



**Wednesday, August 16, 2017, Minutes
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Centre at University Park**

At 11:40 AM the nineteenth meeting of the LR CENT Committee was called to order by Peter McKinney O'Connor, co-chair.

Committee Members present during the meeting were: Dr. Sybil Hampton, Peter McKinney O'Connor, Denise Jones Ennett, Steve Strickland, Musheerah Tharpe, Donald Shellabarger, Rep. Charles Blake, and Troy Laha.

Committee Members Not Present were: June Matheny, Kenneth Gill, and Kristi Lambert.

Also present were: City Director Joan Adcock, City Manager Bruce Moore, LR CENT staff member Scott Whiteley Carter, and other City Staff.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the May 17, 2017, meeting were approved. Motion was made by Mr. Shellabarger, seconded by Mr. O'Connor.

General Financial Report

Sara Lenahan, Finance Director presented the General Financial Report. Overall, year to date, the city is 3.47% above the same time in 2016.

Ms. Lenahan reminded the committee that the General Assembly did not take action on either of the bills which would have allowed for the collection of sales tax on online sales by entities without a presence in Arkansas. While Amazon did announce it would start voluntary collection on March 1, 2017, it is difficult to assess how much of the increase in collections may be due to Amazon. Ms. Lenahan further reminded the committee that the tax was only for items bought directly from Amazon. No tax is being collected for sales by third-party vendors.

Ms. Lenahan noted that there would be no additional short-term financing from the tax. This is because there would not be sufficient time to pay it off from proceeds before the tax sunsets.

Regarding the new Southwest Little Rock Fire Station, the plans call for construction to start in 2018 with it opening in 2019. Equipment and apparatus for the station are in the process of being purchased.

Department of Community Programs

Dana Dossett, Director of Community Programs made the presentation. Since October 1, 2015, over 1200 Little Rock residents have enrolled in the reentry program. In addition, over 300 citizens from other municipalities have stopped by for guidance in finding resources in their areas. By default, Little Rock is becoming a reentry clearing house.

The City currently employs re-entry participants in Fleet Services, the Zoo, Housing and Neighborhood Programs, Police, Public Works, and Human Resources. They are working with Fire, Finance, and Planning to create positions.

Fleet Services

Support Services Manager Donna Facen presented the Fleet Services report. She reviewed a list of fleet purchases since the last report given. These have been for Fleet (\$106,647), Parks and Recreation (\$92,563.03), Planning and Development (\$118,670.95), Police (\$10,500), Public Works (\$314,613.92) and Zoo (\$27,403.36). This is a total of \$670,398.26.

Information Technology

Network Security Manager Mary Cook presented the I.T. report. The Lawson/Infor system has been upgraded. The new Voice Over Internet Protocol Phones Phase 1 & 2 is underway. To date, the department has installed upgrades to 641 of the approximate 1050 city managed phones which are in use daily. The fiber and equipment to connect the Northwest Police precinct, SID and the Stat Data Center to the City's fiber ring has been installed and the project is complete. All sites have experienced an increase in speed and reliability.

Parks and Recreation

Before the Parks and Recreation report was given, City Manager Bruce Moore introduced two new City Department Directors: John Eckart is the new Parks and Recreation Director and Jamie Collins is the new Planning and Development Director.

Mr. Eckart reported that the Parks department has installed upgrades to Boyle, Murray and Reservoir Park totaling \$78,378.05. They are a new Zip Line play feature in Boyle Park, a new fence and climbing net play feature in Murray Park, and a new Swing Set in Reservoir Park. An additional \$48,250 has been spent to retain McClelland Engineers for trail design of the Riverfront Drive improvements to the Arkansas River Trail. A new Omni Spin play feature was installed in MacArthur Park for \$9,913.06.

A question was asked about the state partnering with the city on War Memorial Park now that stadium administration is under Parks and Tourism. City Manager Moore responded that the city and state had had several discussions and were working toward a closer working relationship.

The reopening of the East Little Rock swimming pool was another question which was raised. Mr. Eckart responded that it would take major capital to reopen the pool, which has been closed for several years and needed improvements at the time of closing. However, as the East Village development continues in the vicinity of the pool, there may be opportunities to look at the necessary funds for reopening the pool.

Concerns were raised over fire exits at the West Central Community Center. Some of the exits appear to be behind doors that are kept locked. Mr. Eckart was going to look into the situation.

Little Rock Police Department

Police Chief Kenton Buckner reported that Recruit School #86 which began in February with eighteen (18) recruits graduated all of the members on August 4. This is the first time in many years that 100% of the recruits who started the class finished it. The new \$5,000 graduation bonus has helped with the retention. A new Recruit School will start on August 21, 2017 with an additional one set for November 12, 2017. Enrollment is currently open for a February 2018 Recruit School. There are currently forty-two (42) vacancies in patrol. These new recruit classes will close those gaps.

Regarding 911 Communications Personnel, and eight (8) week academy started August 7th with ten (10) members, seven (7) of whom have previous dispatching experience. The Communications division currently has eleven (11) vacant positions.

Department of Public Works

Public Works Director Jon Honeywell reported that as of August 16, 2017, the in-house Sidewalk Program crew has completed 157,474 square feet (approximately 31,495 linear feet) of new sidewalks since July 2012. Sidewalk constructed by contractor with Sidewalk Program funds totals 82,252 square feet (16,450 linear feet) since September 2015. A total of 239,726 square feet (47,945 linear feet) of sidewalk reconstruction

On the 2013 – 2015 Sales Tax Projects, a total of \$2,600,000 in Sales Tax funding was allocated for each Ward and the projects were approved by the Board of Directors for construction. Public Works is managing and reviewing the design of these projects by the selected design engineering firms. The public meeting process that allows citizens to review and comment on the design of the selected projects has been completed. Multiple projects have been bid and construction started.

All of the second phase projects are proceeding to the design phase. Public Works has received approved contracts and released all design consultants. All design work is scheduled to complete in 2017. Public Meetings to receive input from neighborhoods have recently been completed. Several projects have been moved to the Bid and Construction Phases

The 2016 Street Resurfacing Program is also funded by the sales tax issue. The 2016 Street Resurfacing Program has completed asphalt resurfacing on 84,780 linear feet of City streets. A list of the streets with expected timeframe to be resurfaced follows. The 2016 Street Resurfacing Program is complete. The 2017 Street Resurfacing Program is also funded by the sales tax issue. The 2017 Street Resurfacing Program has completed asphalt resurfacing on 6,475 linear feet of City streets.

Public solicitation is underway for the final phase of these projects. The forms are available on the City's website. In 2018, public meetings will be held in each ward.

Little Rock Zoo

Zoo Director Susan Altrui updated the Committee. The Colobus/Serval Exhibit is scheduled to open in the Summer of 2018. The engineering and design phase are near completion with construction expected in September. The upgrades to the lion exhibit are expected to be finished by September 2017.

The Zoo is working with the Finance Department on a point-of-sale system that will be comprehensive. Because this is more involved than originally planned, it is taking longer to implement.

Upgrades to the tunnel exhibits are necessary to bring exhibits into compliance with AZA accreditation, USDA and OSHA requirements. Fences, gates, pools, landscaping and animal holding areas are being renovated for Somali Wild Asses, Maned Wolves, Yellow Back Duikers and Sarus Cranes. Renovations complete except for anteater and crane pools which will be completed in-house at a later date.

Other

City Manager Moore noted that the Little Rock Fire Department had achieved accreditation. It is one of 56 departments to be nationally accredited AND have an ISO rating of Class 1. The LR CENT projects have contributed to this. He also noted that Fire Chief Greg Summers has announced his retirement. But he will be present until his successor has been named so Chief Summers will be present at future LR CENT meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 pm.