

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
City Council – Special Meeting
February 2, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Wyman Williams, Mayor Pro Tempore Gene Lockhart, Council Members Anthony Henry, Beckey Thompson and Stephanie Muller

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Howdy Lisenbee, Director of Administrative Services Molly Jacobsen, Finance Director Jamie Campbell, Director of Public Safety Chris Bassham

OTHERS PRESENT: Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Members: President Ray Green, Kathleen Hooten, Andrew Baker, & Jennie Reynolds

1. Call to order:

Mayor Wyman Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Discussion and Possible Action on the Award of Bid for HVAC System Improvements at the Commerce Public Library, Commerce City Hall and Commerce Public Safety buildings.

City Manager Lisenbee reminded the Council that this item was previously discussed at the last January 16th regular City Council Meeting. Bids received for this work came from Progressive Heat & Air and A&S Air Conditioning. Multiple options were presented by both vendors to the Council for consideration (Attached to the minutes as "Exhibit A").

Option 1 would include only replacing condemned units at both facilities, which would be the 4 condemned unit at the public safety building and the 2 condemned units at City Hall. For this option, Progressive Heat & Air bid \$31,070.00 and A&S Air Conditioning bid it at \$57,200. Beyond that, there are units at both locations which are approaching their life and expected to be condemned within the year. This includes 2 units at the public safety building and 4 more units at City Hall in need of replacing in the very near future. Adding the option of replacing these units near failing or expected to fail would add an additional \$48,930 to the bid from Progressive Heat & Air and an additional \$60,590 to the bid from A&S Air Conditioning. This brings the total cost for replacing all 12 units, which are condemned units and units approaching the end of their life, to \$80,000 through Progressive Heat & Air and \$117,790 through A&S Air Conditioning.

Progressive Heat and Air further offered a plan for replacing the remaining, functioning units at both facilities over the course of the next 2-5 years for \$40,000 as an optional "Phase 2" replacement plan for HVAC units at City Hall and Public Safety building.

For the library, Progressive Heat & Air offered a bid to utilize a natural gas furnace heating system added to the current HVAC system at the library. They quoted that at \$26,000 for option 1, which would change out the entire existing system or they offered an additional option at \$17,800 to install the natural gas furnace and disconnect the current boiler system.

The City is recommending Council approve a bid from Progressive Heat & Air for \$80,000 to replace condemned units and units near life at City Hall and the Public Safety Building. Staff further recommends Council approve the bid from Progressive Heat & Air for \$17,800 to install a natural gas furnace and disconnect the existing boiler system. These options have a total price tag of \$97,800.

Council Member Beckey Thompson inquired if the phase 2 option for \$40,000 from Progressive Heat & Air would replace all units at City Hall and the Public Safety Building. Manager Lisenbee

clarified that this would include every single unit at both facilities with the exception of a single unit at City Hall which was recently replaced. Finance Director Campbell confirmed that this would include 7 additional units that are not currently critical but will need to be replaced in the coming years. Council Member Thompson inquired if that was something that should be considered. City Manager Lisenbee stated that his concern would be replacing all of the units around the same time and landing the City in a position to replace them all at once again, as opposed to establishing a facilities maintenance plan to stagger the replacement of the units over the course of several years. He felt that punting the operational ones to budget for in the future with an internal service fund would be a better long-term plan, but this would mean it would potentially cost more in the future than it does now to replace them. He also stated that he met with a local Atmos representative recently who said the City would likely be eligible for rebates since these are gas heat units. Additionally, Atmos has programs that support libraries for educational purposes, and they will be working with the City to see what grants the City might qualify for related to HVAC improvements at the Commerce Public Library.

Council Member Beckey Thompson moved to approve the bid from Progressive Heat & Air for \$97,700 to replace condemned and near life units at City Hall and the Public Safety Building and option #2 from Progressive Heat & Air for the Commerce Public Library. The motion was seconded by Council Member Anthony Henry and the vote carried unanimously.

3. **Discussion and Possible Action on a Resolution designating City-owned land for use as a Dog Park in Commerce and reallocating budgeted funds for the Parks & Recreation Department to be utilized to fence off the Dog Park.**

Kathleen Hooten noted that the Dog Park Board and the Parks Board met with the Council in June of 2019 for a workshop where everyone began hashing out the details for a Commerce Dog Park. Since then, they have worked diligently to consider all logistics and do research related to a Dog Park in Commerce. She noted that while the Council has many projects to consider and plan for, the Dog Park Board has devoted all their time and energy into researching this project alone on behalf of the Council to help them make the best and most informed decisions related to the placement, logistics and features of a Dog Park in Commerce. Board Member Hooten stated that in 2019, Mayor Williams indicated that perhaps not everyone would want a Dog Park in their neighborhood or in proximity to their home, which led them to begin looking at Centennial Park. Board Member Hooten noted that the Board worked closely with former Parks Director Lacey Dingman to consider logistics of utility availability in that area of Centennial Park and potential parking and other items related to a Dog Park in this location.

Jennie Reynolds presented a power point and summarized the goals of a Dog Park in Commerce which could provide a place for dogs and people to exercise and socialize in Commerce. She noted there are many Dog Parks in the metroplex, but north east Texas doesn't have one and putting one in Commerce could potentially service Bonham, Cooper, Sulphur Springs, and Paris. She noted that these communities must drive over an hour to get to a quality Dog Park. She noted that socialization and exercise for dogs is a big part of responsibly owning and raising a dog.

Jennie noted that since the joint workshop in June of 2019, the Dog Park board has conducted Pop-Up Dog Parks, a puppy photo shoot, several Doggie 5Ks, and have raised about \$7,500 total over the course of about 2 years and in the midst of an almost year-long pandemic.

Kathleen noted that Centennial Park is about 40 acres and was involved in the Texas Parks & Wildlife Grant Project that was utilized to add a disc golf course and skate park in addition to the existing playground that was already there. She said that the Dog Park Board felt strongly about incorporating the Dog Park with the existing Centennial Park facilities. The Centennial Park project will eventually include a walking trail that winds through the Park amenities. She stated that the intent would be parents could drop their kids off at soccer or baseball practice and then take their family dog to the Dog Park while the kids practiced, as opposed to sitting in their car and playing on their phone. The idea being to make Centennial Park a multi-use complex with the

1 existing disc-golf course, skate park, practice fields, and in the future a walking trail and Dog Park
2 added to Centennial Park. She noted that the Dog Park board likes to host Doggie 5Ks and doing
3 so at Centennial Park would keep citizens and their dogs off public streets and not require public
4 safety personnel to block off streets and conduct traffic when hosting 5K events. They then
5 opened the floor to the Council for questions.
6

7 Council Member Stephanie Muller expressed concerns from the standpoint of being a good
8 steward of tax-payer dollars. She inquired as to the cost of fencing at Centennial Park versus the
9 cost of fencing at City Park, as well as the difference in costs at both locations for providing water
10 and electricity to both sites. She inquired as to maintenance costs for the City to maintain the site
11 going forward and to get parking at Centennial Park to service the Dog Park. She expressed
12 concerns related to the safety of citizens and dogs if the Dog Park were to be at Centennial Park,
13 given its proximity to the highway. She said she would like to see a comparison of these prices at
14 Centennial Park versus City Park and for the Dog Park Board to understand that if it were at
15 Centennial Park, it might be some time before the funds were available from the City to pursue a
16 Dog Park at Centennial Park. Kathleen Hooten stated that she felt both parks would have similar,
17 if not the same, costs for fencing due to the size of the park being the same regardless of where it
18 is located. She further noted that the Dog Park board had no intention of putting electricity at the
19 dog park. She believes utility services to both sites would be comparable in price and that
20 providing water to dogs and people at the Dog Park would be a necessity. Kathleen agreed that
21 parking would be an issue at Centennial Park. She stated that there is already fencing separating
22 Centennial Park from the farm to market road and that should help with safety concerns related to
23 the Dog Park being in proximity to a highway. She stated that there is an entryway at the practice
24 ball fields that could be utilized to assist with parking for the time being.
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26 Council Member Stephanie Muller stated that she had another concern with how people access a
27 Dog Park at Centennial Park since there weren't homes near it. She felt that having a Dog Park in
28 City Park immediately gave access to homes in that area where people could easily walk across
29 the street or down the street to access the Dog Park, and that people already do that with City Park
30 currently.
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32 Council Member Beckey Thompson thanked the Dog Park board for the fundraising and planning
33 efforts they've put into this project thus far. She expressed that she aspired for the Parks &
34 Recreation Department to grow their programs and expand their baseball facilities in the near
35 future. She stated that if the City were to designate 2 acres of Centennial Park to a Dog Park, it
36 would severely limit the ability of the City to expand their ball fields in the future and thus limit
37 the ability to expand the recreational programs to the capacity they were 15 years ago. She said
38 there is virtually no other city-owned land to utilize to expand ball field capacity outside of
39 Centennial Park space. She further felt that the location of the old city pool has little potential for
40 other projects in the future and felt it could be an ideal spot for the Dog Park. Kathleen expressed
41 that this area is less than an acre and a pretty small area to consider putting the Dog Park there.
42 Kathleen noted that City Park is about 7 acres with about 3.5 acres on either side of Park Street,
43 making about only 0.8 acres available for a Dog Park by the water towers, so as not to cut into the
44 art park portion of City Park. Board Member Jennie Reynolds said they pushed the fence almost
45 to the street to maximize as much space as possible in that area and could only find about 0.8 acres
46 to use for a Dog Park in this location. Going behind and around the water tower in City Park, they
47 found an additional approximate 0.8-acre space.
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49 Council Member Beckey Thompson noted that she thought utilizing both of those spaces,
50 including behind the water tower would be plenty of space and already includes trees and is
51 aesthetically ideal for a park. Council Member Anthony Henry noted there is already an improved
52 space there for parking as well. Council Member Thompson said they could use the two, separate
53 spaces as a natural barrier between the "large dog" and "small dog" parks that the board intended
54 to make. Council Member Thompson stated that she sees people out walking their dogs around
55 City Park all the time. Council Member Stephanie Muller stated that she lives near this location
56 and there is "constant traffic, especially from the University" in this area. Board Member Hooten

1 said she initially had some concerns about putting the dog park near the Art at City Park but
2 researched that the intention of the art was for it to be utilized by the public and walked on. Board
3 Member Reynolds expressed concern that putting the Dog Park in this location could be a
4 nuisance to houses nearby listening to dogs barking.
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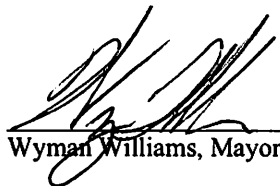
6 Mayor Pro-Tem Gene Lockhart stated that a new Animal Shelter is a priority for the Council and
7 would likely take higher financial priority than a Dog Park. City Manager Lisenbee stated that the
8 money earmarked in the budget for a new animal shelter would not in any way be taken away
9 from to contribute to the Dog Park. Funding for the fence at the Dog Park would come from other
10 money earmarked for other Parks fencing projects.
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12 Parks Board Member Andrew Baker noted that if one of the intentions for the Dog Park was to
13 draw people to Commerce, then signage would also need to be a priority to direct traffic to City
14 Park as the location is much less obvious than it would be at Centennial Park. Council Member
15 Thompson mentioned that this could be a good thing as signage directing traffic to downtown is
16 necessary as most university students don't even know Commerce has a downtown. Council
17 Member Anthony Henry said he has lived in the community for 51 years and he lives near the
18 proposed location of the Dog Park at City Park. He said he felt strongly that people in proximity
19 to this location would be in full support of a Dog Park at this location as practically everyone
20 around there owns a dog and walks their dogs in that area on weekends. He felt that turning
21 around a Dog Park in this location soon was worth considering this location over Centennial Park
22 which might require another few years to find funding for parking and features there to make the
23 Centennial Park location ready for a Dog Park.
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25 Dog Park Board Member Jennie stated that she felt optimistic that the conversation this evening
26 was about "where" to put the Dog Park and not whether or not to even have a Dog Park. Mayor
27 Wyman Williams said that he felt that since the Dog Park board had planned on locating the Dog
28 Park at Centennial Park and the Council was leaning toward City Park, he would recommend not
29 making any decisions tonight but allowing the Dog Park board time to address the logistics for
30 locating a Dog Park at City Park. He inquired as to whether coming back to Council at the
31 February 16th regularly scheduled meeting was enough time to revisit this and the Dog Park Board
32 felt that was adequate time to do some research. Mayor Williams echoed that the Council was in
33 support of seeing a fence go up for a Dog Park and all that was in question now was the location
34 but that the Council fully supported the idea of a Dog Park in Commerce.
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36 **4. Adjourn.**
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38 Council Member Beckey Thompson made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. Council
39 Member Stephanie Muller seconded the motion, resulting in a unanimous vote to adjourn.
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Wyman Williams, Mayor
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49 Molly Jacobsen, City Secretary
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52 02/16/2021
53 Date
54

55 CityCouncilMeeting/2021/February/02.02.2021.SPECLMTGMINS

"Exhibit A"

	PROGRESSIVE HEAT & AIR	A&S AIRCONDITIONING
CONDEMNED UNITS (6):		
FIRE/PD BUILDING	\$ 20,713	\$ 39,900
UNIT #1 (6 TON)		
UNIT #2 (3 TON)		
UNIT #7 & #9 (4 TON)		
CITY HALL BUILDING	\$ 10,357	\$ 17,300
UNIT #4 & #8 (4 TON)		
REPLACE ONLY CONDEMNED UNITS:	\$ 31,070	\$ 57,200
UNITS EXPECTED TO LAST 1 YEAR (6):		
FIRE/PD BUILDING	\$ 14,570	\$ 15,980
UNIT #3 & #8		
CITY HALL BUILDING	\$ 34,360	\$ 44,610
UNIT #2, #6, #7 & #11		
ADDITIONAL COST TO CONDEMNED UNITS	\$ 48,930	\$ 60,590
TOTAL COST FOR ALL 12 UNITS	\$ 80,000	\$ 117,790
REMAINING UNITS TO REPLACED IN 2-5 YEAR (7):		
FIRE/PD BUILDING		
UNIT #4 & #6	\$ 11,430	
CITY HALL BUILDING		
UNIT #1, #3, #5, #9 & #10	\$ 28,570	
"PHASE 2" TOTAL COST	\$ 40,000	
LIBRARY		
OPTION 1		
CHANGE OUT SYSTEM - 3 (5 TON)	\$ 26,000	
NATURAL GAS FURNACE & 1 (2 TON) SPLIT SYSTEM	YEARS PARTS, 20 YEARS HEAT EX & 1 YEAR LABOR	
OPTION 2		
INSTALL NATURAL GAS FURNACE AND DISCONNECT BOILER & INSTALL 1 (2 TON) SPLIT SYSTEM	\$ 17,800 *WARRANTY 5 YEARS PARTS, 20 YEARS HEAT EX & 1 YEAR LABOR	* Recommended by staff
CH & FD/PD 12 UNITS & LIBRARY	\$ 97,800	
FY 2023 EXPENSE "PHASE 2"	\$ 40,000	