

MURRAY CITY-SCHOOL COORDINATING COUNCIL MINUTES

The Murray City School Coordinating Council met on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. at Murray City Hall, 5025 South State Street, Conference Room #107, Murray, Utah.

Board Members Present:

Murray City Council:

Dale Cox – Chair
Dave Nicponski – Vice Chair
Jim Brass
Diane Turner
Brett Hales

School Board:

Elizabeth Payne
Jaren Cooper
Glo Merrill
Belinda Johnson

Others – City Staff:

Jan Lopez – Council Director
Blair Camp – Mayor
Doug Hill – Chief Administrative Officer
Chief Burnett – Murray Police Chief
Melinda Greenwood – CED
Jennifer Heaps – Comm. & Public Relations Director

Others:

Jennifer Covington
Janice Strobell
D. Wright

Welcome and Approval of Minutes - Mr. Cox welcomed everyone and called for approval of the minutes from January 9, 2019. Mr. Brass moved for approval. Ms. Payne seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Business Items

Economic Development Report – Ms. Greenwood reviewed a list of new housing projects that included subdivisions, townhomes, and apartment complexes; some studio and 1-bedroom units; and affordable housing in the city. She discussed ADU (accessory dwelling units), business licensing information, noted two board vacancies, addressed the possible restoration of Carnegie Library, and reported on the city's partnership with Neighborworks. (See Attachment #1)

Mr. Nicponski noted the Garbett Homes project on Winchester Street and 700 West was not listed. Ms. Greenwood confirmed building permits were issued for the project.

Ms. Merrill asked about vacant property at the corner of 5900 South and Fashion Blvd. Mayor Camp confirmed property owner, Roderick Enterprises hoped to construct an office building on the site.

Mr. Brass asked about leveled property on State Street west of Tosh Hospital. Mayor Camp said an America First Credit Union would be constructed there. Ms. Greenwood confirmed demolition permits were pulled.

Ms. Greenwood said the city continues to negotiate with the Kingston Family regarding their property on 4300 South Commerce Street. The hope is to secure the area to prevent students and others from trespassing. Mr. Hales asked if the Kingston's would sell the property that sat abandoned for years. Ms. Greenwood said they had no interest in selling.

Ms. Merrill asked if a public hearing was held regarding new city center development and old buildings on State Street in the downtown area. Ms. Greenwood said yes and explained public misinformation was given prior to the meeting about what would be discussed; however, that provided an opportunity for public comments and clarification during the RDA (Redevelopment Agency) meeting. Correct information is that the city owns the majority of the city block, where two buildings left are designated as historic, and four others the city owns are not on the historic preservation list. Preliminary discussions occurred in January about delayed development, reevaluation of the MCCD area, old building conditions, and the demolition of four buildings; new demolition cost estimates will be determined. The hope is to reexamine plans and work hard with the council, and the planning commission over the next year to get changes made and a workable plan in place for the MCCD Zone; she anticipated many future discussions.

Mr. Brass explained the area was called the *Downtown Historic Overlay District* for 16 years. However, it became difficult for property owners to maintain properties based on that ordinance. As a result, the area was changed to the MCCD, which also created a variety of roadblocks for developers. He agreed another ordinance change was needed to help keep the flavor of Murray and allow for new development because what was required in the area for two decades was not effective.

Ms. Johnson thought the public hearing discussion was interesting and she left the meeting thinking the city, in order to protect Murray, protected it too much. Others agreed. Mr. Brass noted what buildings were established as historic and pointed out how much the city incentivized preservation in the past. Ms. Merrill noted other cities that left historic facades on building fronts, and rebuilt structures behind, allowing the appearance of historic elements. Mr. Brass agreed it was a possibility to consider.

A lengthy discussion continued about various building owners in the area who for 40 years were involved with Murray's historic preservation conversations; building conditions, and specific cost challenges related to keeping up with past and current historic regulations. Ms. Greenwood confirmed the process for attaining a historic preservation status was lengthy, guidelines were detailed, and the time it takes to renovate buildings was a challenge for building owners. She agreed the city 'protected too much' to the detriment of having any future development come in; and she confirmed which dilapidated buildings the city would restore. Her hope was to gain new input from the council and property owners to facilitate growth.

Ms. Greenwood said Murray's partnership with Neighborworks is valuable and explained Neighborworks is a non-profit organization and developer that can build homes at more affordable cost level. (See Attachment #1) She reviewed properties and noted a future project on Tripp Lane.

Mr. Brass led a brief discussion about the program *Paint Your Heart Out* and noted low interest loans where some are forgivable over a certain amount of time. It was noted that social workers can help interested parties, and senior citizens often benefit from the organization.

Ms. Covington said the school district is always looking for property to purchase for their high school construction program where students learn to build homes. She said the most recent project would be finished next year. Ms. Greenwood thought Neighborworks could partner with the school district as well. Ms. Johnson confirmed their association with Neighborworks was awesome, as they completed a service project with them by providing old cupboards and construction material.

Ms. Merrill confirmed student construction projects take about two years to complete and high school kids learn skills related to electricity, plumbing, cement and framing. Ms. Greenwood noted a shortage of plan reviewers and state building inspectors and said including these areas of training might be helpful in the future. Ms. Merrill agreed new classes of this type would be beneficial.

Mr. Cox said his son participated in the high school program and learned a great deal.

Further discussion occurred about specific instances where home improvement loans were useful, and the lot on 700 West available after the tragic fire.

Police Report - Chief Burnett reported the SRO (school resource officer) was pulled from Riverview Junior High to conduct other police matters. They are working to find a replacement; however, no SRO would be present the last 2 months of the school year. A full-time SRO is still in place at AISU.

Vaping in schools is a prevalent concern and bathroom doors are often chained open to deter students from hiding in restrooms to vape; it is also occurring in elementary schools. Chief Burnett said a bigger problem is parents and adults who do not think vaping is a big deal, because they compare it to the 70's when smoking cigarettes and marijuana was common in school restrooms.

Hillcrest Junior High and Parkside Elementary have seen increased gang activity and graffiti. Ms. Covington said a full-time gang mentor would be present at Hillcrest and Parkside next year. Chief Burnett explained demographics for both schools changed attributing to the problem. In addition, Cottonwood High School is busy with similar concerns, due to the meshing of wealthy students, and less fortunate students from the old Granite High School, Kearns and Taylorsville.

Mr. Nicponski asked about the responsibilities of a gang mentor. Ms. Covington explained gang mentors are assigned to vulnerable students for tracking and following, and often meet with kids to teach pro-social opportunities and provide anti-gang activities, for example, workplace skills in food trucks. Chief Burnett said gang mentors are associated with the Salt Lake Gang Unit who are trained in good communication with kids. Ms. Covington noted gang activity this year at Hillcrest and Parkside was typically due to older siblings involved in gangs, and most gang members were coming from refugee populations. She identified 16 students at Murray High, several at Hillcrest, and a couple of students at Parkside. She thought a strong mentor program would help break the cycle. Chief Burnett was familiar with precise neighborhoods with gang activity; he said it was understandable as to what was occurring in those areas.

Traffic light improvements near both junior high schools has helped traffic safety somewhat. However, even with traffic lights at Hillcrest, cars have still hit kids in crosswalks. He said drivers must pay better attention to lights, crosswalks, and crossing guards.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Camp reported according to UDOT (the Utah Department of Transportation), the pedestrian bridge over State Street connecting Murray High School to the east side is owned by Murray City. To address the unsafe condition of the bridge, city engineers indicated the cost to refurbish the bridge is \$500,000, or, \$150,000 to remove it. As a result, the cost to tear it down was included in the proposed budget submitted to the city council for consideration. Ms. Covington agreed the bridge should come down and said students are using the crosswalk on State Street near the high school parking lot exit. The current drop-off bus lane on the west side of State Street will disappear as development continues on the east side of State Street. Mayor Camp confirmed the city owns just the bridge section and not landing areas.

The Arts Advisory Board made a recommendation to increase funding from \$30,000 to \$39,000 for the school's music program; Ms. Edmunds, Cultural Arts Director, also recommended the increase. The increase included in the proposed budget would be considered by the council, and grant money would provide the funding. Ms. Merrill expressed appreciation for the Murray City Council and the Arts Board for supporting art and music programs.

Mayor Camp appreciated the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program and noted the last graduation ceremony of the year. He quoted the DARE phrase, *if you know better, you do better*, and commended Officer Cox for doing an excellent job with students and the program.

School District Report – Ms. Covington confirmed vaping is a huge systematic problem this year in elementary through secondary grades. Because police officers must adhere to laws pertaining to tobacco violations, the school board adopted a policy to issue tobacco/vaping citations internally. On the first offense a \$25 fine would be issued, or, students may attend an *End Nicotine Dependence* class. The first class was held today, April 10, 2019, taught by school district employee, and one sixth grader attended with the parents present. A second and third offense would occur before a student is referred to an SRO. This pro-active measure applies to both cigarette smoking and vaping. Sadly, she thought with so much vaping every day at Murray High, the class would be full every night with 30 students.

A population study is underway to determine where students live and what future growth looks like. A follow-up report would be coming with regards to school district planning, classroom accommodations, school building sizes, and boundaries.

A third party is involved with developing the State Street property, and negotiations are underway. Two developers under contract would construct separate projects that include a hotel, and an assisted living center; an additional property owner would address the LDS seminary building. Ms. Covington and the school district believes the project is a good decision.

Internal Business Items - Next Meeting Date – October 9, 2019

Adjournment – 5:55 pm

Pattie Johnson
Council Office Administrator II