

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

August 27, 1974
4:00 P.M.Electric Auditorium
301 West Avenue

The meeting was called to order with Mayor Butler presiding.

Roll Call:

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

Absent: None

Mayor Butler announced that this was a Special Called Meeting of the City Council for the purpose of a Work Session with staff and department heads for study of the proposed 1974-75 Operating Budget. City Manager Dan Davidson stated that when the proposed budget was forwarded to the Council on August 8, he had suggested that it could serve as a framework for the development of City Council policy. As an effort of assistance, he noted that a list of new and expanded programs were before the Council which were recommended for consideration in the proposed budget. In addition, he noted that there were some continuing programs which the Council might like to review. He stated that the total amount budgeted for the programs on these two lists would total \$4,799,000. He mentioned that some of the programs listed reflected previously established City Council policy, and some were new and were being presented to the Council for the first time. He noted that all were subject to deletion or adjustment by the Council.

Councilman Lebermann pointed out that this list was a policy review and in no way represented cuts in the budget. Mayor Pro Tem Love felt that the key word should be "austerity" and that the City should maintain the status quo as opposed to expansion. He suggested that the City might not be able to act as quickly in some cases, but the job would be done. In reference to this, Mr. Davidson mentioned the number of additional inspectors who would be needed to help carry out the extensive Capital Improvements Program. He felt the City could get by without this many inspectors if the Council did not mind the City's delaying some of the programs under the C. I. P.

Mayor Butler felt it appropriate to mention that this budget contained two major items which most cities did not have: hospital and utility system, with the utility fund amounting to \$102.9 million of the \$163.4 million overall, and leaving \$52 million for the general fund.

City Manager Davidson reviewed the program analysis before the Council:

GENERAL REVENUE SHARING FUNDS

Creek and Greenbelt Acquisition and Development \$1,000,000

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question as to whether or not the \$1 million would be available to pay other necessary costs of the City, Mr. Davidson stated that there were certain projects the money could be utilized for if Council chose not to act in this fashion, but the exceptions would be those programs subsidized by other federal funds. Councilman Lebermann pointed out that general revenue sharing dollars were not used for general budget or on-going items. Mr. Davidson added that this Council had maintained the policy of utilizing revenue sharing funds predominantly for one-time capital type cost items which would tend to provide some economies in the future or reduce maintenance costs for Austin, as opposed to using them for on-going operating expenses which would tend to increase over the years. In connection with this, Mayor Butler suggested that there was nothing to prevent the Council from diverting from that policy on a one-time crash program. Mayor Pro Tem Love felt that the City was on a crash program and wanted to see the \$1 million transferred away from the purpose designated.

Councilman Lebermann noted that he was reluctant to see the entire project abandoned in that it was under the Bicentennial "umbrella" and added that the primary importance was that it was part of the total Parks and Recreation network. Councilman Lebermann felt that this figure could be scaled down if the Council felt this was an inappropriate amount.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Expanded Capital Improvements Program Ability \$ 55,000

Four additional personnel would be included in this budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Creek Ordinance Enforcement \$ 6,000

In response to Council's questions, Mr. Stuart Henry, Environmental Resource Management Director, indicated that this would provide for one intern.

PERSONNEL

Tuition Reimbursement Program \$ 10,000

Designed to encourage employees to continue their job-related higher education by reimbursing their tuition and certain related expenses.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Ms. Andrea Beatty, Personnel Director, noted that this was a new program at a maximum cost of \$20 per semester hour with a minimum of 160 employees. She further noted that this was something that could be postponed if needed.

Equal Employment Opportunity Representatives \$ 23,000

Two proposed employees in the Personnel Department would provide necessary training. Ms. Beatty noted that this would be funded out of a Federal grant and would not cost the City anything except in-kind services. In response to Council's questions, Mr. Homer Reed, Deputy City Manager, stated that the reason these would be included was that the programs funded with Federal funds tended after one or two years to become fixed items in the budget, but the effect on this year's budget would be negligible.

Management Training Program \$ 10,500

Designed to improve the performance of existing personnel and to qualify them for promotional opportunities. Ms. Beatty indicated that there were no Federal funds for this and thought that perhaps this would be the first place the Council might want to look to cut.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Zoning \$ 17,500

Would require addition of a Planner and a Secretary. Councilman Lebermann felt that the City needed to tighten its belt in every way, but he found it provocative to approve a program 7 to 0 and then cut the funding.

Topographic Mapping \$ 13,000

Has been proposed aid in the development of the Lake Austin Plan. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's questions, Mr. Dick Lillie, Planning Department Director, indicated that they had been waiting for this program since the beginning of the summer; and he felt it needed to be undertaken in that it was the City's primary water supply. He stated there was a great deal of need with respect to public access to the Lake. In response to Councilman Binder's statement, Mr. Lillie indicated that there was no topography covered on the west end, but there was on other portions.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Service and Information \$ 15,000

Two additional information clerks proposed to provide a reception information and referral service at the entry to Municipal annex. Also, provision for two additional personnel to meet expanding telephone communication needs.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Expanded Capital Improvements Program \$ 31,000

Two additional personnel proposed in order to keep pace with the accelerated schedule of capital improvements contained in C.I.P. In response to Councilman Lebermann's question, Mr. Morahan, Property Management Director, stated that in relation to the C.I.P., there were probably 6 to 8 houses and a total of 15 to 20 properties.

Renovation of Historical City-owned Residences \$ 35,000

Proposed to provide minimum repairs necessary to preserve and prevent further deterioration to the Caswell House at West Avenue, and the Batts Mansion at Enfield and Windsor Road. Mr. Joe Morahan, Property Management Director, stated that the Batts Mansion was rented out for storage and had been acquired for the cross-town expressway. Until a determination is made on that, he noted that they had postponed any action.

In response to Councilman Lebermann's question, Mr. Morahan did not believe some of the houses were historically significant. In response to Mayor Butler's question as to whether or not the Historic Landmark Commission had made recommendations, Mr. Morahan stated that they had recommended "H" Historic on the Caswell House and did not believe they had taken action on the Batts Mansion. The City Manager pointed out that they had made recommendations on the renovation and restoration.

Councilman Handcox wondered what the purpose of renovation was if these were not historically significant, and Mayor Butler wanted to know why the City did not sell if there was not going to be an expressway put in. It was Mr. Morahan's understanding that this would be considered in the review of the Transportation Plan and that it might be another year before any recommendations could be made.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Force Expansion \$ 110,000

Five additional officers proposed and five civilian personnel budgeted to enable officers to be reassigned to law enforcement duties. In addition, 11 civilian personnel proposed to meet the expanded work load.

Police Chief Bob Miles indicated that four civilians would replace four sergeants on the jail information desk, thereby placing the sergeants on the street to help supervise. It was pointed out that there were two civilians operating the breathalyzer.

Councilman Lebermann noted that they were not engaging any additional officers for clerical type work.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Manning for Aerial Ladder Truck \$ 175,000

Standards established by the American Insurance Association and the State Insurance Board indicated that cities the size of Austin needed at least one ladder truck in addition to the six already in service. The proposed budget would provide 12 men to man additional ladder truck.

In response to Mayor Butler's question, the City Manager stated that the City could possibly get by another year without this. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Fire Chief Ed Kirkham indicated that the truck would cost about \$92,000, and the salaries for 12 people would amount to about \$150,000.

Mr. Joe Liro, Management and Budget Administrator, explained that in the budget there were provisions for a truck and personnel needed for manning the truck with the salaries being prorated and the truck's cost for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Enforcement of Blasting Regulations \$ 14,000

An additional fire specialist proposed as a Fire Prevention Inspector to provide more rigid inspection and supervision of blasting operations. In response to Councilman Binder's questions, Chief Kirkham noted that the permit fees were not enough to cover the adjustments and added that this was a policy matter. Mr. Davidson indicated that he would be pleased to prepare recommendations for an appropriate fee on this.

In response to Councilman Binder's further questions, Chief Kirkham estimated that there were usually from 15 to 25 permits issued per month and that this requested person would be supervising on the job.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION

Creation of Traffic Safety Office \$ 5,000

With the assistance of a Federal grant, two additional personnel would be proposed. Three existing personnel would be reassigned to this office. In response to Councilman Binder's questions, Mr. Ternus noted that this office would be responsible for school safety programs, cadets, detour inspector, safe-driving programs within City Departments, and any community programs which Citizens Traffic Commission would be interested in. Councilman Binder requested that Mr. Ternus provide this information in memo form.

Expanded Traffic Marking Program \$ 49,500

An additional traffic marker machine and a three-man crew proposed.

Increased Public Transit Services \$ 255,000

Reduced Fare Program \$85,000

Expansion of Service (18 new buses) \$65,000

Sunday Service \$50,000

Hospital Service \$35,000

Park and Ride \$20,000

Expansion of School Crossing Program \$ 8,000

Six part-time crossing guards proposed for new school locations.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Pitch-In Coordinator \$ 12,000

This would be a City-wide year around program. Mayor Pro Tem Love noted that he would like to see this withdrawn and go back to the plan as of last year utilizing the free enterprise efforts of the companies in town. Mr. Davidson stated that he would be pleased to cooperate with such a joint effort again if that was the desire of the Council.

Sidewalk Repair \$ 65,500

Five additional personnel and related equipment proposed. In response to Councilman Lebermann's question, Mr. Reuben Rountree, Public Works Director, stated that this was mostly to repair damaged sidewalks due to service work and then repairs would be charged back to the respective utility. He added that the proposal would enable them to keep more up to date because of their back log.

Improved Street Cleaning \$ 110,000

Four additional street sweeping machines and three operators to provide a 40% increase in street cleaning capabilities. Mr. Rountree noted that there were some streets that had not been swept in 3 or 4 months; and of the 8 machines on hand, about half of them were down for repair. He stated that the additional machines would enable them to make an effort to give better service. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Mr. Rountree indicated there were not as many complaints from citizens in regard to dirty streets as there were for holes or rough streets.

Better Storm Sewer Cleaning \$ 36,000

For the purchase of a mechanized storm sewer cleaning machine and a skilled operator.

Better Street Maintenance \$ 150,000

15 additional personnel recommended for addition to the Street and Bridge Division's street maintenance, construction, and asphalt resurfacing crews. Mr. Rountree felt that holes in the street impeded the Police and Fire Departments and caused more wear and tear on equipment.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Creek Ordinance Enforcement \$ 40,000

Addition of three personnel without extended delays.

Flood Plain Management \$ 67,000

Employment of watershed manager and installation of storm water data collecting stations.

Capital Improvements Program Implementation \$ 100,000

Six construction inspectors and a survey crew.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Dental Clinic \$ 28,000

Prenatal Care Clinics \$ 33,000

Provision for three weekly clinics.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Forestry Crew \$ 32,000

2 personnel plus equipment. In response to Mayor Butler's question, Mr. Jack Robinson, Parks and Recreation Director, noted this was an extension of the service being done now and would include trimming the streets rights of way where buses drive. He further noted that if this were done on a contract basis, it would cost approximately \$100,000 a year to have trees trimmed 14 feet above street level, which was the requirement. He added that trees were trimmed upon notification by the bus companies.

Expanded Maintenance Capability \$ 85,000

Proposal for sewer personnel to be added to work crews to enable the Department to continue its present level of grounds and facilities maintenance.

Operation of New Facilities \$ 32,000

Within the next year, the Department expects to open Lanier Pool, a new tennis center and two new playgrounds. City Manager noted that delaying the operation of these facilities would save this amount.

Bicentennial Programming \$ 10,500

Would include theater productions, ethnic festivals and a special celebration.

OFFICE OF BICENTENNIAL AFFAIRS

Bicentennial Information Program \$ 9,000

To inform the public of the goals and activities of the Bicentennial Celebration through publication of a Bicentennial newsletter and other information items.

Decorations for Bicentennial Festival Events \$ 8,500

Would provide flags, pennants, banners and bunting for use at Bicentennial events sponsored by the City and private organizations. Councilman Lebermann noted that meetings were being held with citizen leadership to develop new non-public sources of funding but added that some supportive dollars were needed from this budget.

LIBRARIES

Increase in Book Budget \$ 76,000

BRACKENRIDGE HOSPITAL

Expanding Emergency Room \$ 100,000

Would require refusal of treatment to non-emergency patients. There was discussion with regard to out-patient clinics.

Expansion of Ancillary Services \$ 148,000

Would include utilization of laboratory, radiology, respiratory therapy, and physical therapy services, thereby producing a need to employ at least 15 new personnel during the coming year. In response to Councilman Friedman's questions, Mr. Will Brown, Hospital Administrator, stated that there were no funds allocated in the budget to purchase the proper equipment to perform abortions, and added that a machine was on loan from a physician who was quite satisfied with the arrangement. In response to Councilman Friedman's further question, Mr. Brown indicated an additional \$1,500 to \$1,800 would be needed. Councilmen Friedman and Binder requested that Mr. Brown furnish the Council with an idea as to how much this additional cost would be.

Social Service Programs \$ 40,000

4 additional personnel proposed to provide for improved discharge planning and to provide services to the increased number of applicants for charity care resulting from reduction in residency requirements.

Medical Records \$ 30,500

4 additional personnel in order to keep pace with record expansion and to continue the program of converting medical records from a manual system to a microfilm system.

Housekeeping Standards \$ 14,000

2 new janitors to maintain standards during construction program.

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

Expansion of Transmission and Distribution Crews \$ 150,000

12 new employee positions needed in order to provide for routine expansion and adequate maintenance of the system.

Energy Study Committee \$ 10,000

In response to Councilman Binder's question concerning whether or not the Committee was still meeting, Councilman Friedman noted that the Council had submitted a report to them concerning the study of alternate sources of energy, such as solar. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Mr. R. J. Hancock indicated that the funds requested had to do with the fact that the Committee had produced reports, made field surveys, inspected a couple of power plants, and had produced several publications.

Energy Conservation Commission and Related Electric Department Programs \$ 32,000

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question with regard to the funds requested, Mr. Hancock noted that the Commission had done a great deal of paperwork, a lot of literature research, and published a number of publications. He added that they had an Energy Efficiency Study underway, a modeling study with respect to correct sizing of heating and cooling equipment in Austin. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Mr. Hancock indicated that the administrative help for these two committees was through Budget and Research. City Manager Davidson suggested that the staff would furnish the Council with a list of specific items that had been anticipated by the two groups.

WATER AND WASTEWATER

Industrial Waste Ordinance Enforcement \$ 36,000

2 personnel and necessary equipment.

Maintenance of Fire Hydrants and Valves \$ 55,000

2 crews to initiate a program to provide maintenance for fire hydrants and valves as recommended by a municipal fire survey conducted in Austin by the American Insurance Association.

Sewer System Preventive Maintenance \$ 138,000

City Manager Davidson stated that the total for the new and expanded programs would be \$3,501,500.

Mr. Davidson also reviewed a list of some continuing programs in the proposed 1974-75 budget:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS \$ 585,000

Modifying this program from 2 per year to a slower pace would make it possible for General Revenue Sharing funds to be reallocated for other purposes. District 1 budgeted at \$300,000 and District 2 at \$285,000

PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

Employee Magazine \$ 20,000

This publication believed to be effective in building morale among City employees. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question, Mr. Glenn Cootes, Public Information Department Director, stated that the \$20,000 did not include postage. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Love's question as to whether or not this was needed, Mr. Davidson noted that in the case of government training programs, employee magazines, equal opportunity programs, etc., these were a range of employee's service and opportunity that have not been provided until about two years ago and that these could be done without.

Mayor Pro Tem Love also mentioned documents from the printing department that Council receives as supplementary information. He suggested that one copy be kept in the Manager's office as opposed to a mass mail out or handout.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Increased Public Hearing Notifications \$ 8,500

There was discussion with regard to this being handled by increasing the fees.

ENGINEERING

Commercial Driveway Planning \$ 72,000

This could be replaced with a rigid ordinance requirement that private consulting engineers be employed and that they follow City specifications in designing driveways.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Community Relations Program \$ 205,000

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Elimination of Fire Station \$ 175,000

Fire station location plan shows the fire station at 43rd and Speedway to be duplicated by other stations. It could be closed with the saving indicated. Fire Chief Ed Kirkham noted that a study was underway with the Planning Department to determine the most suitable locations for stations. In response to Councilman Friedman's question, Mr. Lillie stated that the report should be completed within a few months in that most of the technical work had been completed through the Fire Department, and Planning was now drafting maps, etc. The City Manager noted that this was still subject to some study, and the staff would submit additional information from the three offices working in this.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Aquatic Weed Control \$ 40,000

This program is still in its experimental stages. It should be evaluated periodically.

Creek Maintenance \$ 61,000

On an annual basis Parks crews cut weeds and underbrush in the City's principal creeks and waterways. City ordinances probably can make clearing of such channels the responsibility of adjacent property owners.

Tennis Instruction Program \$ 13,000

This proposed activity would provide seasonal tennis instructors at selected neighborhood courts.

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

Contract with Chamber of Commerce \$ 25,000

In response to Councilman Binder's question, Mr. Hancock stated that this was a contract for an Economic Development Program whereby the Chamber of Commerce provides services to the incoming potential developers relating to various utility arrangements that have to be made with Austin for water and sewer and some public works and some electrical. In response to Councilman Binder's further question with regard to whether or not the City needed an annual breakdown of the cost, Mr. Hancock thought the contract provided for this.

In response to Councilman Binder's comment that he had been unable to find this information, Mr. Davidson stated that it was on file with the City Clerk's office and added that he would try to locate this information for him.

Councilman Friedman questioned the City's ability to handle this. Mr. Hancock indicated that the Chamber had an individual who was in contact with the various City departments that might have some information in respect to what would be needed. Mayor Pro Tem Love noted that some cities had a department to handle this. Councilman Friedman suggested that the City do this and put out a brochure of its own. Mr. Hancock felt that the City could do this but noted that the Chamber looked at specific needs and requirements and then put the developer in contact with the people.

In response to Councilman Friedman's question concerning the cost, Mr. Hancock indicated that this had been determined between the Chamber and the Council and implemented through a contract arrangement, which had been made in 1965.

LIBRARIES

Reduction of Hours \$ 83,000

Reduction of services by one day per week at the four least utilized branches could save \$30,000. Extending this reduction to all branches would increase savings to \$83,000. Mayor Butler requested that Mr. David Holt, Library Director, furnish the Council with a breakdown in connection with circulation records on a day-to-day basis.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Sign Program \$ 10,000

This continuing program will complete Austin's transition to the new international type of traffic control signs.

City Manager Davidson noted that the total for Continuing Programs was \$1,297,500.

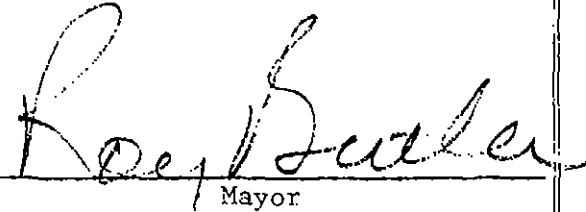
Mayor Pro Tem Love requested that the Council be furnished information with regard to the amount of money the City contributes to the Aqua-Festival and also the amount of money in connection with in-kind services.

After discussion, it was determined that the Council would conduct another Work Session on Tuesday, September 3, at 3:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk