

**MURRAY CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
RETREAT**

The Murray City Municipal Council met for a retreat on Tuesday, September 23, 2008, at Anna's Restaurant, 4700 South 900 East, Murray, Utah.

**Members in Attendance:**

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Krista Dunn           | Council Chairman |
| Jeff Dredge           | Council Member   |
| Jim Brass             | Council Member   |
| Patricia W. Griffiths | Council Member   |

**Members Excused:**

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Robbie Robertson | Council Member |
|------------------|----------------|

**Others in Attendance:**

|                     |                                  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Frank Nakamura      | City Attorney                    |
| Michael D. Wagstaff | Council Executive Director       |
| Janet M. Lopez      | Council Administrative Secretary |

Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Robbie Robertson was excused due to illness.

Ms. Dunn stated that this meeting was scheduled for the purpose of discussing goals and making assignments for working toward the goals. She said that Mr. Wagstaff had listed the goals identified in the last retreat and discussion of individual priorities and group priorities was to be determined along with who would take responsibility for working in that direction, if items are still a priority. Other priorities should be brought up and discussed, as well.

**Goal #1** Efficiency & Effectiveness in Government - Design policy to streamline processes to create a more accountable and cost-efficient government that provides for a balanced and sustainable budget in which ongoing revenues cover ongoing expenses.

Ms. Dunn stated that this was her priority and that the direction of the economy and environment dictate that as a City every possible way to save and be more efficient should be explored. Decreasing revenue reports also make this a priority. This includes vehicles, maintenance of buildings, and future construction. There are ways to conserve and be more cost efficient in everything. For several years, Ms. Dunn has expressed these views and she feels that now the Council should offer suggestions and encourage department heads to do what they can and make it a priority. She commented that she will take responsibility for this goal. She has

already talked with a few department heads who have come to her and asked for information. In terms of effecting a change, she asked what else can be done.

Mr. Wagstaff added that by making it known that it is a Council priority will help.

Ms. Griffiths asked which department heads had asked for information.

Ms. Dunn responded that it was the police and fire departments who had come to her.

Mr. Dredge commented that rather than making a general statement about being more efficient and cost effective, maybe the Council should approach the department heads and make some suggestions on where to start. He added that many times people just don't know where to start.

Ms. Dunn said that was why she had been asked, to give some ideas on where to start. She asked Mr. Nakamura if it is her place to approach department heads, unless they ask for ideas. She said that she does not know how far the Council can go.

Mr. Dredge added that the Council controls the budget.

Mr. Brass pointed out that the Council can show preference for funding in some areas. He said that there will be a strong trend to lower power usage 25% over the next decade. There have been changes in transformers that Murray Power must purchase. Incandescent light bulbs and certain types of florescent fixtures are being discontinued. Lighting in City buildings could save a lot of money, however, there is a budgetary impact to changing out all the fixtures. In addition, there will be a budgetary impact on the proceeds of the power department if energy is reduced 25%. Income is dependent upon meters turning, and that side of things must be considered.

Ms. Dunn agreed and explained that with a fleet of 76 vehicles they cannot all be changed out in one year. It will have to be done on a rotating basis conditioned on available funds. She thinks it is absolutely appropriate for the Council and Mr. Wagstaff to conduct research and tell department heads that they are willing to do the background work.

Mr. Wagstaff offered that just like the Mayor's office communicates with the Council on a weekly basis through the Council Communications, we can communicate to them with this information as well. The lines work both ways.

Ms. Dunn said that she hopes they read our minutes and know the direction the Council is heading. She will talk with Ms. Wells about that.

Mr. Dredge expressed an idea that had been suggested and presented earlier which was a cell phone usage contract. He said that he was unsure as to whether the City could cut costs 2%

or 10%. He asked if it is enough of a driver to be left up to department heads. He suggested that possibly, prior to budget time, the Mayor should be asked what is being done to cut costs in specific areas. This is only an example. The Council gets put in a nasty position to approve or not approve expenses. Budget time, meeting with department heads is not the proper time to have that discussion. It is too late then.

Ms. Dunn reiterated that she will take this on as her assignment and priority and visit with Ms. Wells and let her know the direction of the Council in terms of funding for the future. She would like the department heads to be on board with the Council on this project. She added that the police will not be required to get any specific type of vehicle but sustainability, efficiency and doing the right thing for the City budget and the environment is the goal.

Ms. Griffiths asked if any research had been completed regarding what other cities do about take-home vehicles.

Ms. Dunn stated that she had sent information from three different police departments to Craig Burnett because he had asked for that information. He assured Ms. Dunn that he and the Chief are looking at what can be done for the future. The fire department is also interested and starting to look at this.

Ms. Griffiths said that it is important to look at someone who may be on-call and living in Farmington, for example, because of the distance. Maybe mid year budget is the time to address it, because the revenue is not increasing and there are many obligations.

Ms. Dunn said that her plans are to send out an email to the Council asking for ideas in this direction, opinions or research, and she will compile it. She will share this information with Ms. Wells, who can communicate with department heads, so that everyone knows the direction of the Council.

Ms. Griffiths asked if the policies governing this are set by the Mayor's office, the departments or the Council.

Mr. Nakamura answered that it has a budgetary component to it. He looks to his experience at Salt Lake City, where he formerly worked, and the Council there was very seriously involved in the development of their drive home policy. The City has a budget that has to be funded and he feels that the Council has some say about it. He continued, stating that the Council is responsible for the general policy direction of the City. You do that through the budget but you outline general policy direction as well. The City needs to know that you will develop the budget with these general policies in mind.

Ms. Griffiths mentioned that it is similar to the policy of certain department heads being required to live within the City boundaries. It has a real impact.

Mr. Dredge mentioned that this is a line that is sometimes difficult to understand and he does not intend to create an adversarial relationship with certain department heads but he often thinks about Code Enforcement that drives a huge truck around town. He wonders why that large truck is being used with the price of gas today, however, a line-item veto cannot be used.

Mr. Nakamura confirmed that specifics cannot be prohibited, however, generally a budget for fuel can be approved.

Mr. Dredge stated that he would like the department heads to understand where the Council is heading and not put them in an adversarial position.

Mr. Brass confirmed that what can be done is, if the Council would like to see a 10% reduction in fuel use, that fuel line item in the budget can be reduced by 10%. The departments can then decide how they will accomplish that. The Mayor's argument was that the big trucks were purchased because they were so inexpensive. The reason they are so inexpensive is because of the cost to operate them.

Ms. Dunn said the original reason was because they can haul horse trailers. She said at some time in the past horse trailers had to be pulled. She said they can rent a truck when it is necessary to haul something.

Mr. Brass added that a reduction of 10% of the fuel budgets is a lot of money freed up for other purposes.

Ms. Dunn said that in the police department half the items denied this year could have been approved with a 10% reduction in fuel. She feels this is the argument that made them begin to take notice of the fuel expenditures. It is important to approach things in a positive way.

Ms. Griffiths asked if Mr. Wagstaff could take on the responsibility for researching other cities' policies regarding take home vehicles.

Ms. Dunn stated that most cities in other states have limitations. Her information is from Salt Lake City and two California cities. The way it works is that for those whose homes are within five miles of headquarters, nothing is paid; for five to twelve miles a certain amount is paid; for twelve to 25 miles a certain figure is paid; and for 25 to 50 miles a certain amount is paid, each distance being a little larger amount. Above 50 miles no mileage allowance is given.

Mr. Dredge asked if the Murray Police policy is for the car to be driven only to and from work and then parked at home or if it can be used for other purposes.

Others responded that the car can be driven as a personal vehicle. Ms. Dunn said that it

cannot be taken on trips outside the county.

Ms. Griffiths has had reports from constituents who reported seeing certain vehicles at the parking lot in Disneyland. She does feel this was a reliable source and does not feel the City car should be used for trips.

Mr. Wagstaff commented that this can be communicated through emails and then compiled and presented to Ms. Wells.

Mr. Dredge offered that the department heads should know the direction and be empowered to do research.

Ms. Griffiths asked if we open the door for the department heads to bring the Council proposals.

Ms. Dunn said that the Council can present data and the department heads can also research and present data. There may be a compromise between suggestions. She feels strongly that they do need to know the direction of the Council and it may not be a priority for everyone, however, it is still a priority for the Council.

Mr. Wagstaff asked about ranking the priority as A, B, or C.

Ms. Dunn affirmed that this is an A priority due to the budget and diminishing revenues.

Mr. Dredge said that one thing he wanted to discuss was the need to review where the City is on the budget and rethink some expenditures now before going into reserves.

Mr. Brass added that the Council cannot wait until midyear to review finances.

Ms. Dunn said that decisions need to be made by midyear.

Mr. Dredge continued, pointing out that the Council needs to go to the departments and tell them some cuts need to be done by midyear. This is an A priority. If the gas budgets can be cut by 10% across the board, then that may make up for the sales tax deficit.

Mr. Brass agreed with that comment. He has researched the police department which fills fuel tanks twice a week. By getting a 10% increase in gas mileage, then everything the Mayor cut from the budget could have been funded. It amounted to \$300,000.

Mr. Dredge said that with this as a priority then what we need to do is look at the next possible date to sit down with department heads and have a discussion about where they are on the budget and what can be done for the remainder of the year to trim the budget, with an

emphasis on what projects can be deferred. He feels that the department heads need to be empowered to handle the problems.

Mr. Brass commented that it should be done by the end of next month at the latest.

Ms. Dunn remarked that in talking with some department heads, they are already looking at some projects that will not be able to be completed this year. Right now we need the department heads to look at what absolutely needs funding and what can be eliminated.

Mr. Dredge said that the sooner the constituents are notified that the Council is trying to be fiscally responsible, the more we will allay fears as crisis appears all around them.

Ms. Dunn observed that Mr. Brass started that process with his article for the Murray Journal update. She stated that begins with the Council because it oversees the budget.

Mr. Brass said that one of the nice things about Murray is that it does not rely on building permits and impact fees, these things are crippling other cities. Sales tax does affect Murray. Saratoga Springs, St. George, Washington and any towns that have experienced explosive growth have been living off impact fees and building permits, which are gone. No permits are being issued. As the mall continues with remodeling, some of the sales tax might be recovered, but the City will not see it all. He believes it must be looked at because we are bound by law to balance the budget.

Ms. Dunn says that staying flat is a hit in revenue due to inflation. She asked Mr. Wagstaff to have Ms. Wilson take a look at projections for the year and the month and to look at where the City is on a cumulative basis, as she compiles figures for next month.

Ms. Griffiths said that she provides a comparison of the previous year and projected figures.

Ms. Dunn wants to see not only the previous year but also the total current cumulative revenue.

Mr. Dredge said the graph that was discussed would show that.

Mr. Wagstaff is already working with her to produce a graph showing property tax, sales tax and all revenue sources.

Mr. Brass stated that the Council needs to defer nonessential purchases that were authorized but have not yet been ordered.

Ms. Dunn agreed that the department heads need to outline that when they meet with the

Council. It is importance to be mindful not to wait on vehicles, for example, and then have to replace too many at the same time. The department heads should be able to judge what vehicles can last a few more years.

Mr. Brass stated that it would be wise to look at what vehicles could have a natural gas option and utilize the fueling station Murray has at 84 cents per gallon. Actually, it is less than that due to taxes that are exempt. For trucks, which are used to run around town regularly, meter readers, for example, it would make sense to convert to natural gas. From the fuel savings the City could recover the cost of converting in just a year.

Ms. Dunn commented that trucks are not necessary for meter readers anyway.

Mr. Brass said a small car would be fine.

Ms. Griffiths asked if an overview of the financial picture is reported by Ms. Wilson in the department head meeting. She commented that they should be kept abreast of the City financial situation.

Mr. Nakamura said that they can always get that information, although, it is not discussed in department head meetings. Obviously, public services should be very interested. Mr. Hill is very good about knowing where he stands. Power is also good to keep up on finances.

Ms. Dunn said that she feels it is important to look at MIS. Computers are essential to what we do, however, this maybe a place where it is not necessary to replace every three years. Outdating can occur quickly, but maybe that can be extended a little.

Mr. Brass pointed out that to write documents and send email the latest equipment is not essential. For crunching numbers, speed can be important. On the park pavilions, Mr. Brass met with a gentleman from Brown-Strauss Steel, who is the number one distributor for columns and tubes. He said that steel prices have gone down dramatically and they do not expect steel prices to go up again this year. He insists that the pavilions should be rebid due to this information. It is disturbing that budget funding may be rearranged for a pavilion when other, more essential things, may be cut from the budget. He does not want to be in a position where there may be a liability because one of them falls down, however, there are concerns about building a fancy structure with money that may not be available. China, India and Turkey are not buying steel and commodities in general have dropped dramatically.

Ms. Griffiths mentioned that one of the sub-items on MIS was license and support fees on software.

Mr. Dredge responded that this is a budget discussion that needs to take place. And to clarify, the department heads will come to the Council with their suggestions to cut costs.

Mr. Wagstaff said that by having a meeting at the end of October the department heads will have time to review the budget and make suggestions.

Ms. Dunn added that it is not the intent to say you must cut a specific amount, however, they do need to present some ideas on what they are doing to lower costs.

Mr. Dredge commented that some departments may not have anything to cut, say the treasurer's office. He expressed the opinion that when you have managers you should give them the direction wanted and empower them to make the adjustments, then if you don't like what they suggest put more pressure on them.

Ms. Dunn included the Mayor's office, Council office, treasurer and attorney that don't have much to cut.

Mr. Brass proposed that the budget be reviewed quarterly.

Mr. Dredge stated that he and Mr. Wagstaff have discussed more regular financial reporting to the Council and, in addition, Mr. Wagstaff has been working on the numbers provided by Ms. Wilson and he is about ready to roll out a new system. This report will come monthly and maybe quarterly there will be a need to meet with individual department heads, based on those monthly reports. This would be management by exception, rather than meeting with everyone.

## **Goal #2**      Downtown Revitalization and Redevelopment

Mr. Brass stated that he would take responsibility for this goal. This has already begun with the money spent with Gerding Edlen and Mr. Brass will keep everyone informed on how that progresses.

Mr. Dredge asked if it would be advisable to create a moratorium on building in the downtown area until the plans are a little further along.

Mr. Brass said there was discussion about that, however, he feels that cannot be done because, at least one project, the Grecian Gardens project is too far along. He does feel that needs to be discussed, but how far to go is questionable.

Mr. Nakamura stated that it is an issue that involves a lot of property interests and will be a topic of discussion, however, to get specific at this time is premature.

Mr. Brass added that as the project is discussed with stakeholders in the area their plans will be discovered and then that can be considered.



Mr. Dredge pointed out that it would not be good to see a strip mall go into the area.

Mr. Brass said that no one wants that, however, one of the things the City needs to do is encourage construction of sustainable energy efficient buildings. The impact fees should be reduced because the impact to the systems have been reduced. If power, water and sewer usage is decreased then the impact fees should be reduced to help that owner justify the expense of the technology to build the efficient systems. The Council can legislatively encourage more efficient design. We need to get good businesses downtown to solve some of the other problems.

Mr. Dredge asked about the downtown historic district and how it will affect the master plan.

Mr. Brass said that it will be discussed as the meetings with stakeholders take place. If you find a compelling design, then it needs to be considered. He had the opportunity to visit the Santa Clara city hall, which is a brand-new building, constructed to appear 100 years old, outside and inside one cannot tell the difference. With good design and planning you can get the historic feeling. In the St. George mall you see how the older and newer buildings reflect each other. We need to see the results of the economic feasibility study that was in the Gerding Edlen agreement and where it leads.

Mr. Dredge stated that his only concern is not to handcuff creativity.

Mr. Brass said that he heard a comment worth repeating, and that is that there are historical buildings in old downtown that need to be saved, however, they just don't necessarily need to be saved in the location they are in. He likes that idea, to keep the buildings, but move them to a better location where they can be showcased. There are the mansion and the church that are both stuck back where no one sees them. They could become a focal point of what is being done. Other buildings just don't need to be saved. Because a building is 50 years old is not an architecturally sound reason to save a building. A spectacular project could be created with the really nice historic buildings being rearranged and blended in with what is being done currently.

Ms. Dunn agreed and was amazed at what Gerding Edlen showed them about moving buildings.

Mr. Brass said that he would not like to see the mansion, church or Day Murray Music torn down. He has seen numerous huge buildings being moved, one was an opera house moved a significant distance. He would like to work with the History Advisory Board to keep and move some building sites.

Mr. Brass said that a six lane wide state road with an island in the middle cutting through the heart of the downtown district makes it difficult to make the City look like Manti or Fairview. Buildings can be relocated to one side or the other and create a nice historic look. It is important

to let the initial step run its course and see what the suggestions are.

Ms. Dunn stated that these first two goals are both A projects that need to move forward. As the State Street corridor improves, in reality, it will be a benefit to the City financially.

Mr. Brass has had numerous citizens in his district comment that if they had things to walk to downtown they would. People would like to see more restaurants, ice cream shops, that sort of business. Getting some private money funding the public spaces is intriguing too.

Ms. Dunn said it does need to be revitalized and remains an A goal. Gerding Edlen has experience and she is willing to put the area in their hands and let them show the City what can be done.

Mr. Dredge added that he has talked with Mr. Tingey about the possibility of meeting with Gerding to see what sort of creative financing can be done to make this happen.

Ms. Dunn said they will be here in Salt Lake on a regular basis and the Council agreed that Mr. Dredge should meet with them on financing.

Mr. Brass said that on the performing arts center that was done in downtown Portland they were able to obtain some private foundation funds to build in a converted historic building with a massive public space that is in use constantly. We need to get ideas from them.

**Goal #3** Create and maintain municipal land-use zones.

Mr. Dredge said that he believes it is the mixed-use zone that has not been clearly defined and it may be a problem in the future.

Mr. Brass stated that the mixed-use was going to be different depending on where in the City it is located.

Mr. Dredge added that the planning department was going to get back to the Council on the possibility of A, B and C defined mixed-use.

Ms. Dunn asked Mr. Dredge if he would take responsibility for this goal. He agreed.

Ms. Griffiths asked if the different areas need to be analyzed to see which uses are most compatible.

Mr. Brass commented that the 300 West mixed-use needs to be completely different from the Winchester or 5400 South mixed-use.

Other Council members agreed. Ms. Griffiths added that the geographical areas need to be identified and consider the surrounding uses to determine what is compatible.

Mr. Dredge said that general definitions of the types of things acceptable need to be developed and then go to the areas and decide which one fits.

Mr. Brass asked if this should be considered a B item. Council Members agreed.

After a short break the meeting was reconvened by Ms. Dunn.

**Goal #4** Fifth Tuesday Neighborhood Council Meetings

Ms. Dunn said that this item had been discussed and after the next meeting it would be used on an as needed issue driven basis.

Mr. Wagstaff commented that he would remove this from Council goals.

Mr. Brass commented that a number of people who live around Lincoln Street are concerned about the number of homes built there on the greens and other planned unit developments (PUD). Lincoln Street is a lane and there is concern about added traffic and the impact of construction. Also, none of the homes have been sold and two are currently up for auction.

Ms. Griffiths said that was an ill-conceived project.

Mr. Brass reported that the residents have requested a neighborhood meeting to discuss this. He will arrange that at City Hall. He was looking at October 13, however, Board of Adjustment meets that night in the Council Chambers. Everyone will be welcome to attend and Mr. Brass plans to explain that the Council is aware that Lincoln Street needs to be rebuilt for the traffic, however, he will inform them of how the budget and roads work and what the costs would be to build that road. He wants them to understand that they are not being ignored but many road issues exist in Murray right now. He wants the residents to be able to express their thoughts on this topic.

Mr. Dredge said that relating to the meeting schedule there is a history of three meetings a month other than in the Summer. He has noticed that many of the Council meetings have little business and he is not an advocate of merely holding meetings. By law there must be two Council meetings per month and he asked if there is a reason to require staff and Council attendance three times per month. He asked if this could become more efficient as more responsibility is being added with these goals.

Mr. Brass offered that for the Council meeting that evening five proclamations and no

real City business was on the agenda. Mr. Wagstaff has commented more than once that they are *our* Council meetings.

Mr. Dredge is not advocating to shirk duties, only to be more efficient.

Ms. Griffiths pointed out that one of the Council's chief goals is to become more efficient and cost effective and every time a meeting is held it costs money.

Mr. Brass suggested that it might be more cost effective to work until 8:30 p.m. two nights a month instead of 7:00 p.m. three or four nights a month. Others agreed with this concept.

Mr. Wagstaff stated that he will gladly lump business into two meetings a month, however, there is one element to consider, which is the schedule that was approved and published at the beginning of the year.

Ms. Dunn said that schedule can be amended at any time.

Mr. Brass added that with his travel schedule it would be helpful to him to have one less meeting to work around each month.

Mr. Dredge noted that if another meeting is required it can always be used.

Mr. Wagstaff asked if it would be good to go to the first two meetings every month and then add the last if necessary.

Ms. Dunn responded that it would be better, due to business travel schedules, to amend the meeting dates more like 60 days in advance. The other idea would be to leave three meetings on the schedule and the month before decide which meeting could be dropped.

Mr. Brass mentioned he has asked to have the October RDA meeting moved from October 21, when there was no Council meeting, to October 28, which also has a regular Council meeting. He asked if that works for everyone. Responses were positive.

Mr. Wagstaff said that if the meeting is left on the calendar, then the administration sees openings and schedules commitments. If he had two then the third could be added as needed.

Ms. Dunn confirmed that it would be fine. The public hearings do have to have public notice. But she agreed that scheduling two would be fine. She asked if planning the first and third Tuesdays would work and add the fourth, when necessary.

Mr. Brass said that he is satisfied with the current October schedule, because of some travel that must be done the week of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Dredge said that one local City Manager suggested that staff makes presentations and then several are voted on at once. This is similar to a consent agenda.

Mr. Brass said that he had noticed that on agendas from other cities, however, he feels it is best to handle each item separately. Murray is not that overloaded on the agenda.

**Goal #5** Investigate avenues and possibilities for maintaining the general welfare and enhancing the quality of life for Murray residents.

Ms. Griffiths said that this goal is primarily focused on the need for a performing arts venue. The location does not have to be as proposed by the Parks Department and if a location is included in the downtown master plan, no one would be opposed to that. There is a need for a venue, for public meetings and gathering.

Mr. Brass stated that it is disturbing to him that the Advisory Board wants to get rid of the Murray Theater because there is no parking. If the parking issue could be resolved, that is a nice old building, even though he does not care for the use of the building just now. Last Tuesday there were kids in the middle of the street directing cars to the back parking lot while standing in the middle of the road. That could be restored for less money than rebuilding.

Ms. Griffiths said that the location is secondary, we just need to have a venue. Many people may think it is a frill and unnecessary, however, she disagrees, there needs to be a gathering place in the City.

Mr. Brass stated that he would love to be able to hold City banquets in Murray. Spending \$10 million for one dinner a year is extreme, however, he would like to find a way to do that.

Ms. Griffiths agreed and she does not want this to be on the back burner.

Ms. Dunn said that because this is such a priority for Ms. Griffiths, she would like to ask her to take responsibility for the project.

Mr. Brass suggested that Ms. Griffiths meet with Gerding Edlen to find out how it can be achieved.

Ms. Griffiths would like to do that. She mentioned that in the newspaper there was an article stating that the county cultural arts master plan has been postponed.

This has been postponed due to political reasons, according to Mr. Brass.

Ms. Griffiths said that more amphitheaters have been suggested, which are seasonal facilities, and a Broadway style theater, including three projects in Midvale.

Mr. Brass said that cannot be supported.

Ms. Dunn said that one county party leans heavily toward giving a lot of money to Sandy for their theater.

Ms. Griffiths does want to continue working toward this end and she would like to continue to support the Friends of the Murray Centre for the Performing Arts. Mary Ann Kirk should be included when it comes time to meet with stakeholders of the area. She suggested that maybe it should be included in the downtown revitalization.

Mr. Brass said that the center built in Portland is stunning, however, if included with the downtown plans, it may become buried and that should not occur.

Ms. Dunn said that Ms. Griffiths would take over on that goal and she is welcome to involve other Council Members.

Mr. Brass said that he will mention to Mr. Tingey to keep this project in mind when meeting with Gerdin Edlen in order to accomplish this.

Ms. Griffiths also mentioned the increase in bicyclers around the City and she feels that should be addressed as well. She feels strongly about that because her son is an avid bicycler and rode in the Logan to Jackson Hole ride for the last three years. She is always cognizant of bikers.

Ms. Dunn agreed that it is something that needs to stay in the quality of life area and the priority should be a B. All agreed.

**Goal #6**      Increased Council Involvement, Research and Awareness of Municipal Issues

Mr. Wagstaff commented that this involves education, attending meetings and making that a priority. Mr. Brass is attending a land use seminar in the next few weeks and he has made it a priority to further his knowledge in that area. In general, it is getting Council involved in the issues.

Ms. Dunn said that it is important to have Murray people involved at the legislature. It is important for legislators to know us and what city we represent.

Mr. Brass said that the interesting thing about his job is that he gets to go to Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS) and American Public Power Association (APPA) meetings anyway and alternative energy type conferences, so all of that can be learned and shared. He was able to introduce Tim Cosgrove to a gentleman from Salt Lake Community College at the Economic Development Corporation of Utah (EDCU) luncheon. The issue was the direction that trade education is taking in the state. It was going to be thrown under the ATC,

however, now there is legislation to put it back under Salt Lake Community College. Utah Valley University has terminated all of the trade education. For Murray City Power it means there is no training arm for a journey lineman. Murray's journeymen average age is more than 50. It is a four-year program, however, when completed the pay is more than \$100,000 per year. Line work, electrical and plumbing work is needed. Knowing Mr. Cosgrove, gaining his interest and with support from other cities, has had an impact on this issue.

Ms. Griffiths added that everyone does not have the aptitude to be a professional and we need these other trades.

Mr. Brass pointed out that by knowing the legislator he was able to get this accomplished. Other cities obtain available dollars for roads and arts and if we are more visible we can do it too.

Ms. Griffiths said that the reason Midvale has gotten such favorable response on the cultural arts master plan was because their Mayor was involved. She is on the steering committee.

Ms. Dunn said that we can do the same thing by getting involved. She sees Salt Lake City Council getting very involved with the League of Cities and Towns and the Salt Lake Mayor does not attend. She feels that her presence there has gotten Murray a lot of attention. We are one of the cities that they are quick to jump to our aid. In fact, on House Bill 40 they are willing to help us with what we want. They will step in and help those they know.

Ms. Griffiths thinks that all the Council coming together on performing arts has made a difference.

Mr. Brass said that it does not take very many emails to a legislator to persuade them. In our own careers on the Council, you respond to those who contact you. We are all busy, but this is worthwhile and it makes a difference.

Ms. Dunn responded that this concept can be stretched to the national level too. There are cities in Utah that are bringing in a ton of money, and, regardless of whether you believe in earmarks or not, if it is going to be spent then Murray is better off participating. She felt it was interesting to see the behavior of our representatives in Washington when they sat at the tables of those who have been in attendance every year. The others were not recognized. Their schedules were full with those cities and Ms. Dunn was not able to meet with them. This is up to the Council and she would love to see the entire group meet with them. The cost of the travel will be an investment toward the future. Even if for the first few years no money is gained there is much education to be gleaned along the way.

Mr. Brass added that it is important to learn the processes. With the money available now, Murray is not able to repair its roads and he looks at what St. George is doing with the money

brought in from outside the state. Provo, Ogden, Layton and Sandy all play the system, however, it takes time.

Ms. Dunn said that should be a high priority. She will take the lead on that but it is intended that everyone participate. Regarding the APPA conference, the pre conference seminars are really designed for elected officials running the utilities. These days are usually scheduled over a weekend.

Mr. Brass commented that he has learned so much on alternative energy. You look at things differently and consider what can be accomplished. He has observed, and talked with Mr. Haacke about, the possibility of cutting energy costs by 25%. If that happens then Murray has way too much IPP resource. In 2025, the California contracts expire and Murray must take the entire 75 megawatts. At this point, the City needs to plan for the future, because if we have to take it all, we will be bankrupt.

Ms. Dunn expressed the importance of elected officials understanding how it all works.

Mr. Brass said that he has discussed this issue with Mr. Haacke, so there are 18 years to figure out what to do. Now there are many cities that would like the resource so if we can contract it out, Murray can make money off of it. These are the things that you learn about national policy that make conference attendance worthwhile.

**Goal #7** Create a sense of security for Murray residents by attempting to reduce crime, improving emergency response times, and in general assisting in the clean up of potentially unsafe and hazardous properties.

Ms. Dunn asked if this needs to be a goal or if it is something that is being worked on from day to day.

Mr. Wagstaff stated that going down into strategies discussed in prior meetings there were topics, such as, traffic calming and code enforcement issues.

Mr. Brass stated that Mr. Tingey is working hard on code enforcement. There are properties with owners that willfully disregard code enforcement. One can talk with them and they don't care and won't make any changes. Those are beginning to bother more and more. In other situations, the owners are physically unable to take care of it. As the City looks at this there must be a balance and the idea Mr. Tingey presented to reallocate Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money toward that is good and moving forward. If there is ever increment on Fireclay it can be used toward this, as well. It actually is an administrative issue.

Mr. Dredge stated that he would take the responsibility for this goal.



Ms. Dunn added that there are other things to look at and one issue is that with the current economic situation, some people have decided not to water the lawn.

Mr. Brass said that the City can cut weeds and lien the property, however, it is not possible to go into the property and turn the water on.

Ms. Dunn said that there is no City ordinance about watering lawns.

Mr. Brass added that the cost to enforce, prosecute and ticket is a budget item. The county is doing sweeps. They select an area and sweep through to clean up. White City is the one being done now and that might not be a bad idea.

Mr. Dredge agreed that the Council needs to empower the staff rather than direct them. He would like to give Mr. Tingey some time to research and work on this. It is important to decide how far the City should go toward legislating property maintenance.

Mr. Brass offered that in this economy it will not improve. Houses are starting to go vacant, several in his district. Eventually these may become rentals and the issues could escalate. The Council has asked the police to be strict on traffic enforcement and that takes away from concentration on code enforcement. As the Council gives direction, there must be a balance because there are limited resources.

Ms. Griffiths said that these are two distinct issues.

Mr. Brass explained a situation in his neighborhood which was a bush on private property that impeded the view of traffic. The owners refused to do anything about it, however, the City went in and cut it down. We must recognize that takes time and money and it must be supported in the budget. He added that a neighbor has lost both feet and can't mow, but other neighbors take care of it for her. There are those situations.

Mr. Dredge said that there is enough community spirit to take care of these issues but it does need to be coordinated.

**Goal #8** Provide quality municipal services while maintaining adequate infrastructure that ensures the livability and economic viability of Murray City.

This is an interesting item as the Council looks at cutting the budget, Mr. Brass offered.

Ms. Dunn stated that for many departments, cutting the budget means cutting people or cutting services or both. It also involves the equipment that is used for people to do their job.

Mr. Brass said that it is imperative that we do not do that.

Mr. Dredge commented that 70% of the budget is personnel.

Mr. Brass said that when property tax education was done before the tax increase, citizens decided that they would rather pay the taxes than lose services.

Ms. Dunn brought up that people don't realize what they get for the money spent in tax dollars. It would be good to send out educational pieces through the Journal or other avenues to let people know what their money buys in service.

Ms. Griffiths talked with a citizen who lives in the area of Walden Hills and Walden Meadows, in Mr. Robertson's district, and she mentioned that driving from the west to enter the freeway is like a suicide mission. She asked who has jurisdiction over that area.

Mr. Brass said that it is a state road and he agrees that the intersection is dangerous. To get on the freeway or 300 West one must cross six lanes of traffic.

Mr. Nakamura said that those issues should be directed to the Mayor's office, who in turn contacts the state. He also said that Mr. Hill has great credibility and is very effective in working on issues such as this.

Ms. Dunn agreed and commented that she had contacted Mr. Hill about Utah Transit Authority (UTA) issues and the response was great.

Ms. Dunn adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Janet M. Lopez  
Administrative Secretary