

City Council Transcripts 8/21/2012

We all jumped and
cially -- and robbed or
we're going to use the
aircraft that is available.

We have -- we have
yesterday in tarrytown, one
gentleman had his truck
broken into, they stole
items from his truck,

[10:16:00]

another family broke into
the house, actually, they
came in through an unlocked
door.

Word to the wise, lock your
doors.

Really a good key to not
getting victimized.

But they took the -- the
person's keys and they used
it to steal the car.

A lot of folks don't realize
that the iphones, there's
an application where we
actually use --

>> the propositions when you
are suing people, we backed
away, we didn't have an
aircraft available, all that
we got the stolen vehicle
back, we lost a suspect
because we didn't have --
where he went and ran it or
she or had he ran into we
have a lot of -- we have to

make -- we try to minimize
the impact to the community.

So when we have closures,
for example -- we want
-- what's happening with
traffic, so we can fluctuate
our traffic management plan
to try to minimize the
impact on -- on
neighborhoods, on
businesses, so it gives us a
lot of flexibility from that

[10:18:01]

standpoint.

This specific aircraft, what
it's going to do for us is
give us the ability to have

aircraft available.

We don't have availability
like we do now.

We don't have the necessary
availability that we have.

But the most important piece
of this specific aircraft is
the multi-mission capability
that the chief can talk
about now.

>> We did -- I don't mean to
interrupt you, but we did
talk about that at the
hearing.

>> You have enough on that.

>> Tovo: Unless my
colleagues want to hear it,

I understand that it's going
to be -- you know what?

It had a lot of -- sounds
like it has a lot of great
features in that regard,
what did you call it?

A multi-use.

>> Multi-use,
multi-functional,
multi-mission capability and
including fire, and our
current aircraft are a lot
of folks don't realize are
not just police department
using it, the fire
department, it's of course
the fire department on a
regular basis, I've got a
couple of instances in the
last couple of months that

we have actually supported
e.m.s.

So although it's a police
asset, it really belongs to
all of us and it is used
across disciplines and
across departments.

>> Right.

I really appreciate this
information.

It's giving me a sense of
the kind of -- the kind of
things that would trigger
helicopter use and they --
they sound like instances
where you would need a
helicopter versus another
kind of -- another kind of
response.

Are there -- do you have
guidelines that your
officers follow about when
it should not go out?

I mean, is there -- is
everyone clear on where --

>> the -- absolutely, the
ones that control the -- the
use of the aircraft is
what's called our watch, our
watch commander is an
officer in the field or a
young officer, it is a
person or a -- or what we
call -- actually a real-time
crime center, which is kind
of an operations center that
we have -- that we have
established in the last
couple of years.

That lieutenant is responsible for ensuring that the use of the aircraft is an appropriate use and a justified use.

One of the things that we really want to focus on, at least I want to focus on is when we talk about pursuits,

[10:20:00]

is one of the opportunities that we will have with the additional capabilities and the additional coverage is we're probably going to end up strengthening and -- our pursuit policy where --

where -- where we will
automatically call off
the -- the vehicle -- the --
back away the units because
depending on the situation,
you may not -- if you have
bonnie and clyde there, you
don't want to take any
chance on losing these
people.

But in a lot of instances,
what we will probably end up
doing is requiring a
justification as to why we
kept the -- kept the units
with the aircraft overhead.

So we will be a little bit
more restrictive, we believe
that we will have with the
additional coverage the
ability to do that in a much

more frequent basis.

>> Great.

So in terms of the
logistics, we had talked
about, you know, waiting in
long for a time time, 18
months -- can are you
reminds me where why -- why
it's coming forward today
for just a partial payment.

Not today, but thursday.

>> That's okay.

So the it is the financing
of it, I believe we are
authorizing, believe
considering authorizing --
[one moment please for
change in captioners]

>> when there is ano carrierringconnect 57600

[technical difficulty]

>> absolutely.

I think we can track the hours
and that's something that we
could track in the future.

>> Great, because it is a more
costly way.

>> It is probably the most
effective way.

It is the most effective way to
manage large traffic control

[10:24:00]

issues and, fortunately, in our city, it's fortunate in one area because it brings in a lot of people spending a lot of money, but it is a challenge from a public safety perspective.

When you can look from an aircraft at what's going on from the ground, next to satellite, it's the next best thing.

>> I know you attended to kind of give us a sense of the round -- I didn't mean to cut you off earlier, I just wanted to run through my questions.

But a snapshot of capabilities.

>> From the fire department's perspective, the ability to have that first due aircraft to

deliver water to the scene is
significant.

One of the things and what's
most illustrated we spoke of
57600

>> I appreciate you being
here and I appreciate the
backup information this
time.

>> Sure.

>> I just want to say
something real quick here.

>> Sorry, mayor.

i
think I said it all the last
time that we considered this
but I just want to reiterate

some of it.

In my opinion, this is the
fastest most effective thing
we can do to improve
subsafety in austin and
central texas.

We all still remember not
only the pinnacle but the
fires last labor day and
even at that time everybody

[10:26:00]

was saying we wish we had
more air assets.

In a lot of cases that's the
only thing available to
fight the fires,

specifically out at shiner
ranch where the terrain is
difficult.

They couldn't get ground
machinery in there because
of the hills and so forth,
to fight that fire.

If we had had more air
assets at that time we would
have faired, I think, much
better in combating that
fire.

It is the quickest and most
effective thing I think we
can do to improve our public
safety.

>> Mayor, if I could just
add to that, I remember
being in our emergency

operations center when we
started calling -- even
though steiner ranch wasn't
our fire, we're partners
and, you know, in public
safety there's no territory
when it comes to saving
lives.

We started suggesting we
need to get in line.

Chief evans hit it.

This region was way down in
hose fesnd it
several days to
actually get assets here so
you're hitting it on the
head.

We're going to have it here,
ready to go, in our control,

and one of the things that
scares me coming from
southern california is, you
know, I live were a lot
of -- we're going to have a
hundred year event.

It has not happened and i
don't want to be an alarmist
but it's coming, and this is
an shrnses policy.

I think council member
martinez referred to it as
an insurance policy that we
are going to draw on for the
fire capability and we will
draw on every day for the
law enforcement capability,
the ems capability
definitely will be drawn on.

thank

you.

>> Mayor, I hate to butt in
here, but --
didn't
want to leave you out.

>> No, I mean, really, we're
talking about fires, we're
talking about property,
we're talking about
protecting all of that but
one of the key roles of ems
is to protect the rescuers
who are fighting those fires
and the officers in those
locations that are hard to
get to and we have
challenges accessing that.

So in ems we need to jump in
and being able to be dropped
in with medics and their

gear to make all the
difference in the rescuers

[10:28:00]

lives who are working to
resolve those and mitigate
those situations.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: thanks.

I've actually been picked up
by a helicopter in and a
horse collar in a training
exercise.

It's interesting.

>> You haven't lost an
aircraft yet, mayor?

[Laughter]

>> mayor leffingwell: no.

So I guess now we can go
back to b1?

Which is a discussion of
citizen forum.

Council member martinez.

yeah, this is
the item -- or the citizens
forum is from an item that
council member tovo and i
and I think mayor pro tem
cole co-sponsored and since
staff has identified a date,
and we are still talking
about some of the logistical
issues we might face such as
if they sign up and don't

specify a topic, what kind
of interaction can we have.

I just want to manage those
expectations of citizens
that might want to
participate so the greatest
extent possible and let them
know that those are the
rules and that we're
restricted by that under
open meetings act.

But I do want us to go ahead
and move forward with the
item and have this forum.

Unfortunately, the data
identified by staff is one
in a time period where i
won't be available, so I'm
just respectfully going to
ask that we look for another

date so that I can attend,
but if we can't, i
completely understand and i
will do everything I can to
try to be there on the 22nd,
I believe is the identified
date.

>> Mayor leffingwell: mr.

St

st

einer, do you have anything
to add?

I mean, you're here.

I think it's worthwhile to
elaborate a little bit on
what the restrictions might

[10:30:00]

be, and if it's anything
like what I understand the
rules are, the rules used
for citizen communication
are that you can talk about
any topic you want to.

It's just that unless they
were posted in advance the
council could not engage in
a discussion of that topic.

>> Yes, sir, that's correct.

If no subject matter is
posted, the council is
limited to responding to an
inquiry with a statement of
spec fact or with a
recitation of existing
policy or a suggestion to

the body that you schedule a
topic for a future meeting.

Other than that, if it
were -- if it were entirely
open-ended and no subject
matter was posted to be
limited to that, if you use
a model like citizens
communications where
citizens can identify -- a
citizen who signs up to
speak can identify the topic
the citizen wishes to speak
on, then it depends on what
they write down, and we'd
have to look case by case to
see whether or not that was
sufficient notice under the
open meetings act.

And of course that would
have to be posted 72 hours

in advance of the meeting.

>> Mayor leffingwell: right.

>> Something like city
issues would allow no
discussion.

>> Mayor leffingwell: right.

>> But --

or
tbd.

Say that a lot.

>> Right.

Something that was quite
specific, you know, animal
control issues and the
bouldin creek neighborhood
would be something that you

could engage on.

If you wanted to do
something where you posted
something that citizens
might speak on, then we
would have to consider what
sort of things you would
like to hear about and
consider what sort of
postings would be
appropriate for that.

>> Mayor leffingwell: yeah.

And that's exactly why when

[10:32:00]

people sign up for citizens
communications, we ask them

to list their topic so that
we could, if necessary, have
discussion about that.

And the other thing I wanted
to bring up is we kind of
discussed the
possibility -- you know,
it's going to be hard to
find a saturday when
everybody is available,
especially on saturday, but
also the possibility of just
posting a meeting for -- in
case there's a quorum and
just kind of saying, if
you'd like to show up -- to
council members, if you'd
like to show up you can.

We wouldn't necessarily have
to have a quorum of council
members to let people come

up and speak.

Speak.

>> Well, without a quorum
there's no meeting.

right,
there wouldn't be a meeting
but you could have --

>> I guess it would be a
town hall --
town
hall, yeah.

but then we
wouldn't be limited by the
concerns that you just
raised about having
discussions.

If there weren't a quorum,

it's not a council meeting.

Therefore, it's not having
to comply with open meetings
requirements.

that
would be my guess, and
steiner might want to
weigh in on that.

>> If only the sponsor
showed --
[laughter]

>> well, three of you are
chris and mike and kathie.

When you add the mayor all
of a sudden you become the
council.

So --

or

even without me, we could

add laura.

I don't think

we have to worry about

adding the mayor.

[Laughter]

>> add any additional one

and then all of a sudden

just those individuals turn

into the governing body of

the city.

So if it's not the council,

then it's -- it could be a

town hall meeting.

Of course we would have --

[10:34:02]

if it were posted as a
council meeting and turned
out not to be a council
meeting, I guess you would
have to at that point i
hadn't really anticipated
that question but I guess
you would have to say, well,
the meeting is called off
since we don't have a quorum
and then you'd just be
hanging out with the folks
that showed up.

sort

of hanging out.

Okay.

Kathie?

so, yeah, I mean,
we've talked about this a
little bit in previous work
sessions and I've given this
a lot of thought because
we've, you know, kind of
talked through some of the
different options, and none
are ideal.

I'll just say none are
ideal, but they are the
restrictions we have to work
within.

I would like a situation
where if a citizen comes to
us and is talking at the
podium, we have the ability
to ask clarifying questions.

It's my understanding we

won't if we don't have
topics posted.

On the other hand, if we
have topics posted, that
limits the citizens in other
kinds of ways.

So I'm satisfied with having
this meeting struck turld as
an extended citizens
communication, so I would
ask that if it's possible
that we open up the
computers several days in
advance and allow people to
sign up with a specific
topic if they so desire.

Would that be an option in
the same way we do with
citizen communications?

Then those items would be posted 72 hours in advance and if we had clarifying questions we could ask them --

>> our speakers signing up using the kiosk would not allow them to post topic.

When they sign into the speaker sign-up system they simply select which item they're interested in speaking and indicate whether they're in favor or against and whether they want to speak or they want to donate.

So using that system would simply allow you to have a group of speakers that you

know want to speak on

[10:36:00]

whatever topics are posted.

The way we handle citizen
communication is very
different and goes through
the agenda item.

and it's still by
phone, I guess?

>> We allow by phone, by
email and in person.

>> Tovo: I see.

So there's no way to
configure -- there's no way

to configure our kiosk so
they would accept that
information so that a staff
member wouldn't have to be
involved in manually
compiling the list of topics
and citizens?

>> Well, and I don't know
that that's really our
concern because when we
start of calculated it out,
if you have three hours and
you're going to give three
minutes apiece, 60 speakers,
we can handle that through
our normal system.

The problem is then you have
no time for discussion with
council members if 60 people
showed up and signed up with
topics, so you might want to

limit that to no more than
45 people, you know, to try
to build in some discussion
times if you're going to
stick to that three hours.

So it's really those kinds
of limitations.

I mean, I think we can
handle, if you want to let
people know that within a
certain time frame they can
start calling in or coming
in and giving us their
topics.

I don't think that's the
restriction that's limiting
us but it's rather how many
speakers would you allow to
do that and then would you
allow people who show up

that day and haven't
registered but want to be
heard, would they be allowed
to speak.

So those are some of the
issues I think you need to
work through versus whether
our office can handle it or
not.

thank you for that
explanation.

You know, from my
perspective I think it's
less important that we have
time to talk with one
another because we do that
with some frequency,
especially lately, but I do
think it's important that we
have plenty of time for the

people who come down on a
saturday to speak to us.

So yeah, I guess that gives
me pause.

We don't want all the time

[10:38:01]

slots to be filled up by the
time people get here on
saturday.

On the other hand, it might
be useful to have a handful
of them filled so that if
there are clarifying
questions that we need to
ask from the dais to get the
information -- you know, to

really understand the point
somebody is making, then we
have the opportunity to do
that with at least a certain
number of the people who
come down.

So I guess that's really a
question for my colleagues,
does it make sense to have
some sign-up opportunities
available for people who
want to clarify -- who want
to specify their topic or
should we have it be just a
free for all on that
saturday.

my preference
would be, mayor -- sorry --
my preference would be that
we conduct it like we do
citizens communication and

have a sign-up time period.

I mean, I just think we
envisioned this as sitcom on
steroids, kind of, and so
why not stick to that same
process and let citizens
sign up, you know, ten days
in advance, I believe.

How many days in advance can
they sign up?

Two weeks?

>> It's ten days, roughly.

so allow them
to sign up, have a closing
period.

Then have all of our
speakers -- a list of

whoever they are and their
topics and conduct the
forum.

I think -- I don't think
we're going to be inundated
with 45 people wanting to
speak.

It's going to be the same
ten people that are mad at
us and want to talk about
the same issues like
fluoride and con trails and
issues like that.

that
was sitcom with a c, not an
s, right?

>> Tovo: yes.

>> Martinez: yes.

So I think it's important
that we're having this
discussion.

I don't think it's going to
be some logistical
nightmare.

I don't think we'll have 100
people come down on a
saturday morning, but it's
important to give them that
opportunity if they want.

So having a pre-period
sign-up is not -- to me it
doesn't give me great
heartburn.

It just gives us the ability

[10:40:00]

to post these items with the
72-hour notice so that we
can engage in a conversation
with them, because I think
the people that are going to
come down on saturday
morning, they're going to
want a little bit more than
just their 3 minutes.

They're going to want to
say, what do you think?

What can you tell me?

And we need to be able to
post that properly so we can
engage in that discussion.

>> Morrison: mayor?

council

member morrison.

I agree with

that last point completely.

I think that to be able to

have some conversation and

interaction with the

citizens is important.

Otherwise it's going to be

really frustrating.

They might as well just

write us an email, it's just

a one-way street, so I'd

like to allow some time for

that.

I would -- I would hope that

we might be able to set

aside some time for people
that are just signing up at
the meeting as opposed to
allocating all the time,
because I certainly see the
benefit of being able to
sign up so that people know,
for one thing, what order
they're going to be in.

They don't necessarily have
to be there for the full
three hours, but to be able
to engage.

On the other hand, I'm
hoping that we might be able
to -- that this might be an
opportunity for people that
aren't usually engaging with
us to be able to have some
face-to-face contact, and
frankly, that was my

understanding and maybe i
just read it into it, to
broaden the engagement base,
if you will, in terms of
doing this in the first
place, and so I would -- i
would foresee some benefit
in allocating, say, an hour
of it or something at the
end, maybe, and we could
even say, you know, that's
going to be at the end so
people know when to come if
they haven't signed up, just
for -- just for people to
show up and sign up.

And we can make it really
clear on the agenda that
it's going to be a one-way
street that those topics
are.

So those are my thoughts on
those two items.

I do want to know, are we
having it here at city hall
or were we having it
somewhere else?

[10:42:04]

>> The plan was for city
hall.

>> Morrison: okay.

Those are my thoughts.

I just
want to make clear I thought
I heard something about
action.

These are not going --
topics posted for possible
action, just discussion.

I didn't mean
to suggest that.

council
member tovo?

>> I did want to note that
if there was interest in
changing -- not using the
september 22 date, the other
dates that rose to the top
as I looked at your
schedules and fl and music
festival, they were
september 22, september 29
and october 27.

September 22, september 29

and october 27.

I want to just in
here and say I like the
suggestion of having a good
block of time reserved for
people who just show up.

You know, it is really my
hope and that was part of my
intention in sponsoring this
item, to really broaden
beyond just the people who
come down here every week
and understand how to sign
up for citizens
communications and, you
know, know how that system
works, and can make time to
come over here at noon.

The suggestion that came
from our community member

was to have it on a saturday
to accommodate people who
work all day and through the
workweek and don't have jobs
that are flexible enough to
come over here.

So I think that is an
important balance that we
have, an opportunity, if the
staff feels it's feasible,
an opportunity for them to
sign up in advance so that
we have some ability to ask
questions but a good block
of time, at least maybe
half, for people who just
come down that day.

With regard to the date, i
want to add in there that i
believe -- I believe we
wouldn't have any of the

sponsors present.

I think three of us have

[10:44:01]

maybe committed to a session
on the date of the 22nd.

I think there was an
affordable housing
discussion going on on
september 22 that several of
us have been invited to
attend.

So that could pose an issue,
I think.

There may be as many as four
of us who aren't able to

attend the people's forum,
the citizens' forum.

So I would suggest we do
change the date and think
about another one of the
other options that misthomas
thomas has
presented.

And I hope owe, you know, i
don't know once we have
arrived on a date or arrived
on a new date, I don't know
what mechanisms we have here
at the city, but I hope we
can promote this through
channel 6 and through other
means because I think it is
a unique opportunity to be
able to come down to city
hall on a saturday and i
hope members of our public

will take advantage of it
and come tell us what's on
their mind.

And I'll just say the 29th
looks good for me, of
september.

I would just
add --
council
member martinez.

one last
comment and that is that we
do everything we can to have
a quorum.

To me it just avoids so many
logistic al issues.

If you just have three, then
the question comes up, are

you trying to circumvent the
open meetings acts with just
three.

So whatever we can do to
accommodate schedules to
ensure that a quorum would
be there I think is really
important.

council
member riley?

I'm going to be
out of town on september 29
but I would be here on
october 27, for whatever
that's worth.

so i
definitely couldn't make the
29th either.

the 27th works

for me.

The october 27 works for me.

i

don't know about that.

I can't commit to that right

now.

it looks like

we have four.

[10:46:00]

that's good, and i

think it's important -- i

really delighted, i

believe this passed on

consent, and I think that

shows the cooperation of council so I think we should have a date we can be here so we can have a majority of the council.

>> To summarize, so you don't want any limits on the number of people who can sign up in my office and be posted on the agenda?

I would -- my opinion is that we should have limits, and I think council member morrison suggested maybe about an hour's worth of free time.

I would suggest maybe half-and-half, so allow for about an hour and a half worth of speakers and then

keep about an hour and a
half --

>> so that would be 30, the
first 30 who sign up will be
posted on the agenda?

that sounds --

>> that allows no
interaction.

I mean, if they each took
their full three minutes,
council would have no
interaction with them, so do
you want to reduce it down
to 20, the first 20?

I'm certainly open
to that.

What do you all think?

20?

First 20?

Mike?

First 20 sounds good.

>> And will this be
televised?

yeah, I'd like --

I'd like for it to be
televised.

just as an

fyi --

council

member martinez.

we had a fiscal

impact node on this item and

one of the things that we
specifically eliminated to
cut cost was staff --
channel 6 staff, department
DIRECTORS, ACMs, BECAUSE

We start running into a huge
cost to the citizens if we
start --

do you
remember how much that was?

we whittled it
down to 500 bucks.

I think it started at like
15, 20,000 with all the
staff.

I can't remember exactly.

I'm throwing those numbers
out there, but it was
something very drastic.

Once we eliminated all of
the staff needs, it got down

[10:48:01]

to really just ac, you know,
running the ac on saturday
mornings.

we need a lot
of that.

i
couldn't support that
expenditure.

would it be --
we can bring
candles.

[Laughter]

hopefu

hopefu

lly it will be during the
daytime.

Council member morrison?

I wonder

whether we could fund the
cost specifically to have it
televised because there's a
huge benefit to the
community to be able to have
it televised or at least
have it recorded.

I don't know if it adds

something to have it
televised live as opposed to
just recorded because if
that's the way to break it
down we could record it and

play it later.

you're

still going to have the

crews.

that's why I'm

wondering is there more of a

crew if it's live versus

just recorded?

What money we're talking

about.

Because if it's a thousand

dollars, I would support it.

If it's 15,000, then it's a

much different question.

>> Well, staff just noted

the request so we don't have

it now but before the day is

out we'll have an estimate.

>> Thanks.

>> I'm just hearing --

excuse me, I'm hearing

october 27.

I want to say thank

you.

I know you've spent a lot of

time and energy researching

was possible and talking

with our office and

researching dates.

So thank you so much for

your work on this.

we

haven't had enough meetings

this year.

We need to pick up the pace.

[Laughter]

if we're done with that, i
don't know if there's any
staff -- I didn't -- i
didn't think to -- okay.

I want to do bring up item
3, and just taking a look at
the back -- this is the
building services item to
add 28 new ftes for

[10:50:02]

custodial services cost, and
energy, march 1, rca was
submitted to the council
for -- to outsource those

services.

And march 22 the council, i
believe, rejected that
contract.

It looks to me like from --
could we -- I know you're
not interested in this,
but -- this backup material
says that the costs will be
\$682,007 more than the
projected cost for services
provided by an outside
source and through fiscal
1617 additional costs
resulting from the
transition would be
\$3.3 million.

So can you verify that?

I think what we're saying is

by rejecting the contract
item through those three
years we'll be spending
\$3.3 million.

Is that right?

>> [Inaudible] okay.

There we go, eric stockton,
building services officer.

[Inaudible] packages of
facilities and contract
services considered in march
plus additional facilities
that were not under contract
based on the assumption that
we are to move these
services in house for austin
energy facilities as
contracts or new facilities
come up in the future.

So the cost change a little

3 million cost

differential over five years

[inaudible] to based on the

[10:52:00]

additional facilities.

and

that involves 28 new

full-time employees.

>> Yes, sir.

would

have to be hired for that.

I -- you know, obviously

we're going to consider this

item on thursday, but to me
this puts a whole different
light on it and I think we
ought to take another look
at it.

In the big scheme of things,
3 million is not a
huge amount of money, but
that is money that you could
say, does this increase the
cost of austin energy
service to its customers?

I think the answer is yes by
some increment.

And perhaps I think the
concern at the time was
we're not sure that these
employees of the contractor
are being paid a living
wage, have adequate health

benefits, et cetera.

Maybe we could take a
look -- maybe it would be
possible to issue another --
another request for action,
another rca -- or rfp, i
guess it would be, that
would include, at least to
some degree, addressing
those issues, because to me
with this additional cost i
think it merits
reconsideration, and i
don't -- I personally can't
support this item on the
agenda as it stands right
now without at least
exploring it further.

>> Morrison: mayor?

council

member morrison.

thanks for
bringing this up because i
wanted to talk about it
also.

Actually I was ill that day
when this -- and I watched
the discussion.

I was certainly supportive
of us moving forward to make
these folks in-house.

As I recall, the real
difference came down to the
fact that the -- the
contractor didn't have
benefits that were really
accessible in terms of the
costs and all, to the

[10:54:02]

contracting employees, so
the really discussion was,
are we willing to contract
our work out so that we can
get a cheaper price because
the folks doing the work
don't have health benefits
and all.

And that was a very
important and actually
pretty extended conversation
by the council that didn't
include me and it talked
about the fact that it's not
necessary -- we need to
think a little more broadly
and have having folks in our
community that don't have

benefits is not free to us
because the community comes
around and ends up
supporting those folks, not
to mention that, you know,
when we do an economic
incentives and all, we have
some baselines of wanting to
do business with folks that
do provide health benefits.

The big difference here, as
I understand it, is that the
new system control center
wasn't really contemplated
when we looked at the
numbers last time, and so
that we really -- so the
numbers sort of stay the
same for what we had
considered, if I'm correct.

It's just that we also have

additional requirements for
services.

Is that -- is that correct?

Am I looking at it properly?

>> That's correct.

The service control center
is approximately
200,000-square-foot
facility, and by comparison
if you consider city hall,
for example, we have about
five to six custodial
personnel in the services
office building.

The service control center
is about double that in
terms of square footage and
it also has some small

percentage of is a 7 by 24
facility as well.

So there's a number of
factors which that building
alone adds a great deal.

We also were able to absorb
some of the facilities in
our existing staffing.

We kind of reach a tipping
point once we did that where
we had to -- we weren't able

[10:56:00]

to absorb any more square
footage with existing
staffing bringing that
on-line.

>> When is it coming
on-line?

>> My understanding is it's
due to come on-line in
november december of this
calendar year.

>> Another question, a
suggestion was asked --
there's a different rfp that
actually had requirements
for the contractor to be
providing benefits.

Is there any reason to
believe that they're going
to be able to provide
benefits and come up with a
contract that's less costly
than us having the folks as
employees providing

benefits?

Byron, I know, you're
probably going to say you
can't answer that question,
but seems to me that
benefits cost money and
either we pay them to our
employees or we pay somebody
else to --

>> there's two parts here,
byron johnson, purchasing
officer.

One part karen can handle,
which is the legal aspect of
having benefits in
contracting, and that's
one -- that's the one issue
there that we can't control
because the attorney
general's office has said

that you can't consider
health benefits as part of
the process.

So we can't mandate that, to
do that.

Your second question was, is
do we think that their costs
would be less?

We participated with eric
and other people on the team
that did the evaluation, and
even though they offer
benefits in some cases, some
companies, you will find
that generally they do have
a little bit different cost
factor, and it sometimes is
more costly for the city to
do something versus
contracting it, which is why

we do a lot of the
contracting we do and we
don't have the employees
doing that.

So I can't say that, but the
third part to that was, is
could we issue another bid?

Most assuredly.

We can issue a bid in
anticipation -- if you

[10:58:00]

remember, we took two
actions.

We took the original
contract for council, and

then when council gave the direction otherwise, we brought back another item to extend the existing contract for up to 12 months, anticipating that building services would need to gear up, ramp up, bring forward ed's budget item to be able to do that one.

So we still have that in play.

So it's not such that we would have to do that.

The wildcard is going to be the ecc.

We would need to be able to go out fairly quickly if we were going to contract for

the ecc because that wasn't
on the initial contract and
we would need to be able to
contract for that, but we
most assuredly could do
another solicitation.

We could go forward.

The problem that eric will
say and as ed will say, is
that if council then chooses
to not make an award, there
wouldn't be sufficient time
to bring staff in to do the
same work, so we would have
to do either a temporary
contract or we would have to
do a permanent contract, at
least until they could be
able to get staff in.

Did that help?

yeah, I think
that's a lot of good
information, and I do want
to comment.

My memory is that the
contract that we were -- had
before us that was rejected,
benefits were available to
the contract employees, but
the cost of them was
prohibitive.

It would have cost, you
know, a week or two's pay or
something like that.

And I could be wrong about
that.

So I know that it was --
it's hard to compare.

It could be apples and oranges and all, but I do want to just briefly mention that, you know, I think this is sort of an overall issue -- overarching issue that we need to think about in terms of what kinds of responsibility we want to take in our contracts or are we going to be supporting employees that we know have benefits, and interestingly, the parks department has done a couple of contracts that we have approved and both recently -- this week 50 is one, and a couple weeks ago there was another one, and both of those in the backup staff have been quite clear in

articulating why they need
to be contractors, because
they are for peak purposes,
you know, serving peak
demands and things like
that.

So I really appreciate the
parks department doing that.

And then just lastly i
wanted to mention that we
also have item -- we have a
water utility item that is
to do a contract for the
security guards, and i
understand it's a
ratification and they need
to be able to, number one,
provide security for our
water utility assets, and
number two, they're in a
situation right now where

they've exceeded the
contract.

But I do think we need to
ask there, you know, some
places we have security
guards, as I understand it,
that are our employees, and
other places we don't, and
it's a question I feel like
we just need always to be
asking.

yeah,
a couple of things.

Number one, let's not forget
that when we contract out
we're contracting for --
usually with local small
businesses, and so that's
something that doesn't need
to get lost in the

discussion.

In addition to that, and
this just occurred to me so
this may not be well thought
out, it is a question, how
is national health care
going to affect this issue
of benefits and over what
time frame?

>> May not.

in
other words, it may not be
an issue early, in the near
future.

>> Mayor?

city
manager.

>> If I might, and this really is an overarching issue and I think one of policy.

I mean, when I just generally have listened to the discussion, this almost feels like I'm taking on some sort of an employment policy, if you will, that the city is doing that, and when I think about that in the context of, you know, the economic decline and also the challenges and the things that we had to do structurally to stabilize our budget, you'll recall that we were very much committed to no layoffs, for example, and one of the other things that we did was

we eliminated a number of
vacant positions.

And those two things seem to
kind of fly in the face of
an employment policy, if you
will, that talks about
hiring additional people.

I'm not certain or convinced
that the economy has
entirely stabilized yet.

So let's say that in a
worst-case scenario that we
began to experience problems
again.

We could find ourselves in
the position then, having
hired a bunch of people, and
then later on subsequently
having to lay them off and

some of those people end up
in a position worse than
they are today, certainly
being unemployed is a worse
position than working for an
employer out in our
community where you may or
may not be getting benefits.

I'm just -- I'm just
concerned about that.

And so I ask that we just be
mindful of that as we go
down this path.

yeah,

I -- I think as council
member morrison brought out,
there are certainly places
for contracts, where there
are economies of scale,
there may not be a need for

a full-time service but if
you hire your own it has to
be a full-time service.

Just as an example, if i
want to -- if I want to hire
somebody to mow my yard, you
know, I can hire somebody to
come by once a week to do
that, but I don't have to
hire a full-time gardner.

So it would be more
economical for me to do it
that way, and, you know, i
can envision this being the
case in a lot of services
like this general janitorial
services, a private
contractor might be able to
do two or three different
facilities in a day,
different kinds of

facilities and not
necessarily have to be there
full-time.

Just some thoughts.

Council member tovo?

I have a couple
quick questions lest there
be any confusion I am quite
interested in this item.

I assume that in your
calculations you considered
the point that the mayor is
making.

I mean, you don't want to
bring on full-time staff who
are -- have three hours of
work and then not enough,
you know, nothing else --

not enough -- nothing else
to do the rest of the day.

And so are there -- can you
just confirm for me that
that was part of the
consideration that these
full-time employees would
be, you know,
consistently -- would
consistently have tasks
before them, either in one
facility or would be
shared -- you know, would
have responsibility for
working in several different
facilities?

>> Yes, we use a staffing
model based on industry
standards which, you know,
we modify as necessary based
on our needs, and what that

means is, is we hire a
full-time equivalent to
handle a certain amount of
square footage, which means
they work a full -- you
know, full 40 hours a week.

Some cases we may have a
part-time position that is
used to cover any sort of
outliers on that and, you
know, if we have a total
square footage and we get
five full-time equivalents
and we still are short,
about half -- 20 hours a
week, then we'll hire a
part-time position to, you
know, complete that coverage
for that square footage.

So we -- we don't have,
strictly speaking -- we're

never going to hire someone
full-time to work on in a
part-time capacity.

We do have some flexibility
built into the system
because not all tasks are
done every day, but there
are tasks that have to be
done periodically, like
mowing the yard or buffing
the floors and things like
that.

So it's -- it's a fairly
delicate balance in terms
of, you know, getting the
staffing just right, and
also being able to cover
vacations and sick leave
and, you know, unexpected
events and training and that
kind of thing.

just a few specific
questions about the bid.

-- Excuse me, about the
backup information we have
in front of us.

I notice in the first chart,
the first table, you talk
about austin energy
facilities, the full-time
equivalents the contract had
proposed 17 and then the
city of austin has proposed
14 1/2, and then there's
some discussion in the
backup information about --
and I think you mentioned it
as well, about the scope
somewhat expanded in terms
of adding some additional
facilities.

Is that correct?

So what we're talking about here today is custodial staffing for an expanded number of facilities than were before us last time.

Is that right?

>> Correct.

What you considered last spring did not include several facilities, the largest of which was the service control center, which is about a 200,000-square-foot facility, and that is really where the bulk of the costs -- additional costs

that have been added to what
you considered last spring
came from.

that would have
been an additional cost in
either configuration, we
would have had --

>> correct.

we would have had
to spend the money.

>> Correct.

on additional
staffing for that facility?

Okay.

Thanks very much for doing
this analysis.

>> So while the ag's opinion may preclude us from issuing an rfp that contemplates health care benefits or other benefits, is there any -- is there anything that precludes us from inserting language that would say for any respondent to work with some of the groups that we currently work with as a city, like capital idea or skill point alliance, something that meets a policy value of the city?

If we're going to contract out, would there be a prohibition on putting something like that in an rfp?

>> Council member, that's something I haven't -- i haven't heard of before.

The issue as the city manager mentioned of benefits in contracting versus employees has been around for a long time.

The ag's opinion actually goes back to 1987.

It unfortunately was one of my bid when I was with the city of houston, so I'm quite familiar with it.

So there are some innovative ways we can look at doing this.

As the law department can
say, we can ask them to
identify what benefits they
offer.

We can say things like we
encourage.

We just can't mandate it and
you can't make that as a
condition.

And again, in some cases
when we -- when we have put
some things out there in the
past saying we encourage
this, some of the companies
say their people don't want
the coverage, either they
have coverage from a spouse
or they have coverage maybe,
as eric mentioned, maybe
they work part-time

somewhere else and they
don't want the coverage, and
they don't want to be
burdened with that extra
cost themselves.

So again, as a directive, we
can -- we can do out with a
directive that says do this,
and we can go out and see
the best bids that we can
get, and we'll attempt to do
that with the community, and
I think the community has
been really good at
responding, but again,
they're trying to win the
bid and they know that
they've got to put the best
number they can or they're
going to lose it.

council member

riley.

byron, how much
flexibility do we have in a
situation like that
[inaudible] a respondent
that offers a benefit
package that we have a
preference for?

Are we required to take the
low bid or are we allowed to
look at the whole array of
responses and make some
decision, taking into
account the various types of
benefit packages that are
offered?

>> In my purchasing
viewpoint, again, I will
gladly take input from law
and karen, but you can't

require benefits, you
can't -- you can't take that
as a consideration in an
award.

You could take value.

You could look at
experience.

You can look at quality.

You can look at a number of
those factors, so you don't
have to take the low bid.

We can take best val.

You just can't say because
there's benefits we're going
to select company b instead
of company a.

so we are legally
prohibited from considering
the benefit packages in
making our decision?

>> That's correct.

>> Riley: okay.

That's important to know.

Thanks.

well,
you know, despite the
discussion that you had
about allocating time for
full-time employees versus
part-time employees and
shifting the tasks around,
it still falls back to the
statement that I'm reading,
the cost will be more to do

it in-house, and more by a
lot, more by \$682,000 a
year.

Joe?

I guess that's it.

Thank you.

>> Mayor?

>> Mayor leffingwell: ed?

>> If I could just take a
moment to remind council
that there is a council
referral on contract
insourcing and that staff is
in the process of looking at
54 contracts that are set to
expire by the end of the
year, contracts that staff

felt might lend themselves
to insourcing, so, you know,
things that are not seasonal
in nature, things that don't
require some specialized
skill set or knowledge or
certifications.

And so we are reviewing
those 54 items.

It is a lot of work.

You know, you're dealing
with budget staff,
purchasing staff.

You have the department who
needs the service, and then
the department, like eric,
who would be providing the
service, and we got to get
all those people around a

table and multiply that by
54, it becomes this
avalanche of work, largely
being done by the same folks
who are trying to get a
budget out and bond
information out.

But we are working very
diligently on that and are
hoping to report back to
council by october 1 with a
comprehensive report as
opposed to piecemealing
these things, a
comprehensive report, of
here's 54 contracts set to
expire by the end of the
year and the rationale for
why we may or may not want
to insource those different
contracts and what the costs
may be for insourcing versus

continuing with the
contracts.

I want to remind you that
work is under way and we'll
be getting back to the
council here in the next six
weeks or so.

this
is a timely discussion to
have, then.

Council member morrison?

thanks, and
thanks for bringing that up.

And I do appreciate the work
you all are doing.

We had a great conversation
about that in our earlier

conversation -- in our
earlier conversati I think
you mentioned, in fact, it
probably came back in a memo
to council from staff that
you had win owed down a huge
number of we had from 54
down to -- can you remind me
of those numbers that we're
actually looking at?

Because it's --

>> I believe, and byron may
know, it's maybe in the
thousands in terms of all
the contracts we have, and
we said, how about if we
narrow to the contracts that
are going to expire by the
end of the year or set for
renewal at the end of the
year, let's cut down the

little ones under city
manager's authority, let's
cut out the ones that are
seasonal and that's how we
ended up with the 54.

great, I wanted
to point that out because we
do have a lot of contracts,
and so the ones that you've
picked out are the ones that
are -- we're going to have
to be dealing with one way
or another in the near
future and are nontrivial
and so really that's going
to give us sort of a
framework, perhaps, to have
that policy discussion that
the city manager refused to.

>> If I may, mayor, to add
to ed, is we also did look

at the benefits issues, and
some of the contracts that
we pulled out of the list
of -- there was 1800 to
2,000 at any given point, so
we said, here are ones that
we know they offer benefits.

So let's take those out of
the mix because that's a
nonissue.

So we thought we wouldn't
spend the staff time for
those.

That was a direction.

Council wanted to look at
those that might not offer
benefits.

So when you look at them and

see if it's win owed down,
if it's win owed down to
those that don't offer
benefits or maybe have a
lower employment rate than
some of the other ones.

Again, we tried to narrow it
down to the contracts we
have with the 54.

>> Morrison: thank you.

any
other topics?

There are no others listed.

Council member morrison?

I wanted to
highlight one item on here
and make a comment to my

colleagues, and that is item
no. 52.

It's under
telecommunications and
regulatory affairs, and if
you all will recall, a year
and a half ago I guess it
was, or a little less than a
year and a half ago we had
pretty intense discussions
looking at ways that we
could actually help the
school district that was
having some real financial
challenges and all.

And one of the things that i
had mentioned at that time
to put on the list was the
fact that we have franchise
fees that come from our
cable providers that go into

a pot of money that the
city -- it's restricted now.

It can only be used for
capital investments, but
that was -- that was --
those were funds that i
think our legal staff --
well, clearly our legal
staff determined that those
were funds that could be
shared with aisd because
they are part of our whole
public access system, and so
what this item does is
transfer some of those funds
to aisd for them to use for
equipment.

So I appreciate the staff
bringing that forward, and i
just wanted to put that in
the context of it's -- as i

understand it outgrowth
of those discussions that we
had with aisd a while ago.

>> That's exactly right.

I want to acknowledge ray
laray and his team and ron
della and all those folks
who remain sensitive that
that issue and that's why
it's on the agenda.

>> When it was first brought
up there were discussions
about what our budget really
was and what -- the
equipment, what the funds
would be used for and
they've all been accounted
for, but keeping your eyes
open, apparently, ump able
to find ways to open that

up.

So I appreciate that.

council

member tovo?

I have a quick

question actually about that

item.

I submitted it through the q

and a but since we're

talking about it, I wonder

if those funds -- well, I'll

just mention it and then

submit it through the q and

a, but I wanted to know

whether or not -- at the

joint subcommittee recently

we asked staff to look at

opportunities for working

with the schooled to expand

internet access for students
in the school district, and
I wonder if the staff could
also be thinking about these
funds and potential
possibilities for using them
to help effect that goal.

>> Council member, bert
lumbreras, assistant city
manager.

We'll be happy to look into
it but it's my understanding
that these dollars are only
for capital, and I don't
believe that it would
specifically solve that
particular issue, but we'll
vet it out a little bit more
and look into it.

>> Tovo: thank you.

>> Sure.

>> Tovo: thanks very much.

And I have a couple quick questions about some other items, if we're moving on.

So I had questions for some of the sponsors of 70 and 74.

With regard to 70, I wanted to know whether the austin fire department is aware of the technology and whether there are any efforts under way on their part to study the use of it, and then my second question is, where is it currently being used?

It's called fire watch
america, but the resolution
refers to its use in other
countries.

yes, it's --
it's developed by the german
space program.

It's only used in germany at
this point.

Fire watch america is the
first -- the first company
to enter into a franchise
agreement with them to
market their product.

They were able to reduce
forest fires in germany by
90%.

It's worked very well.

It's not certain whether or
not it is going to work that
well here because in germany
most of the forests are
uninhabited.

So when there's smoke, it's
really an anomaly.

Here in the western part of
travis county we have huge
population, and so it's not
an anomaly when you see
barbe -- see barbecue pits and
smoke.

This resolution allows the
staff designated by the city
manager to meet with them to
see if it is something that
works.

They are in town.

They've met with county
officials.

They've met with the texas
forest service, fire
departments, west lake i
know is one of them, maybe
lake travis, hudson bend
fire department.

All I wanted was an enabling
document that wouldn't
preclude our appropriate
staff from entering into
these conversations.

Lcra is very interested
because obviously they have
to protect the areas that
their power lines cross.

This could be one way to
monitor those areas.

But, you know, it could be a
five seven way partnership.

You just never know, until
they are able to start these
discussions, and that's all
that this item does.

It will obviously have to
come back to council for any
action if we're to move
forward on any type of
interlocal agreement or
funding.

We just don't know.

They haven't done a study of
the area to determine how
many cameras are needed and

there's obviously going to
be a bunch of questions
about the use of cameras for
monitoring, for potential
fires.

Those are the kind of
conversations I believe that
need to begin now so that if
and when we can make a
decision, you know, we'll
have all those questions
answered.

But to me it's just one of
those things where we really
need to look at everything
we possibly can to help us
protect from the dangers of
wildfires in and around
austin, and I think this is
one tool that could be of
benefit.

I don't know for sure at
this point.

but at this point
they haven't met with austin
fire department.

They've met with other
surrounding --

I do not know
that for sure.

I know that they were
meeting with a bunch of
folks.

I don't know if they met
with afd, but I did provide
a contact for them to reach
out to them.

I don't know if they did.

great, and thanks

for the information about

where it is used.

My second question regards

74, and again, it's directed

at the sponsors of this

item.

So the resolution talks were

a 2008 event honoring

olympians that was -- or.

it was canceled

for hurricane ike.

so my question is

will the event being

contemplated also recognize

past olympians or is it

designed to recognize

central texas olympians who

participated in 2012?

that's a great
point.

I don't think we -- I don't
think we discussed that.

We just simply said, you
know, we missed out on '08
because of hurricane ike.

Let's not mess out this time
because -- miss out this
time because we have several
central texans that were in
the olympics.

You know, I think we could
include past olympians if we
wanted to.

I don't see why we wouldn't.

We just wanted, you know, to
hold a family friendly
event.

The conversations right now
are to start at the capital
with a brief ceremony
introduction, jog with them
to some location, and
there's logistical problems.

Auditorium shores is taken
up for an event.

Not sure if we can get an
agreement from ut.

But try to find a suitable
location where there is a
huge video screen or a
jumbotron where they can
show each one of their

events, and then kind of
have an autograph session
with them and picture
taking.

It's just a way to honor
them and, you know,
recognize them for their
efforts and hopefully we can
pull it off.

Paul caroza is helping
coordinate all of the
athletes since he seems to
know everybody in this town.

So he's helping with ut.

So this item again is one of
those enabling items that
says, you know, let's not
miss out on this if the city
can be a partner and help in

any way, let's try to help.

>> Tovo: great.

Thank you.

council

member riley?

yeah, I have not

previously notified staff,

but I do have some questions

about a couple

parking-related items on the

agenda.

First is item 20, which

is -- relates to the parking

agreement in place up around

the central library, and

this is something we've

talked about for years.

Flongs the policy at the --
for a long time the policy
at the library was that we
would tell the employees,
here's your 100 or 125ed for
your parking space --
dollars for your parking
space.

You're going to like it.

And even if an employee
didn't want to use the
parking space and would
rather have \$50 and take the
bus or ride a bike or walk,
we weren't giving them that
option, and there's been a
lot of interest around the
country in recent years in
parking cash-out programs
that do try to promote
alternative travel by --

instead of just providing --
automatically providing a
free parking space, instead
offering some amount, maybe
even a lesser amount, to an
employee if they were
willing to give up their
parking space and take some
other means to work.

And so since this is coming
back, seems like a timely
opportunity to check in on
that program, see how it's
working, consider whether we
need to make any possible
adjustments.

I think I'll be fine letting
this go on the agenda and
continuing to work on that
afterward based on -- if i
can get some assurance that,

in fact, the number of
spaces that we're renting
can be adjusted.

I believe it's the case that
since the backup says the
agreement may be canceled in
whole or in part by either
part at any time within 30
days -- with 30 days advance
written notice.

So I think it's the case
that if we're able to make
the program more effective,
reduce the number of spaces
that we need, that we can
cut back on the contract in
that case, and we won't be
incurring that expense.

But I'd like to get some
confirmation that that's the

case.

>> dina McBee, assistant
director, austin public
library.

Either party can cancel on
30 days notice.

We only pay per month for
the spaces we use that
month.

Some months it may be 100,
some 105.

It depends how many
employees take advantage of
the parking.

>> Riley: great.

I think this is something we

need to keep in mind because
if we can get this policy
right, then it's something
that can be useful in a
number of locations not just
the library.

This came up recently in
connection with the Jones
building in an area where
the city is using a lot of
office space, there's a
parking shortage there.

We would be able to market
those spaces, save money and
encourage alternate travel
so we just need to keep our
efforts on that parking
cash-out program to make
sure we get it right.

I'm fine with letting this

go on the agenda but I want to do make a note of that and recognize that there are significant policy issues at stake with respect to parking opportunities like this.

The other item that I'm interested in related to 22, which relates to a tract on rainy street, and this came up yesterday, again, during the budget discussions and I wanted to revisit it to make sure we're all clear exactly how this is going to work.

The -- as I understand the item on the agenda, this would authorize negotiation and execution of the sale

of -- of documents related
to the sale of a parcel of
lane on rainy street, at 64
rainey street, for
\$100,000 plus 30 privately
managed controlled access
public parking spaces, and
so I just wanted to get
clarification on -- on a few
items -- a few issues
related to that, such as
where those parking spaces
would be located and what
the actual cost is.

But let's first talk about
where the parking would be
located, if we could.

>> Council member, the
proposal --
your mic, and you
might want to introduce

yourself.

>> Elaine riser, real
estate.

Council member, the winning
respondent that we're
recommending to you today is
going to build a structure
parking garage that goes
across that lot and the lots
adjoining this property.

>> Riley: okay.

And so the city would have
access to 30 spaces --

>> there would be 30
reserved spaces for the
city.

We're still in negotiations

with the property owner to
determine the parking
agreement to decide whether
we're going to have it be a
card or a meter or a person.

We haven't determined that
yet.

But it will be reserved just
for the city, and it was
determined early on before
we went out for the proposal
that in five years the
programs for the mac and the
boat house required
additional parking, so
that's why on this tract
that's adjacent to the mac
we determined we needed
parking as part of the
compensation.

did I hear you say
we haven't decided on the
term?

>> The terms of the
management agreement with --
with the respondent, we're
still in negotiations.

and what period of
time are we talking about
for access to the parking?

>> Forever.

and have we looked
at the -- just so we'll know
the cost that we're talking
about, have we gotten an
appraisal on the -- on
the -- to tell us how much
the land would be worth if
we were to just sell it

without reserving any rights
related to parking?

>> Yes, council member.

We appraised it both ways.

We appraised it without any
encumbrances and it came out
to \$1.1 million.

And then we appraised it
with the city goals being 30
parking spaces that were in
a structured parking
facility, with management.

so even though the
only number we see on this
agenda item is \$100,000, the
cost we're talking about is
actually \$1 million?

Because if we were to just
sell it without reserving
parking, then we would be
expecting to receive
1.1 million?

>> That is correct.

this is a
\$1 million item?

>> That is correct, sir.

and this is a
structured parking garage on
rainey street?

>> Yes, sir, it's not just a
structured parking.

I have some photographs of
what they're going to build
on the property.

>> Riley: okay.

So just based on what I see
here, it looks like the
parking -- there would be no
parking adjacent to the
street at the ground level.

>> That's correct, there
will be the entryway on the
ground level and then it
will be underground.

>> Riley: okay.

And --

>> there's not a complete
design yet.

This is just a conceptual.

>> Riley: okay.

Have we -- given that there are long-term plans related to the mexican-american cultural center next to this, to provide structured parking on the site that's currently used for their surface parking lot, have we considered the possibility that at whatever time in the future that that -- that that gets built out, that that could provide an opportunity that would be even more convenient for users of the rowing center, that would actually be closer?

Have we considered the possibility that parking

might become available
whenever that garage is
built?

>> Parks and recreation, and
the answer is yes.

This is actually a phase 3
of development for the
mexican-american center
cultural center and part of
that is construction of a
garage that would be on the
property to the west of the
facility.

There hasn't been extensive
discussion about who would
use the garage, but the --
there is a phase of building
a garage there for phase 3
that is not funded at this
time.

>> Riley: okay.

But of course there is a surface parking lot there at the mac that exists today, and there has been some discussion about obtaining access to some spaces on that lot.

Now, the mac -- i understand, from the perspective of the advisory board for the mac, those surface parking spaces that exist today are really supposed to be for mac purposes, but they are open to the idea of making them available at some cost, and actually providing a revenue stream for the mac.

So have we done any kind of
a side-by-side comparison to
consider whether instead of
essentially spending a
million dollars on -- to do
structured parking along
rainey street, if -- and
with the million dollars
going to essentially that --
that value is essentially
going to the developer of
the building on rainey
street to do more structured
parking there, an
alternative -- it seems like
one alternative might be to
pay -- to have some fees to
be paid to the mac for the
use of parking spaces on
their surface parking lot,
and if it seems like, if
tho amounted to less

than a million dollars over
some period of time, that
might make more sense and be
more convenient to the users
of the rowing center.

>> I guess I'm a little
confused, but I know that --
what I can tell you is that
the board there is very --
is supportive of a mechanism
that would improve parking,
period, and we've looked at,
through our work but also in
partnership with
transportation and
particularly steve
grassfield and rob spiller,
is looking at what's the
answer here.

Council member martinez
mentioned about a gate.

We're actually looking at a gate to be put up only to be put at the ending and closing of the facility so that people don't come in and park overnight and stay and then we don't have parking spaces.

So there's one answer we're working on and actually going to do that work in-house.

The second is we're ready to go with the meters on the lot which would open up those spaces for public parking.

Users of the facility but also users of the boat

house.

But it would be for parking,
and that those who were
coming into the
mexican-american cultural
center would be able to not
have to pay for the parking.

We'd have a system in place
that we're going to work
out.

So the revenue then of
course would come from that
that would help hopefully
pay through a resolution
that you receive through the
mexican-american cultural
center board.

We did look at, when we
looked at this site, I was

heavily involved in working
with lorraine on what's the
best process here with this
site and that is what if the
city looked at -- keeping
the property and developing
a parking garage.

The problem is after
visiting with rob spiller
with transportation is that
the cost of building the
garage and operating and
maintaining it may outweigh
and cause them to put money
up front they didn't have,
number one, but number two,
if a developer would do it
and take those expenses,
continue to pay on the tax
roll, which would help the
economic vitality of the
city and carve out 30 spaces

for use by city programs,
boat house and the
cultural center, that we
created sort of a win-win
for everybody until we could
then in the next five years
request bond money for the
development of another
garage, how far size it need
to be -- however size it
need to be based on usage
from the rainy street
study, then again for the
use of the mexican-american
cultural center.

And correct me if I'm wrong
but I'm trying to
regurgitate all of our
meetings we had.

But that was sort of the
sequence of our discovery.

But we went through lengthy
discussions on the site and
the need for parking in
general, and the final piece
to this is this parking
study that has just been --
I've just been given on
rainey street that's very
comprehensive.

yes, that's been
completed for some time now.

The -- what you're
essentially describing
entails the city essentially
becoming a participant in
the development of a parking
garage on rainy street
which will presumably be
larger as a result than it
would be otherwise.

And I can see some value in terms of additional property on the tax rolls.

You can question whether having additional parking on rainy street -- you can question the value of having a larger parking garage on rainy street.

What's clear is at the same time that we are essentially investing and creating a larger parking garage on rainy street, we are letting the surface parking lot sit and we are -- and i have to point out that the hours of parking demand for the rowing center are quite likely very different from

the hours for peak demand of
parking in the rainy street
district, so that if -- if
one goal is to generate
revenue for the mac and
allow them to make the most
efficient use of their
surface parking spaces, it
might actually be in the
mac's interest to make more
use of those surface parking
lots during the day, during
times when you don't see a
great demand from the rainy
street area or events at the
mac and get a revenue stream
through that and provide
more convenient parking to
the users of the town lake
rowing center and then you
would just have the space on
rainey street would be
whatever size that the

market would dictate for
that project on rainy
street.

So anyway, I think this
is -- I appreciate what the
staff is trying to achieve
here.

We certainly want to make
the use of the rowing center
convenient for everyone, but
it seems like we might -- it
might make sense to give
some more consideration to
the possibility of working
cooperatively with the mac
to see if -- if their
parking -- their existing
surface parking could
provide a better alternative
than essentially investing
in the larger parking garage

on rainy street.

With that in mind can I just
ask, to what extent is this
a time-sensitive item?

Is this something that has
to be concluded this week or
would it be possible to take
some more time with this?

>> We could take some more
time.

>> Riley: okay.

Well, with that in mind,
mayor, I would suggest that
we -- that we pull this item
from this week's agenda and
give this more thought.

And also work with the mac

advisory board to see
whether there is some
arrangement with the mac
that might actually make
more sense than what's
proposed here.

and
we'll have to withdraw it
thursday.

>> Riley: right.

council
member toafy?

>> Tovo: thanks.

I have -- tovo?

I have some
questions too.

I appreciate your questions,
council member riley, and i
agree with a lot of the
thrust of the discussion.

I concur that, you know, it
needs some more thought.

Here's some of the questions
I had.

I guess I wondered, as i
understand the value of
having a private developer
develop the garage, and i
assume that's, you know, the
\$100,000 is not -- is not
such a boon to the coffers
of the city that it would
make sense to sell this.

It seems to me, as you
presented it, the value is

getting that parking.

But how soon is it going to
be constructed?

Are there any requirements
within the contracts you're
negotiating that would
require that parking to be
completed by a certain
amount of time?

>> Yes, it's to be completed
within three years.

how much total
parking are they
constructing in that
project?

>> I don't know that answer
right now.

>> Tovo: okay.

I can submit these to the q
and a so you've got them.

What other kinds of -- i
guess did you consider
the -- and do kind of a
complete cost benefit
analysis of what a different
kind of partnership would
look like?

And I guess my general
perspective is that this is
an area that is changing so
rapidly and we have a lot of
exciting things happening
there, right, as you
mentioned, the mac will be
expanding its programming
and will need more parking,
the rowing center will need

more parking.

We're a few blocks from palm
park, which I hope will need
lots more parking at some
point when that project
is -- when that park is
revitalized and we've got
lots of families going to
that area who will -- you
know, may drive instead of
taking other forms of
transportation if they've
got young children in the
car.

But it's the whole waller
creek project.

Seems to me this is a
well-situated piece of
property and I know that
you've given it serious

consideration, but to what extent did those other factors play into the decision of recommending that we sell the property?

>> The main driver to sell the property was the need for the parking and the parks and the macs board not having the money to build the structured parking.

And so in meeting we tried to come up with a way that we could try to meet that need without having to come up with any revenue.

and what was the purpose of the -- why was this tract of land purchased and I guess when was it

purchased?

>> This land was actually part of a trade with another piece of property when they vacated a street.

I can't remember the name of the development, but it was a development on rainy street, and it happened probably 10, 15 years ago.

and what was the initial vision for the tract?

>> There was no vision originally because it has a big wastewater line running through the middle of it, and so it was just going to be open space.

but was part of the
thought it was nearby the
mac and could supplement the
programming going on there
in some way, either through
parking or through --

>> and I will say, you know,
from the beginning we looked
at that site in the
possibility of acquisition.

It's owned by actually
public works department i
think is the city owner of
it.

But the fact that the
wastewater line ran right
through the middle of it and
we did not victim funds to
develop a -- have the funds

to develop a garage.

We would only be able to get
a small amount on surface
area there.

This is a more viable option
for us from a financial
standpoint, knowing that we,
as council member riley
pointed out and is very
accurate, is knowing that we
have parking available at
the mexican-american
cultural center, but we need
to be able to try to control
it in some manner.

There's different needs and
times.

That's why the
recommendation came forward

with the meters and how that
would solve a lot of our
issues and help generate
revenue.

So it's something I'm 150%
in support and hope it moves
forward fairly quickly.

This was just an option
where we just didn't have
the money to buy it and
develop it, but at least i
could get 30 spaces out that
we desperately needed also
as overflow and also I was
trying to honor the efforts
that we were directed by
council to do in finding
more parking for our friends
at the boat house.

>> Tovo: I see.

Do you have -- have you
given any thought to how the
value -- what the value of
this property might look
like ten years from now when
we've got more of waller
creek completed and again
perhaps palm park will be
under way or the
revitalization of palm park?

>> We did not look at that.

Again, there's a big
wastewater line running
through this, and in order
for this recipient to even
use that property for
anything but a surface
parking lot, it is not
allowed by the zoning out
there.

You have to relocate the
wastewater line, and that's
a big expense.

I think it was about half a
million to \$750,000 to move
that line.

So that really keeps any
kind of construction from
being built over it.

And so if the city did
anything on that lot we
would have to have that
expense to move that line as
well.

and I assume to
achieve this, that is what
they're planning to do, to
relocate the wastewater

line?

>> Yes.

is it any cheaper
for the city to relocate a
wastewater line than it
would be for a private
developer?

Is that 500,000 the private
developer's cost or is that
the city's cost?

>> Yes, that -- that's the
number that I got from
austin water utility.

and so would that
be the city's cost?

>> Right.

>> That was my understanding, we would have to encumber that cost.

We would have to make sure we paid that cost.

>> Tovo: I see.

Did I understand from the questions that council member riley was asking that the spots that are designated, the 30 spots that are designated, are not on the ground level, they're higher in the garage?

>> We haven't negotiated where these will be located yet.

In meeting with the

developer, he would be open
to anywhere in the garage
that we would want the
spaces.

We just would want them
contiguous.

>> Tovo: right.

So I see a comment in the
backup that this would not
be -- this was deemed not
appropriate for smart
housing, and I wondered if
you could provide some more
information about that, that
the tract was offered to the
austin housing finance
corporation to see if it was
a viable option, and it was
determined that the parcel
was not a viable option in

ahsc passed on the right of
first acceptance and i
wondered if you had any
information about why that
was the case.

[Inaudible] argument that
this is, you know, centrally
located and we might
certainly want to see
housing there and i
understand there's housing
contemplated, at least i
assume that's what --

>> yes.

levels [inaudible]
residential.

>> Yes, and that's over four
lots, side by side.

These are small lots and i
think that in talking to
austin housing finance
corporation, that the lot
was too small and the cost
to develop it with moving
the wastewater line really
took the affordability
component out of the
property.

okay, so the size
of the lot and the
wastewater line?

>> Yes.

>> Tovo: okay.

Thank you.

council
member riley.

just a couple more
points.

First, I want to be clear, i
fully support the city
selling this property.

This property has been a
matter of private sector
interest for years now, and
I wholeheartedly support the
interest in getting this on
the tax rolls.

I have one question about
it.

Since this is public land
that would be coming to the
tax rolls would it be
subject to the rule that 40%
of the tax value from this

would go in towards the
housing trust fund?

I guess I'm seeing people
nodding heads so I assume
that would be the case.

The one thing that kind of
confuses the picture in this
case is that it is also
within the -- within the
waller creek pid -- or tif
area.

just
for info, we're going to
have to adjourn here in
about two minutes or lose
quorum.

>> Riley: okay.

We can sort through exactly

how the tif would interact
with the 40% rule, but the
question -- so I fully
support bringing it on to
the market.

What I'm questioning is
whether it makes sense for
the city to essentially
forgo \$1 million in revenue
in order to invest in
additional parking in this
site as opposed to making
use of surface parking that
already exists on the mac
lot, that the mac actually
wants to market and generate
revenue from.

>> Morrison: mayor?

Can I make 60 seconds worth
of comments?

>> Go ahead.

I'll make them
quickly.

Number one, I really
appreciate your questions,
chris, and we had -- me and
my staff -- my staff and i
had gone through trying to
figure out a lot of what was
going on and that's sort of
a general comment.

It would have been helpful
to have a whole lot more
information about what this
is all about and I don't
know if my questions have
reached you yet, but you can
see I submitted questions
struggling to figure out

what the heck is going on
here, and I think that it
might have saved us some
time.

Number two, as you talk
about these things, one
thing that jumped out at me
and that is that if we're
planning to do a phase 3
parking at the mac and we're
looking at forever parking
here, I guess I don't know
why we would need forever
parking at this place
because we're going to be
having parking later and
clearly this is costing a
million dollars for the city
so if we could scale back
what we're asking from them,
if this, in fact, goes
forward, that might save us

some money.

And then my last question
for you and you can answer
later, is you mentioned that
they have to provide the
parking within three years
and my question would be,
what happens if they don't?

Do we get the land back?

And you can just answer that
later.

And lastly, a comment, we've
talked a lot about, you
know, trying to get good big
picture visionary real
estate assessments strategy
in place and this seems to
be part of that --

>> actually this is.

We put together a project
team that focused
specifically on this area.

I think -- sara, I think
you're on there.

I think sue edwards is the
executive sponsor for it and
I don't know that they are
quite at a point, they may
be now, to come and kind of
lay that out for the council
that would take into account
many of these factors, and
the reason we did that is
because we seem to be
dealing with these issues on
sort of a singular basis and
we wanted a comprehensive
approach.

So delaying this gives us
time to check on that and to
come back and try to address
this in a more holistic
context.

right, because
as the discussion has shown,
there really are a lot of
issues in this area to work
through.

I'll
just throw in the mix there
as the last word, whatever
discussions you have,
whatever recommendations
you're going to make, i
think solving the parking
problem at the mac and the
rowing club in the near term
is a very high priority for

me.

Without objection we stand
adjourned.