

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL CONVENTION, ZOO AND VISITOR FACILITIES  
COMMITTEE OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT

Regular Meeting  
October 24, 1989

Committee members present: Councilors David Knowles (Chair),  
Tom DeJardin, Ruth McFarland and  
George Van Bergen

Committee members absent: Roger Buchanan

Acting Chair Van Bergen called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.  
with Committee member McFarland and himself present.

1. Convention Center Construction Report

Glenn Taylor, Metro Construction Coordinator, gave the construction report. Work is approximately 63 percent complete and on schedule, despite the labor strike against Hoffman. Mr. Taylor said the interior concrete was substantially complete and ODOT was almost finished with the N.E. Glisan curb reconstruction and should re-open the street at the end of October or early November.

Chair Knowles said he would like to see a report showing a comparison of current and prior data on the contract status report. Staff said they would do that on the next report. In response to Councilor questions, he said the only real problem would be a major labor shortage, but he does not foresee any problems.

2. FY 89-90 First Quarter Program Progress Reports -  
Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission, Convention  
Center Project, Metro Washington Park Zoo

Neil McFarlane, Management Analyst, gave the quarterly report for the Convention Center Project. In cooperation with the MERC staff, a newsletter is being produced to promote the Convention Center and contributions are being made to Metro news articles. He said tours (up to 10 a week) were being scheduled regularly for organizations interested in renting the Convention Center.

Mr. McFarlane noted the first \$7.5 million quarterly payment from lottery funds had been received from the State of Oregon and the same was expected in mid-1990. Payment was still expected from the City of Portland for the LIDs. In response to questions from Councilor McFarland, Mr. McFarlane stated the prospect looked good for collecting delinquencies. He then went over the signage issue, noting that bids received for that work were well over the \$530,000 budget. As a result, the architect has been redesigning the project and renegotiating the signage contract with the signage contractor, which has resulted in bringing the cost much closer to budget. He added this issue did not involve any interior signage, only the outside signs.

The decorative tiles have been received and will be one of the last items to be installed. He added the paintings are in progress and on schedule. Bids on wiring have been received and U.S. West was the low bidder, being well under the estimated budget for this project.

In conjunction with acquiring the needed property for the Convention Center, Mr. McFarlane noted the Venetian Blind contested case hearing would be back to the Council on November 9, 1989. In relation to relocation claims, he said Rose City Plating had filed a belated suit with the Executive Officer; who responded by rejecting the claim. It was not known if Rose City Plating intended to file a claim with the Council.

Jeff Blosser, Convention Center Manager, presented the MERC quarterly report. He said 33 groups have booked the Convention Center and another 100-120 are tentatively on the books through 1998. Direct mail is being used to contact 600 to 700 groups and various trade show representatives. It was also noted license agreements have been approved by MERC and 54 events are currently scheduled for FY 90-91. Mr. Blosser said staffing of the Convention Center has begun and included a receptionist, Events Manager (in charge of the events themselves), Sales/Marketing Director and Operations/Maintenance Section Supervisor. He added the food service provider has been selected and commenced their operation October 2nd. Lee Fehrenkamp, General Manager of the Portland ERC said the bidders for the computer system have been narrowed down to two bidders and are in the site selection process. In response to questions, Mr. Fehrenkamp said the bids are within the budget.

Mr. Blosser noted the grand opening is set for September 19 - 23, 1990, and will include an all Oregon trade show. The Steering Committee has been working to get a broad representation of the private and public sector to help with the grand opening. It was noted that the best way to show what the Convention Center could do was to have a trade show during the grand opening. For this reason, an RFP for a Trade Show Producer has been solicited, with four responses being received. It was expected that someone would be on board within 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Fehrenkamp then mentioned the Advisory Committee formed to assist with the development of economic opportunity in conjunction with HB 3075, which gives first opportunity for employment to disadvantaged citizens living around the Convention Center (Outreach Program). It was hoped to fill 50 positions between January and when the Convention Center opens.

Chair Knowles asked that all copies of information, including minutes and quarterly reports, relating to the Convention Center and the Advisory Committee be made available to the Committee. Mr. Fehrenkamp said that would be done. He also noted in July the ER Commission donated one square block of property (between the Convention Center and Coliseum) to Tri-Met for the development of a bus transfer station and to provide a walkway connecting the two buildings.

Chair Knowles then said the quarterly report for the Metro Washington Park Zoo would be postponed until the next Committee meeting on November 7, 1989.

3. Zoo Tax Levy Worksession, Discussion of Levy Options and Filing Schedule

At the September 12 Committee meeting, the Committee requested a report on how the Metro Washington Park Zoo's 50/50 policy compared to other similar zoos regarding tax and non-tax resources for operations and maintenance. Sherry Sheng, Zoo Director, gave the Committee a survey showing the comparisons, noting the average subsidy was 57 percent. She said progress was continuing on the telephone poll to be conducted by The Friends of the Zoo. The pollsters (Tim Hibbits and Bob Moore) have settled on the questions to be asked. Ms. Sheng explained the questions would be centered around three proposed levies: one for two years, one for three years and one for five years. She said it would take about two weeks for the information to be gathered and the poll interpreted. The results should be available by November 8th. Councilor Van Bergen asked why a poll was being conducted at this time. Ms. Sheng said there was a need to verify if the timing was right for proposing a levy. Chair Knowles added that information received in the poll would help in putting the levy together.

Don Carlson, Council Administrator, then referenced the report from Linda Craig, who volunteered to help with the Zoo levy, and noted in response to Councilor questions that Ms. Craig did not respond to the question regarding insights offered by the historical analysis for the 1990 serial levy and the current financial and operations assumptions outlined in the new Zoo Five-Year Financial Plan.

4. Upcoming Agenda Items

Chair Knowles mentioned the upcoming Council retreat planned for November 17 - 18, 1989, noting that Committee members need to think of policy issues they feel should be discussed at that

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time. Councilor Van Bergen said he felt the retreat would be a good time to remind both old and new Councilors of department policies. He added there was a need to think about what needs to happen regarding consolidation when the Convention Center is completed.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Brunson  
Committee Clerk

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