

Minutes of the work session of the Winslow City Council held on July 25, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. in the main hall of the Winslow Visitor's Center, 523 West Second Street, Winslow, Arizona.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Cano, Councilmember Cake, Councilmember Crisp, Councilmember MacLean, Councilmember McKee, Councilmember Nelson (via Zoom), Councilmember Tafoya

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF:

David Coolidge City Manager, Trish Stuhan City Attorney, Suzy Wetzel City Clerk, Tim Westover Public Works Director

Mayor Cano called the meeting to order. The Pledge was given and the Invocation was offered by Mayor Cano. Roll call was taken and all members were present.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

A. Discussion Regarding Old Police Department Facility Located at 115 East Second Street, Winslow, Arizona

After Mayor Cano stated that she requested a work session to discuss what should be done with this property, the City Manager reminded the Council that this was one of the items that was withheld from the fiscal year 2024 capital improvements project list until further discussion could take place.

The City Manager stated that the property had been put on the market but was removed due to the fact that there is an issue with a sewer line running through it. The City Manager informed the Council that a portion of the roof was replaced and two HVAC units were installed to the front portion the building over the last couple of years. The City Manager noted that Transit currently utilizes the former council chambers area and the rear of the facility is used for storage of records.

The City Manager distributed a conceptual drawing showing proposed renovations to the council chambers portion of the building that were prepared prior to the decision being made to move the council meetings to the Hubbell Building. The City Manager advised the Council that if the meetings are moved back to the old facility, the foyer would have to

be remodeled and the restrooms would have to be ADA compliant. The City Manager stated that the property is a valued piece of property due to its location and it is up to the Council to determine the best use for the building.

Mayor Cano discussed the fact that it takes staff considerable time to set up for council meetings and feels that it would be worth moving back to the old council chambers due to the improvements that have been made to the facility.

Mayor Cano stated that the only reason selling the building came up was because someone made an offer to purchase it. There was discussion regarding the challenges of trying to sell the building due to the sewer line issue. Councilmember Cake stated that he is not necessarily against moving back to the old council chambers but he does have an issue with the cost of utilizing such a large building for just record storage and a council chambers.

Mayor Cano discussed other possible options for the building that included an entrepreneurial center, an indoor farmers market or extension of the Old Trails Museum. Mayor Cano also stated that the restrooms could serve as public restrooms for the downtown area.

In response to a question from Councilmember MacLean, the City Manager and Public Works Director stated that the cost of the new roof and HVAC units was approximately \$300,000. Councilmember MacLean stated that based on discussion over the last two years, he was under the impression that the concept was to eventually build a city complex in the area of the new library next to the Hubbell Building. There was further discussion regarding a new complex that would be constructed in phases and Mayor Cano stated that in the interim, a decision needs to be made on how to conduct city business in a professional and efficient manner.

Councilmember McKee stated that in light of the fact that there have been improvements made to the old police department building, she feels it is a good idea to move forward with renovating the front portion of the building and utilizing it for a council chambers since future improvements will make the property more valuable.

The Public Works Director and the City Manager responded to a question from Councilmember Crisp regarding how remodeling the old council chambers would fit into the schedule for the new library and new city hall. Mayor Cano commented on the need for an office for the Mayor & Council and the Public Works Director stated that an office could easily be added next to the old council chambers. The City

Manager stated that the new city hall facility will include vacant offices for the Mayor & Council and a small conference room. The City Manager also stated that the current city hall conference room will be expanded into a larger room.

Councilmember MacLean stated that he feels there is a problem with constituents not being able to see the screen when presentations are given during council meetings at the current meeting room and inquired about the feasibility of utilizing funds to address audio/visual needs.

There was discussion regarding the cost of constructing new restrooms downtown, which the City Manager clarified would be approximately \$200,000, and the cost to remodel and secure the restrooms in the old police department for public use.

Councilmember MacLean commented on new planned development coming to Winslow that will bring in new community members resulting in the downtown area becoming more valuable. Councilmember MacLean also commented on the aesthetics of the building and stated that he is not in a hurry to spend money on a building that the city may consider selling in the future. Councilmember Crisp stated that she is not in favor of rushing into selling the building due to its historical value.

Mary Grayeske stated that she thinks it is a great idea for the city to hold onto their property and commented on the fact that not having a public restroom in the downtown area is a real problem. After Ms. Grayeske asked what the city is doing to address the absentee landlord problem, Mayor Cano stated that topic is not on the agenda for discussion tonight.

Kelly McCauley stated that he thinks it would be a mistake to put additional money into an old building and suggested that the city look at a long term lease with a developer that could create a new facade. Mr. McCauley also stated that First Street is a better option for downtown restrooms.

There was discussion regarding the feasibility of leasing the building and the City Attorney provided options on how a Request for Proposals could be prepared to address specific needs. The City Manager stated that a Downtown Master Plan is needed prior to issuing an RFP.

In response to a comment from Councilmember Tafoya regarding the fact that the sewer line needs to be addressed regardless of whether the city keeps or sells the property, the City Manager stated that funds will be included in next year's budget for the sewer line project.

Councilmember MacLean stated that he likes the idea of a long term lease for the old police department and recognized the fact that it takes a considerable amount of time and effort to set up for council meetings. Councilmember MacLean stated that since the city owns the Hubbell Building, he would like to take a portion of the \$200,000 set aside for renovation of the old council chambers and utilize the funds to make it easier for staff to set up for meetings at the Hubbell Building.

Mayor Cano stated that if minimal renovations with some modern updates are done to the old council chambers, it could still look professional and reduce the amount of staff time needed to set up for council meetings. After Councilmembers MacLean and Tafoya inquired about the cost to make updates to the current meeting room versus a refresh of the old council chambers, the City Manager reminded the Council that Transit would have to be relocated. The City Manager referred to ADA requirements and stated that there are challenges with relocating offices since the new city hall facility will not be ready for at least a year.

Councilmember Crisp referred to the proposed changes to the Hubbell meeting room and stated that there should be a conversation with Chamber staff and their Board before proceeding too far into the process.

In light of the discussion and clarification that it is not necessary for a decision to be made tonight, staff was directed to come back with costs for basic renovations to the old council chambers as well as costs to make practical changes to the current meeting room so that the Council can discuss further before making a final decision. The City Manager asked that staff be given a few months to gather the information that the Council is requesting.

There was a brief discussion regarding possible uses for the back portion of the old police department building and the suggestion was made to consider having a structural engineer inspect the building. The Council also indicated that they would like to tour the facility. The City Attorney briefly commented on options to consider if the Council decides they want to lease the building.

Prior to adjourning, Councilmember Crisp thanked the public for attending and providing their comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Moved by Councilmember MacLean, seconded by Councilmember Cake, to adjourn the work session at 6:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously

with Mayor Cano and Councilmembers Cake, Crisp, MacLean, McKee, Nelson and Tafoya voting yes.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the work session of the Winslow City Council held on July 25, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Dated this *12th* day of *September*, 2023.

Suzy Wetzel

City Clerk