

Planning & Zoning Minutes  
P/Z Room South City Hall  
360 Rio Communities Blvd  
May 4, 2017

**Call to Order**

- Robert Teague called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm.

**Roll Call**

- Present: Jim Winters, Robert Teague, John Thompson, and L.E. Rubin
- Absent: Dennis Kintzler (excused)
- Also present: City Manager Bob Skerry and Deputy Clerk Pam Johnson

**Approval & signing of minutes**

- John Thompson moved to accept the minutes of the April 20 meeting. L.E. Rubin seconded and the motion passed on 4-0 vote.

**1. General Discussion –**

- John Thompson distributed a draft copy of a parks/trails survey and asked for comments.
- Robert Teague said we'll make the changes we need to make tonight and there is also a one page city newsletter that will be included. He said we need to plan on helping get the survey in the mail.
- Jim Winters said we may want to consider having a meeting next week and do the folding at that meeting.
- John Thompson read the survey and started a discussion on corrections and changes and how it should be distributed.
- L.E. Rubin said we want the survey to go out to residents in Rio Communities and, if it's in the newspaper we'll get responses from people who don't live in the city telling us what kind of park they want.
- Robert Teague suggested we send the survey to the newspaper – not for publication but just so they can see what we're trying to do. He said he will ask them to write something about the survey for the paper.
- L.E. Rubin moved to accept the two-sided mailer with the changes discussed to be put together with the document from city which is also a two-sided sheet to be folded and mailed as soon as the mailing labels are available. John Thompson seconded and the motion passed on 4-0 vote.
- Robert Teague said there will be a meeting next Thursday and the documents can be folded at that meeting.
- John Thompson moved to meet on May 11 at 6:30 pm for the purpose of folding and preparing the mailing and any other general discussion. The motion was seconded by L.E. Rubin and passed on 4-0 vote.
- John Thompson said at the last meeting we discussed land that someone owns and may be willing to donate to the city.
- Jim Winters said he looked into that and that land has been sold to the people who live next door.
- Bob Skerry explained that when the minutes are sent out, any changes or corrections need to be made before a vote to approve. He said once the minutes are approved they can't be changed. He also explained the rules regarding e-mail to each other.

- John Thompson said he has found a spot at about 861 Frederico that would be a perfect place for a pocket park. He said the property runs from Frederico to the golf course and has beautiful trees in the back. He said he would like that property to be tagged as potential for a pocket park.
- Jim Winters mentioned that the lots in that area sell from \$25,000 to \$40,000.
- Robert Teague said the city owns land located in drainage run-off areas so they can't be built on and could be used for parks. He said those properties will be used first because we can't do anything more with them.
- John Thompson asked if we have a list of potential places for pocket parks.
- Jim Winters said we can write down places people suggest if there are any, but we won't know what we're doing until we have a plan and there is money in the budget for that.
- Bob Skerry said the first money available will be a CDBG grant for \$50,000 for planning but they need to know what it is we're planning. He said we should know what we want first.
- Bob Skerry said the process is to plan, design and then construct and we're just in the planning stage. He said there isn't money for parks so we'll have to get grants and the only way to get that is to show a lot of public input and a lot of planning and design.
- Jim Winters said our representatives will help us if there is ever capital outlay money.
- Bob Skerry said they need to see that we have done the planning and have the support of the public. He said we'll be looking for a plan that benefits the entire community and when talking about parks, you're talking real estate. He said there will be people who own property in a certain area and want a park there and it is our job is to get input for the plan and not be biased.
- Bob Skerry said we can go to MRCOG and contract with them to come up with a park plan but it won't be what people want and there will no local control. He said the zoning commission needs to be spearheading the planning and that is what gets funding. He said later when we go for \$500,000 to build the park, we need to show we have public support.
- Jim Winters said the director at Whitfield does park plans and we might consider contacting them.
- Robert Teague said Whitfield owns property so they're interested in working with us because it will help them get their agenda done.
- Jim Winters said when we apply for money we get extra checkmarks if we show cooperation with others in the community.
- John Thompson said in terms of economic development, that would be a feather in the community cap.
- Jim Winters said we need to think about how to get the word out that we accept donations.
- John Thompson said we could contact estate planning people and let them know we can take donations. He also said we could invite estate planners and lawyers to come to the meeting and talk to us about it.
- Bob Skerry said we may need to form a non-profit organization that can accept donations.
- L.E. Rubin said that is a long and complicated process.

## **2. Discuss: Parks/Trails – Public Forum -**

- L.E. Rubin said we should add information about the public forum to the survey.
- John Thompson said he will add a text box "come to the public forum Saturday May 20 at 3:00 at city hall.
- Jim Winters moved to revise the survey by adding a text box that says "come to the public forum on Saturday May 20 at 3:00 pm at City Hall". L.E. Rubin seconded and the motion passed on 4-0 vote.

- Jim Winters asked if we want to provide pictures or handouts at the forum.
- Robert Teague said he will look at the pictures he has received and Bob Skerry has a lot of pictures of parks we can use. He said having a power point going when we're trying to talk may be distracting. He said we don't have the power point presentation we had before and we're running out of time. He suggested we print out pictures of different kinds of parks (pocket parks, xeriscaping, large parks, etc.) for handouts.
- John Thompson said he would create a power point presentation.
- Jim Winters said pictures should be added to next week's meeting agenda.
- Robert Teague said we can also talk about John's power point at that meeting.

### **3. Clean up on Hwy 304 –**

- Robert Teague said his idea was that when we have the dumpster here we could put it on property adjacent to the church on 304. He said that area has turned into a dumping ground so it would be a good location for a dumpster. He said people driving to and from work use that street and it should look good.
- Robert Teague said the dumpster would be there but he said he wondered how many people will see it.
- Bob Skerry said we could order two dumpsters and put one at city hall and one on 304. He said if we fill the one at city hall, we could send people to the one on 304.
- Robert Teague said we could ask the Mormon Church to volunteer to walk up and down that highway along with us to pick up trash. He asked for input on whether or not we can gather enough trash and if people will bring trash to that location so we can make good use of the dumpster.
- L.E. Rubin said it depends on who owns the property because we can't go on private property.
- Robert Teague said the person who owns that property doesn't live here.
- Jim Winters said we may be better off concentrating on clean-up of DOT right-of-way and once that's done, move on to Hwy 47.
- John Thompson suggested sending the property owner a letter advising them that they are responsible for maintenance of their property. He said we could let them know we have volunteers to help clean it up and ask for their permission.
- Bob Skerry said that's the code enforcer's job and letters have been sent to that property owner.
- Robert Teague asked if we should ask the mayor to get in touch with someone at the church and find out what month they would be willing to help us.
- Bob Skerry said someone should be there to make sure people don't throw things in the dumpster they shouldn't.
- Robert Teague said we just started the city clean-up in March and will have a dumpster here every month through October from 8:00 am until 11:00 am or until it's full.
- John Thompson said his vision is to let churches know what we're doing and ask them to organize their congregations and tell us when they want the dumpster.
- Robert Teague said the Mormons have worked with us before. He said they have a big group and have offered to help in the future and have dealt with the mayor in the past. He said if we think it's a good idea, he will talk to the mayor about asking the church what works for them.
- John Thompson explained the program he started in California called "Love Atwater" and they had a lot of volunteers. He said he will talk to pastors about the clean-up and let them know when they get organized they can let us know when they want the dumpster.

- Jim Winters said the problem we've had with churches in the past is that more than half of the church members don't live here.
- L.E. Rubin said he's not opposed to putting a dumpster on 304 if we make sure we have a commitment from the group that will do the clean-up to be there on the day the dumpster is there. He said we have to be coordinated and have a commitment we can count on. He also said it's a bad idea to pay \$350 to have a dumpster on 304 and have no one to help and people don't know the dumpster is there.
- John Thompson mentioned that high school seniors need community service hours.
- Jim Winters said Belen has a program and they have kids available. He said Tom Walton is the person to talk to because he has run the program before.

**ADJOURN –**

- Jim Winters moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by L.E. Rubin and the meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm on 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

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Pam Johnson, Deputy Clerk

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Robert Teague, Chair

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John Thompson, Vice Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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L.E. Rubin, Secretary

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Dennis Kintzler