

CITY OF DELTA, UTAH
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 23, 2009

PRESENT

Gayle Bunker
Robert Banks
Kiley Chase
Bruce Curtis
John Niles
Betty Jo Western

Mayor
Council Member
Council Member
Council Member
Council Member
Council Member

ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Merrill Nielson
Kent & Linda Stewart
Don & Eva D. Nielsen
Judy Kelley
Myrna Longhurst
Ireta Shurtz
Philip Morrison
Merlin Sampson
Sindy McMichael
LaWanna Peterson
Craig & Jackie Neilson
Paul & Carrie Stephenson
Becky Prestwich
Nila Willden
Steve Koga
Elmo Nielsen
Owen Nielsen
D. Scott Nickle
Roger & Bobbie Killpack
Roger Anderson
Terry C. Finlinson
Julie Draper
Susan Stefanoff
Lorie Skeem
James Severn
Jane Beckwith
Gregory Schafer

Area Resident
City Residents
Area Residents
Area Resident
D.U.P. Museum Board
D.U.P. Museum Board
Great Basin Museum Board
Visitor
Area Resident
Great Basin Museum Board
City Residents
City Residents
City Resident
Area Resident
Visitor
Area Resident
Area Resident
City Resident
City Residents
Area Resident
City Resident
City Resident
City Resident
Area Resident
Visitor
Topaz Museum Board
City Recorder

Mayor Bunker called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. He stated that notice of the public hearing had been posted at the City Building and had been provided to the Millard County Chronicle/Progress and to each member of the City Council at least two days prior to the meeting.

Mayor Bunker stated that the purpose of the meeting was to hold a public hearing to consider requesting funding from the Permanent Community Impact Fund Board, commonly known as the CIB, for construction of a proposed facility to house the Great Basin Museum, Topaz Museum, Daughters of Utah Pioneers and a community center on property located at approximately 75 West Main Street in Delta. Mayor Bunker indicated that the City Council will request a \$1,000,000 grant from the Permanent Community Impact Fund Board for the project. It will likely be a matching grant, which requires that local funds be used to match the amount of the grant. Amounts already expended for property purchase and architectural expense can be used as matching funds for grant purposes.

Mayor Bunker provided a short history of the process which has taken place to bring the project to this point. Mayor Bunker indicated that the driving force of this project is the necessity of having our museums and community center located on Main Street where they are easy to find. He also stated that a \$30,000 grant had been received from the Permanent Community Impact Fund Board for initial planning. When the planning stage was completed, the board of directors obtained bids and chose an architect for the project. After explaining the process, Mayor Bunker invited members of board of directors for each of the three museums to explain their ideas for the project.

Philip Morrison, representing Great Basin Museum, expressed a need to preserve the heritage of our area. He stated that if we do not take the time and make the investment to provide a facility to preserve our heritage, it will disappear. Great Basin Museum has done a good job of operating in their current building but it is an old building that is wearing out and there is lack of visibility and display area for the museum at its current location. Everyone who goes through the museum is impressed with the exhibits but it is felt that a location on Main Street would increase museum business ten-fold due to increased awareness for both local residents and tourists.

Jane Beckwith, representing Topaz Museum, noted that they have been attempting to find a location for a Topaz Internment Camp museum for a number of years. Many people come to Delta because of their interest in the Topaz Internment Camp which was active during World War II. During the past two months there have been five schools bringing approximately 250 students to learn about the history of the Topaz Internment Camp. Topaz Museum currently uses a portion of the Great Basin Museum. That facility will not hold the number of students who come to learn about Topaz. Ms. Beckwith is amazed at the number of local residents who do not know much about the Topaz Internment Camp and have never been to the site. She feels that this project would allow adequate space to house the students who come to learn about the history of Topaz and would make it possible to educate many more individuals, both local and tourists, about the portion of U.S. history which took place in our area.

Ireta Shurtz, representing Daughters of Utah Pioneers, indicated that her organization requested to

be included in the museum / community center project about four years ago because the Daughters of Utah Pioneers do not have a facility to house artifacts they have gathered. Sometimes artifacts are displayed during meetings or conferences, but there is no permanent location where the items can be kept on display.

Mayor Bunker noted that the museum / community center will not be a taxing entity so they will be looking for funding from several sources including the Permanent Community Impact Fund Board, the State of Utah, our federal legislators, as well as foundations and groups for construction of the project. Donations will also come from local families, former families and the families of those who were interned at the Topaz camp. Mayor Bunker feels that the cost of construction will be approximately \$4 - \$5 million, which will provide 27,000 square feet of space.

Mayor Bunker opened the public hearing to comment from the public.

Paul Stephenson, a retired Certified Public Accountant, asked how maintenance of the facility would be funded and what the expected annual cost of maintenance would be. Mayor Bunker stated that a transient room tax of 1% has been adopted to be used for maintenance and operation of the museum / community center facility. Donations and fund raising events will provide funds for maintenance and operation. At some point in the future, it may become necessary to charge for use of the facility. The museums will be operated by volunteers and the chamber of commerce office will be located in the facility so that tourism information will be available at a convenient location.

Lorie Skeem, Delta Area Chamber of Commerce office manager, stated that during the last year and one-half that she has been working for the Chamber of Commerce, she has received many questions about what there is to do in Delta. Ms. Skeem feels that the museum / community center will be a great asset to the community to make it memorable to tourists. She frequently receives calls asking for a facility where meetings can be held and there is very little available for meetings and social gatherings other than churches and schools.

Mayor Bunker stated that there are many conferences held around the state where there are 50 - 150 participants that would come to Delta if we had a facility available for use. If we can bring in conferences, it will be a boost to the local economy because all those people will utilize local facilities and businesses.

Steve Koga, of Ogden, said that his mother was one of the internees at the Topaz Internment Camp. Mr. Koga expressed the importance of internment issues nationally and stated that his interest in the project is educational. He feels that much can be done with school children in teaching them about the Topaz Internment Camp and lessons that can be learned from that experience. Mr. Koga offered some suggestions of things which could be included in the museum facility to create additional tourism.

Becky Prestwich, a Delta City Library Board Member, asked whether the Topaz Camp building would be inside the Topaz Museum. She was told that the building would be located outside the museum facility.

Elmo Nielsen, of Leamington, said he was impressed with the plans and believes it would be a very nice facility but questioned whether taxes would need to be paid on the facility. Mayor Bunker indicated that the facility would be owned by a non-profit organization and would not be subject to property taxes, however, drainage district taxes will have to be paid. At present, drainage district taxes are approximately \$10 per year.

Linda Stewart questioned whether there would be a fee charged to help fund the facility. Mayor Bunker expressed hope that there will not be a fee but it may be necessary to charge a nominal fee. Donations boxes will be available and it is hoped the donations will be adequate so that admission fees are not necessary.

Kent Stewart asked about the fire protection system for the building. Mayor Bunker stated that they have not discussed fire protection at this stage of the process. None of the engineering has been done at this point. Mr. Stewart asked about security at the museum. Mayor Bunker answered that this will be addressed in the engineering phase of the project. At this time we simply have architectural drawings of floor plans and building construction but none of the internal systems have been designed.

Mayor Bunker indicated it will probably take two to three years to find adequate funding for the facility. Construction could probably begin when 50% of the funding is available. It is hoped that the community will take ownership of the facility by putting some effort into making it a reality. Perhaps local cabinet makers would be willing to construct cabinets if we provide materials or local electricians may be willing to help with some of the electrical work and other construction trades to keep costs at a minimum. Delta City will be the general contractor on the facility and will bid out subcontractors for construction rather than hiring a general contractor to oversee construction. Delta City has acted as the general contractor on other city projects and it has worked well. There are many areas where community members could be involved and we hope they will come forward to assist.

Mayor Bunker asked if there were any additional comments. When none were offered, he thanked everyone for their comments and invited those in attendance to spend some time looking at the drawings of the proposed facility.

Mayor Bunker declared the public hearing closed at 7:48 p.m.

GAYLE BUNKER, Mayor

GREGORY JAY SCHAFER, MMC, CITY RECORDER

MINUTES APPROVED: RCCM 05-07-09