

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

July 19, 1972

THE ELECTRIC BUILDING AUDITORIUM
301 West Avenue

Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 7:00 P. M., announcing that this was a Public Hearing for consideration of the Capital Improvements Program.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmen Dryden, Nichols, Mayor Pro Tem Love, Councilmen Lebermann, Friedman, Handcox, Mayor Butler

Absent: None

Mr. Donald P. Harris was recognized by the Mayor as the first speaker. He addressed his comments primarily to the issue of the Nuclear Power Plant, stating that he thought the proposal for participation in the project a rather short-sighted answer to the geometric increase in energy consumption. He requested that the Council reject the proposed Nuclear Power program and redirect the City Planners to initiate positive programs that would guarantee the reversal and progressive reduction of per capita energy consumption.

At this point, Mayor Butler noted that the proposal for participation in the Nuclear Power Plant Project was simply a method of responding to the increasing demand for electric power, and that the plant would be built regardless of whether or not Austin voted to participate in it.

Mr. John Davis was the next speaker, criticizing the City Council for their expenditure of public monies. He accused the Council of adding greatly to the burden of the taxpayer through adoption of the C.I.P. Mayor Butler pointed out that C.I.P. bonds are not funded by taxpayer or tax revenue money, but are paid for, retired, and maintained from the revenue produced by the services produced by the C.I.P.

Mrs. Robert Bryce, President of the League of Women Voter's of Austin, spoke in support of the Library Development Plan and urged its support by the Council.

Mr. Larry T. Hill then took the podium to accuse the Council of discrimination against the Black neighborhoods of the City's East Side. As evidenced by the C.I.P. proposal to install the new sewage plant on that side of town.

Mr. Dean Rindy spoke to the Council about C.I.P. project no. 7360-15, a street and bridge project in the University area, and a complimentary project for an overpass across Lamar Boulevard. He criticized the proposal to route large numbers of vehicles through primarily residential areas, and proposed that, rather than base urban transportation policy upon the rapid movement of maximum numbers of vehicles, these funds be used to develop workable mass transit systems.

Mrs. Ursula Brown addressed the Council to request the installation of a public park in the Springdale Hills area. She also requested that something be done about the smog, and requested information about the procedure for making appointments to the Park Board.

Mr. James B. Nuse, representing the South Austin Civic Club, stated that the members of South Austin are pleased with the Capital Improvements plan, and congratulated the Council on their foresight in extending the utilities and facilities.

Mr. Cleve Moten, Chairman of the Concerned Citizens for East Austin, called for the deletion of the sewage plant in East Austin from the C.I.P. He claimed that the project was economically unsound, that it was being pushed because it provided for the immediate development of the Bull Creek area, and that the Council had ignored other, more feasible alternatives presented to it by his group.

The next speaker, Mr. Rick Ream, echoed Mr. Rindy's sentiments against the enlargement of 25th Street.

Mr. R. L. Duke, Sr., spoke in opposition to the location of the proposed sewage plant, asking for it to be moved three to five miles further down. He also supported Mrs. Brown's request for another park in the area.

Speaking in opposition to the Nuclear Power Plant, Mr. John Lummis alluded to several studies, all of which were used to support his contention that nuclear power plants are unsafe.

Mr. Forest Higgs addressed his comments to the issue of the Nuclear Power Plant, stating that the information provided the Council regarding the project was shallow and inept. He suggested that the Council commission a serious study by disinterested parties to discover exactly what is needed by this area in the way of an energy delivery system.

Mrs. John Hicks addressed the Council as to the safety factors of the Nuclear Power Plant, suggesting that the Council wait until the technology to make reactors safe becomes available.

Mrs. Lemay Higgs also spoke in opposition to the Nuclear Power Plant, citing several studies in support of her contention that nuclear radiation levels from such plants were dangerously high. She stated that she was in opposition to the construction of any nuclear power plants anywhere, and hoped that Austin would lead in objection to the construction of these proposed nuclear plants.

Mrs. Huntley voice her opposition to the Nuclear Power Plant, stating that nuclear waste disposal was a particular problem, and also that radiation levels from these plants constituted a hazard to human life.

Mary Louise Hill outlined for the Council several alternatives to nuclear power as an energy source, to wit: solar power, fuel cells, using garbage to fuel generator furnaces, and other methods.

Mrs. Edith Buss, speaking on behalf of Travis County Democratic Women's Committee, requested that the jail expansion item be removed at least temporarily from the C.I.P. until the matter could be thoroughly studied by a Council appointed committee to determine whether alternative programs might make the need for such expansion unnecessary. She proposed that jail populations be reduced through the institution of the following techniques:

1. expansion of the personal bond program
2. use of the summons to appear procedure as opposed to the arrest in certain cases
3. providing emergency treatment facilities at Brackenridge Hospital for cases displaying psychotic behavior and drug-induced psychosis
4. the possibility of setting up a holding and/or a rehabilitation facility for persons repeatedly incarcerated for alcoholism
5. improving coordination between the City jail and the County jail
6. fitting the City jail into the future regional jail facility.

Mr. G. Barry Kitto exhorted the Council to make full public disclosure of all information pertaining to the nuclear power plant, to invite increased public participation in the decision making process, and to take a very critical look at all factors of the project.

Mr. J. B. Flink questioned the \$25,000 allocated for Parks development in Northeast Austin. He was assured that other developments were being prepared by the Parks and Recreation Department for that area.

Mr. Phillip Prim observed that the public was not made aware of the proposal for participation in the nuclear power plant project until the project had been on the drawing board for some time, that the environmental impact study for the project would not begin until after land had been purchased for the project, and that the actual cost of the project was not certain.

Mr. David Block voiced his opposition to the philosophy of continued growth as embodied in the proposal for a Crosstown Sewage Tunnel and for a Nuclear Power Plant. He suggested that instead alternative methods of sewage treatment and methods of controlling power usage be considered.

Mr. Allen Locklier spoke in opposition to the inclusion of the nuclear power plant in the same bond election package with items such as parks and libraries. He was informed by the City Attorney, that although this was a single bond election each of the items could be voted on separately.

Ms. Judy Smith criticized the City's presentation of the Nuclear Power Plant issue, pointing out that while the City was requesting funds to build increased electrical generation capacity on the one hand, on the other hand the electric department was advertising the increased use of electricity.

Mr. Joseph Thiel had left a note with Mayor Butler, which stated support of the nuclear power plant and the library system expansion.

The note was co-signed by Mrs. Joseph Showmer.

Mr. Billy R. Rogers, President of the Austin Golf Association, expressed disappointment that there was no money in the C.I.P. for replacement of the Municipal Golf Course. He requested that the City re-evaluate the situation and put money in the C.I.P. for an additional golf course.

Mr. Anthony E. Robbino spoke in opposition to both the East Austin sewage plant and to the Nuclear Power Plant.

Mr. Tommy Wyatt outlined for the Council the requirements of East Austin as related to the C.I.P. He requested that the unpaved streets be paved, that street lights be installed, that more sidewalks be installed, and that East Austin be given more park land.

Mr. Rogan Giles asked the Council if a decision had been made to submit the convention center complex proposal to the public at the same time that the C.I.P. would be submitted. Mayor Butler informed him that it would be presented. Mr. Giles then asked for some information pertaining to the financing of the C.I.P. and the complex. He was informed that the C.I.P. could be carried out without a general tax increase, but that the figures for the financing of the convention center complex were not yet finalized.

Mr. Herbert Ecker, student at Trinity University in San Antonio, presented the Council with information pertaining to the possible dangers inherent in handling and storing the waste products of nuclear power plants.

On Councilman Love's motion and Councilman Dryden's second, the Council adjourned at 11:30 P. M.

APPROVED:

Ray Butler
Mayor

ATTEST:

Grace Monroe
City Clerk