

AMERICAN FORK CITY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 7, 2015

WORK SESSION

The purpose of City Work Sessions is to prepare the City Council for upcoming agenda items on future City Council Meetings. The Work Session is not an action item meeting. No one attending the meeting should rely on any discussion or any perceived consensus as action or authorization. These come only from the City Council Meeting.

The American Fork City Council met in a work session on Thursday, May 7, 2015, in the American Fork City Offices, 51 East Main Street, commencing at 3:30 p.m. Those present included Mayor Pro-Tem Councilman Clark Taylor and Councilmembers Carlton Bowen, Brad Frost, Rob Shelton, and Jeff Shorter. Mayor James H. Hadfield was out of town.

Staff present: Administrative Intern Brittany Erikson
Associate Planner Wendelin Knobloch
City Administrator Craig Whitehead
City Attorney Kasey Wright
City Engineer Andy Spencer
City Planner Adam Olsen
City Recorder Richard Colborn
Finance Director Cathy Jensen
Fire Chief Kriss Garcia
Parks & Recreation Director Derric Rykert
Public Relations/Economic Development Director Audra Sorensen
Public Works Director Dale Goodman

Also present: Dale Gunther and Jason Burningham

In the absence of Mayor Hadfield, Mayor Pro-Tem Councilman Clark Taylor conducted the meeting.

DISCUSSION ON PARTICIPATION IN THE BANK OF AMERICAN FORK'S PLAN TO ENHANCE THEIR MAIN STREET FRONTAGE FROM CENTER STREET TO CHURCH STREET – Adam Olsen

Adam Olsen reported that the Bank of American Fork would like to enhance their Main Street frontage from Center Street to Church Street with some street furniture, some new landscaping, bring the sidewalk back, and match what the Main Street corridor vision would be. He met with them last week. Staff recommended that the City participate in the improvements but also recommended that they wait until the concept study was done in a few months. That study went from the Main Street interchange to 500 East State Street and would provide a unified streetscape for American Fork including types of street furniture, types of street lights, and landscaping. Where UDOT was a partner in the study it would also provide the ultimate width of the street. A key element of this study was to provide an estimate of what the betterments would cost. It was great that the Bank of American Fork wanted to do this. He added that the

City had money set aside to help implement the Main Street Vision. They were now drilling down to the details.

Councilman Bowen asked who at UDOT was doing that study.

Mr. Olsen responded that the City had an agreement to partner with UDOT. They would be sending out an RFP.

Bank of American Fork Representative Dale Gunther gave a little history. The Bank of American Fork was organized and chartered in 1913 by a group of local businessmen in the name of People's State Bank of American Fork. In the early 1960's, Dale Gunther's father Orville Gunther who was the Chairman of the Board at that time, wanted to tie the Bank closer to the community. People's State was dropped and it was called the Bank of American Fork.

Mr. Gunther continued that the building on the northeast corner of Center and Main was purchased by the Bank a little over a year ago. It was originally built and occupied by a different Bank of American Fork. During the depression when all of the banks closed that Bank of American Fork closed also never to reopen. It was on the National Historic Register and they were restoring it. They would have a ribbon cutting around July 20, 2015.

Mr. Gunther showed packets of materials from studies that the City had done back to the 1960's regarding Main Street over 50 plus years. Studies were done. In 2010 the City partnered with Mountainlands Association of Governments (MAG) to do a new vision for American Fork. It is called the American Fork Downtown Vision Plan and was adopted by the Council in November 2011. The plan called for widening Main Street by taking two feet off of each side. Their idea of landscaping was to put in street planter boxes with low plantings and flower beds. A lot could be done to add to the beauty of downtown. If the City did not have a plan UDOT could do what they wanted. He understood that UDOT was sensitive to those that had a plan. We have a plan. This block would get it started and the Bank of American Fork was willing to share 50-50 with that. He did not want this to die the death of other studies. Big D Construction provided a ballpark estimate of about \$155,000 to do this section. He asked if there were questions.

Councilman Shelton asked when they wanted to start this project.

Mr. Gunther answered that if the City agreed to participate they would start right away.

Councilman Shelton asked if August was too far down the road.

Mr. Gunther thought that would be fine.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor asked what would be the problem to take into consideration what could be done in this area and setting a precedent that they could give to UDOT knowing that they were helping with the planning process. If they did nothing, the City may well end up with something they did not want.

Andy Spencer explained that the study was at the City's request. It was a match of \$25,000 each. The City was the lead. The goal was to show UDOT what the City had in mind and he thought UDOT was ready to come along and they would come along quickly.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor stated let's get started. He was on the Council in 1997 when this was talked about.

Mr. Spencer thought they could get an RFP out in the next week or so. It was necessary to get the downtown group together so that the themes worked with all the rest of the downtown area. The key was to get a quick consensus.

Councilman Bowen asked that with the bid was some architectural work done.

Mr. Gunther stated that Cooper Roberts was the architectural firm that was involved in the Main Street Plan and they were the firm that was doing the restoration of their building. He talked with them about doing the plan and if the City was supportive, that would be the necessary first step.

Councilman Bowen asked if parking in front of the stores was envisioned.

Mr. Gunther answered that it was. Two-feet additional on both sides of Main Street would help a lot.

Councilman Bowen thought that traffic flowing through could be a benefit. He thought a lot of the Main Street Vision Plan was not realistic or practical. He was not opposed to planters, making the street more pleasant, and new lighting. He viewed sidewalks as something the City would normally fund. Planters would be great and should have water and electricity. The other part, to have it as a big destination and fed by Trax, was not realistic.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor expressed that the Main Street Vision Plan added foresight. Trax was going to come along 100 North and they ought to be prepared and take advantage of that. The Plan did not dictate what had to be done.

Councilman Shelton asked if the Plan had seven lanes of traffic.

Mr. Gunther thought it was two lanes and a parking lane on each side.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor thought it would be great to get an RFP out next week.

Councilman Shelton asked if it was thought that others might want to participate.

Mr. Gunther responded that at one time they had 80 to 85 percent of the businesses that said they would participate with the City in downtown improvements. That was one of the reasons he ran for City Council and when he got on the Council he found that the City did not have any money.

Councilman Frost could not think of a better group to work with than with the Bank of American Fork. They were a great partner with everything that the City did.

Mr. Gunther noted that their new building was going to be the Administrative Offices for Peoples Utah Bank Corporation. It owned 100 percent of the Bank of American Fork and Lewiston State Bank. They were the biggest community bank in the State with \$1.4 billion in assets. In the near future they would become a public company.

Mr. Gunther added that he appreciated the help of City staff on the restoration of the building. The Bank of American Fork tried to be supporters of the City. They have bought a lot of the City's bonds.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor stated that the great thing about this was that the Bank of American Fork does what community banks do, they put money back into the community. This was a prime example of the Bank of American Fork coming to the City. This was a win-win.

Councilman Frost commented that getting started, even one block, might start the general improvement, even it was one block at a time.

Councilman Bowen commented on the timing and that Main Street should not be torn up during Steel Days.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor asked if the clock was going to work.

Mr. Gunther answered that he talked with the guy that was rebuilding the clock and was told that he could get it going.

PRESENTATION REGARDING THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE CITY'S RDA, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES, TIFF STANDARDS, AND RDA GOVERNANCE - Jason Burningham

Jason Burningham with Lewis Young Robertson & Burningham expressed that Dale Gunther's presentation was a great lead in because one of the things he wanted to talk about was new areas for RDA's.

Mr. Burningham noted that his firm had been hired due to some fairly onerous reporting requirements placed on the RDA by State Law. The City should be commended and feel very good about some of the steps that had been taken to ensure the economic vitality of the community. They could look in hindsight and see what needed to be done. It was difficult to govern the RDA as in the past. Going forward it would take a new look including going back and looking at the By-Laws that originally created the RDA as there was some opposition to RDA's and tax increment financing.

Mr. Burningham raised the question as to how would the City entertain a project that came to it. What projects would merit participation from the RDA? Which would not, and why? How would the RDA evaluate and measure the merits of a project? In the past public infrastructure was the City's most acceptable way to fund projects. That was coming into question and was it really economic development. Those types of questions would be answered with this proposal

and frameworks would be established along with how to evaluate if projects should be extended. There were still opportunities for RDA's to be a useful tool.

Councilman Shelton commented that he had met with Audra Sorensen and Craig Whitehead where they reviewed proposals from two businesses asking for incentives to locate in American Fork. One was in an RDA project area and one was just outside of a project area. The question arose as to how to evaluate those proposals. They brought in Jason Burningham to help them understand highest and best use. It was time to put policies in place that helped the RDA better judge and be the best stewards of that money.

Ms. Sorensen had been here 10 months and had talked with everyone and as staff they wanted to do what the Council wanted. Adam Olsen, Andy Spencer and Audra Sorensen were asking was it roads; was it Main Street; was it new jobs; they needed help in prioritizing those things.

Councilman Bowen did not think governments built economies. Governments provided some basic infrastructure. There had to be more than a government incentive to want to invest in American Fork and be successful. It might be the educated workforce or the demographics.

Ms. Sorensen commented that was true but in many cases that same demographic was across the street. One of the companies they talked with was going to bring over 1,000 jobs to American Fork.

Councilman Bowen stated that was a bigger issue and got to the State level because it was a race to the bottom when cities were competing against each other for the biggest handout. He felt that was a bad model. He asked what the problem was with an RDA expiring and would City taxes go up or down at that point.

Councilman Shelton responded that the bigger point was that the City had these RDA's. The responsibility was on the Council's shoulders to utilize that tax increment to the best of their ability.

Councilman Bowen asked what happened when an RDA expired.

Mr. Burningham explained that typically the benefit was that it would come on the tax rolls as new growth and that happened without having to change the City's Certified Tax Rate or having a public hearing.

Councilman Frost asked if that was immediate.

Mr. Burningham answered that it was.

Councilman Bowen wanted to see some high rise buildings on Main Street. There would be some awesome views. That was what he envisioned of being successful. The question was, would that require an RDA? His personal idea of business development was to have a low tax rate across the board and maintain it consistently over time. As far as priorities, he did not think they were mutually exclusive. For instance south of I-15 they were going to see a lot of growth and those roads were in bad shape.

Mr. Burningham added that the RDA did not want to be in the middle of two competing companies.

Ms. Sorensen would really like to see the RDA re-evaluated. There was a company she was talking to that wanted to expand dramatically. What was the framework?

Councilman Frost thought that guidelines were a key to the future of economic growth.

Mr. Burningham agreed and noted there were a lot of things to be considered. Would the new business take away from an existing business? It was not just a want but what was the impact of having it there.

Craig Whitehead stated that the RDA Board was meeting this Tuesday and putting in place their budget for next year. Budgets could be changed as needed.

Mayor Pro-tem Taylor thought this had been good discussion and part of the Council responsibility was to plan forward and to embrace the inevitable. These policies needed to get into place. Even if the City's general philosophy about taxes or government were different, that was okay. Policies still needed to be in place that would outlast this City Council. The Council needed to get after it right now.

Councilman Frost asked when they could have this proposal on the RDA agenda for action.

Mr. Whitehead answered that it could be on the RDA agenda for action on Tuesday night.

Councilman Bowen suggested that if they were going to have an RDA there should be a framework for evaluating requests for assistance. He encouraged that there not be loans for storefronts. It was not the purpose of government to be a bank.

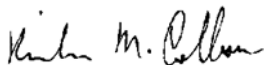
Councilman Frost appreciated that Mr. Burningham was on the forefront of the changing RDA laws.

OPEN & PUBLIC MEETINGS TRAINING – Kasey Wright

This item was postponed.

ADJOURNMENT

The work session adjourned at 4:44 p.m.



Richard M. Colborn
City Recorder