which will be a \$756,000 investment to educate future generations on the importance of preserving heritage breeds and farm culture. They are also working on several other projects that will be completed in the summer of 2015

Other Items

Mr. Moore wanted to thank all of his staff for keeping on track with the priorities and that he was pleased with direction in which the City is heading.

Dr. Whitfield asked if the Chamber has been approached regarding the re-entry program. Mr. Moore indicated that that idea has been expressed, but he is trying to work on the public sector approach to set the example.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49pm.