

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Special Meeting/Work Session – May 15, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice, a special meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Erickson, Downs, Johnson, Markeson, Meuers, Hellquist, Lehmann.

Staff Present: John Chattin, Alan Felix, Curt Oakes, Kay Murphy
Others Present: Paul Richards

Mayor Lehmann stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Events Center and formulate questions for Leo A Daly who will be in Bemidji at the end of the month. The bonding request has to be into the Legislature by June 25.

Paul Richards, Widseth Smith & Nolting, facilitated the discussion to define the vision and goals for the Bemidji Regional Event Center. He stated that the Council should discuss not "if," rather "if then what?" The results of the latter question, drives the first question.

Richards asked the Council to consider the following two questions given the State is considering funding for a downtown regional event center, which would include (but is not limited to) an ice arena and conference/convention capabilities:

1. Describe the uniqueness/philosophy of our community/region that could be reflected in a Regional Center?
2. With this in mind, what will make this a successful Regional Center?

Uniqueness/Philosophy

The following are the Council's top choices describing the uniqueness/philosophy of our community/region that should be reflected in a Regional Center:

1. Community Public Use
2. Cultural Heritage
3. Financially sustainable/accessible
4. Improve Economy and Downtown
5. Welcoming Façade
6. Green Design

Richards commented that at the public meetings green design was brought up most often.

Successful

The following are the Council's top choices describing what will make this a successful Regional Center:

1. Public Acceptance: Cost, Design, Location
2. Well Managed
3. Financially Feasible – for public use
4. Partnership with BSU: Equitable Agreement, Long-term
5. Leveraging Surrounding Attractions

EVENT CENTER SITE

Mayor Lehmann stated that the Task Force is recommending the Council adopt Site A as the preferred location for the Event Center. Site A is deemed most desirable for the following reasons:

- Function as an anchor at the west end of 2nd Street
- Close proximity to the existing core downtown
- Better position to take advantage of dispersed on-street and existing off-street parking, thereby decreasing the amount of new parking that would have to be created
- Takes advantage of the area under the Irvine Avenue Bridge for "back of house" access
- Avoids areas that are assumed to have high potential for cultural resources
- Leaves intact the businesses and residential units in the Mercantile building

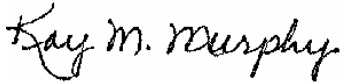
- Takes advantage of property currently owned by the City and makes efficient use of the rail corridor
- Leaves space for future commercial development between the Event Center and waterfront

Motion by Downs, second by Johnson, accepting the recommendation of the Event Center Task Force to select Site A as the location for the Event Center and direct the design team to proceed with a design for that location. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Johnson, second by Markeson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk