

WORK SESSION MINUTES—JANUARY 3RD, 2008

Minutes of the Huntsville Town Council Work Session, held at the Huntsville Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. January 3rd, 2008.

Present: Mayor James C. McKay
Council Member Chris Stevenson
Council Member Ron Gault
Council Member Richard Sorensen
Council Member Jim Truett
Legal Council Jerald Engstrom
Clerk/Recorder Gail Ahlstrom

Citizens: Deputy Chatelain Drew Wilson Bob Wood
Laurie Allen Linda Carver Richard Creamer
John Posnien Bruce Ahlstrom Angel Truett
Brett Allen Tommy Lee Mack DeVries
Steve Johnson

Mayor McKay called the Work Session to order. The main purpose of the work session was to review the remaining draft ordinances as was appropriately posted. However, an item of information has come up. There are three members from the Weber County School District visiting tonight's meeting. CM Truett commented that he had the opportunity to attend the W.C. board meeting last night. CM Truett asked Linda Carver, Bob Wood, and Drew Wilson to come share their information and findings in regards to Valley Elementary School, with the Town Council tonight. The time was turned over to Drew Wilson.

Update on Valley Elementary School Remodel: (See Attachments #1)

Drew Wilson commented that when they started this process three years ago, the plan was to remodel Valley Elementary School. They were going to tear down the older part and leave the newer section of the school. This would produce ½ old building and ½ new building, keeping the school on the current site. The W.C. School District originally budgeted 4 million dollars for this project. Since that time construction prices have escalated considerably, making it a 10.5 million dollar project. Drew showed a drawing of the proposed remodel project. He stated that the school sits on 3.2 acres. Mr. Wilson stated that they have been working with architects and wanted to accomplish a number of items. They wanted to increase the parking around the school. Their biggest challenge was trying to get the number of classrooms needed into one structure. Right now the school has three portable classrooms and an art barn. In order to do that, and keep the north playground, they proposed a two story structure. Doing this created ADA problems, because now you needed an elevator. This increased to cost of the remodel as well.

They originally thought they would be able to keep the school all one level, but while trying to fit all the classrooms in and the extra parking, it forced them to build a second story.

Mr. Wilson remarked that in the newer part of the school, it is electrical heat. They were hoping to change this over to a boiler system. All the coils for the boiler system are down in the tunnels. Air would be forced through the tunnels while being warmed by the coils and then circulated through the classrooms. They will need to bring in a whole new electric service to this section of the school, adding additional cost. Mr. Wilson stated that the water pressure on the fire hydrants is very low. There are only 5 inch lines for the fire system in the school, this would require them to have to tear down all of the ceiling and install a sprinkling system in the school. There are also problems with the septic system, the state requires a back up septic system. Right now there is only one. Mr. Wilson said there isn't space for a back up field. Mr. Wilson stated that an elevator costs about \$75,000, and also takes up needed square footage. It costs \$175 dollars a square foot to build a school. Their goal is to put as much money as they can into the classrooms instead of into the infrastructure. If they proceed as first projected they will end up with ½ a new building and ½ a 30 year old building.

They still need to figure out where the students all the logistics of what to do with the students during the remodel. They planned to bus the 5th and 6th graders over to Snowcrest Jr. High, there are three classrooms for the 6th graders but they would have to purchase three portable classrooms for the 5th graders. The portable classrooms cost \$75,000 a piece. They would then move the existing three portables at Valley to a new site and still would need to purchase another one, making it a total of four portable classrooms, plus they would need to transport the students, they wouldn't want the 5th and 6th graders at the junior high as early as the rest of the students, creating an extra bus trip to the school. They were also planning on tearing down the kitchen and gym facilities. This creates the problem of having to cook food for both schools at Snowcrest, and then transporting it over to Valley. This would force them to buy a delivery truck, and hire a driver. Mr. Wilson commented that this would be a lot of inconvenience for the kids, as well as a lot of extra expenses. Their new estimated cost of building on the current site came to 11.1 million dollars, with all of the added expenses.

So the question was asked if they are going to spend 11.1 million dollars for a remodel, how much it would cost for them to build a brand new school at a new location. Mr. Wilson stated that a new school would cost 14.5 million. He mentioned that the School Board owns property in Eden by Wilson's garage. A drawing of a school floor plan was displayed. This same floor plan is being built at two different locations, Nebo and Cedar City, and has also been used at two other schools in Cedar City, and they like the floor plan. This floor plan is one level, is built with ground source heat, there is 72,000 square feet, and it's a four section school which means you have four classrooms per grade. CM Truett asked how long it would take to build a new school. Mr. Wilson replied they would like to open the school in August of 2009. They will be putting bids out this April. He would like 14 months to get the school built. The site in Eden is a ten acre parcel. Mr. Wilson proceeded to explain how the layout of the school would sit. CM Truett asked if the school was moved over to Eden, what would happen to the existing school site. Mr. Wilson replied that the building would be sold. He felt that this would be an advantage to the town. The town could tear the school down and re-zone the property to residential and sell the lots. Then the town would receive property tax on the property.

John Posnien asked how this would be an advantage to the town, he doesn't feel that this would be an advantage. CM Gault asked if the new owner of the school would have to bring the school into compliance with new building codes. Mack DeVries commented that he understands that there is a lot of nostalgia with having the school in Huntsville, but after Mack took a tour of the new Plain City Elementary, he was astonished at how nice the facility was. Mack stated that we need to think of the kids and how they will benefit from a new school, not how it will affect the older citizens in Huntsville. Mr. Wilson mentioned that the new school would have a full size gym with bleachers that could be used for community events.

CM Sorensen replied that the reason the library was placed in Huntsville was because of the location of the elementary school. Mr. Wilson agreed. CM Sorensen stated that the town's park is one of the nicest in the state of Utah, and the elementary has benefited from using it.

Mayor McKay gave a rebuttal to the previous statements made by Mr. Wilson. He is bothered that the engineer's estimates came in at 4 million dollars and then jumped to 11 million. Mr. Wilson replied that they did use some resources for engineering, but the estimate was given three years ago, construction costs have escalated since then. The Mayor stated that the town was a proponent to the bond election, which included the elementary being remodeled in Huntsville, during phase two. The Mayor has been receiving updates on the project all along, until two weeks ago when he heard a rumor that the decision had been made to move the elementary over to Eden. Less than two weeks prior to that the architects and engineers had set up a meeting with the mayor. The Mayor asked, when did all the change occur and where is the public process in this? Huntsville as an entity has a vested interest in this decision, and was given no notice about this change in location. No letters, no phone calls, there was zero communication, this is a huge change and the Mayor expressed his anger by stating that this is inexcusable.

Mr. Wilson responded by saying the school board knew about the changes about three weeks prior to when the town first heard about it. They knew that the numbers were increasing and held a board retreat to discuss the matter.

The Mayor wanted to respond to the other items of concern that have been mentioned. It was stated that the school sits on only 3.2 acres. The school has the entire block except for the Creamer property, which is greater than 3 acres. The town's blocks consist of eight $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lots plus a 33 foot alley down the center of the block. The pressure of the water system was mentioned as being low, and that the pipes were only 5 inch. Mayor McKay stated that several years ago the town upgraded the water system, put in a million gallon storage tank, with a 16 inch line that reduces to a 12 inch line that comes into town, and then reduces further to an 8 inch line. The school has two connections to the 8 inch line on Second Street. All four hydrants by the school are new, and were replaced within four years ago. The school engineers hired Robert Goodlowe to come and do a test on the hydrants for fire flow.

Robert's remarks to the Mayor were that he was amazed at how good the town's system was, and that it was more favorable than other larger communities. Mr. Wilson mentioned that they provided this information to the state fire marshall, who does his calculations by the drop in pressure, and the drop in volume. The Mayor is puzzled as to why Mr. Goodlowe, who is licensed by the state, would make those comments about the town's water system, and then receive a poor report from the school board. Mayor McKay mentioned that he was intimately involved with the decision to have the library in Huntsville. At that time there was great public interest with many meetings held on the matter. The counties final decision on where to put the library was primarily based on the fact that it would be across the street from an elementary school. So it appears that it's a slap in the face of the multi-million dollar investment of building the library, because now the counties decision was in error. The town has had a good relationship with the school in allowing the children to use the park since the 1800's. The Mayor reiterated how appalled he is with how quickly the decision was made to change the location of the school with no public notification, no public process, and feels that the process has been incorrectly handled.

Mr. Wilson apologized for this, but said that they had short notice too. The Mayor commented that he would like to see them tear down the existing school and build a new one on the current site. The question was asked what they would do with all the students during the construction year. The Mayor asked what they would do if the school had burned down. Valley Elementary has burned down twice. It wouldn't be easy, bussing the children and changing their schedules, but there would be many advantages to building a whole new school and leaving the school where it is. The new proposed site in Eden will not be in the center of Eden, and will be located on a busy highway. Whereas, if they left the school in Huntsville, it is tucked back into the town off the busy roads, with the library across the street. Mr. Engstrom replied that the school sits on more like 5.5 acres. John Posnien asked how much time was taken in looking for alternative solutions with the existing site instead of just making a move to a new site. Mr. Wilson replied none. The Mayor asked how much money has already been expended on engineers and architects to remodel the current school. Mr. Wilson replied that he didn't know.

The council continued to come up with different ideas that would help keep valley elementary in town. Such as using the LDS church and the Community church for their classrooms or gym facilities. Mr. Wilson remarked that he will take this information back to the board, as well as the architects and engineers. It was mentioned previously in the meeting that the population of school kids is declining in the valley. CM Sorensen stated that right now there are 6-8 thousand homes in the valley and with the projected build out of up to 17 thousand homes. This is more than double what there is currently. There are 250 homes already approved for construction this spring just in Huntsville. CM Sorensen reiterated that the valley has been found, and it is growing. He thinks the school board should hold onto the property in Eden for a second elementary school in 20 years. Mr. Wilson responded by saying that he deals with growth issues every day. There is constant and continual growth in most areas. They are having a hard time keeping enough classrooms for schools west of Ogden.

Linda Carver stated that we need to do what is in the best interest of the kids. They are in desperate need for new schools west of Ogden to accommodate the fast growing population. The population of elementary kids is declining in the valley and she was shocked to hear that the school board decided to put so much of their resources into remodeling Valley Elementary, at the expense of all W.C. tax payers.

Bob Wood had a couple of thoughts to address. One, having a ½ new ½ old school vs. a whole new school, an entire new school would be pretty exciting. Two, having the school board hang onto the Eden property for a future school, and lastly if all the new homes being built are not all second homes but first homes with kids then obviously this will change the number of students.

Linda Carver remarked that the final decision has not been made, and if the town can come up with a workable option they will look at it. They are just trying to make the best decision for the kids. The board will meet again on January 28th for a final decision. Mayor McKay thanked the school board members for taking time to come up tonight and inform and to listen to the council.

Review of Title 11: Cemetery Ordinance:

CM Gault led the discussion as the council reviewed the changes that were integrated into the draft ordinance.

All items on the agenda have been addressed. Mayor McKay made a motion to adjourn. CM Sorensen seconded. All votes aye.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Gail Ahlstrom, Clerk/Recorder

James. C. McKay, Mayor