

COMMON AGENDA
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2003
Immediately Following Joint LPS/City/County Meeting
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING - ROOM 113

I. MINUTES

- A. Minutes of Common Meeting of January 14, 2003

II. PRESENTATIONS

- A. PBC Presentation (Don Killeen) - *30 Min.*
- B. *Healthy People 2010* Mental Health Addendum (D.Settle/Denise Bulling/Bruce Dart) *20 Min*
- C. Discussion on Joint City/County Staff Position - *20 Min.*

III ADJOURNMENT

COMMON MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2003- 8:40 a.m.

County-City Building
Conference Room 113

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ken Svoboda, Common Chair, Jon Camp, Jonathan Cook; Glenn Friendt (Late for Minutes Vote); Annette McRoy; Coleen Seng; Terry Werner **COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None; *MAYOR WESELY:* In Attendance.

COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ray Stevens, Common Vice-Chair; Larry Hudkins, Deb Schorr, Bob Workman. *COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:* Bernie Heier.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: - Presenters, Staff, members of the public and media representatives.

I. MINUTES

1) Common Meeting of Tuesday, January 14, 2003

Chair Ken Svoboda opened the meeting and called for approval of the above-listed minutes. Jonathan Cook moved approval of the minutes, as presented. Coleen Seng seconded the motion which carried by the following vote: **AYES:** Mayor Don Wesely, Jon Camp, Jonathan Cook, Larry Hudkins, Annette McRoy, Deb Schorr, Coleen Seng, Ray Stevens, Ken Svoboda, Terry Werner, Bob Workman; **NAYS:** None; **ABSENT FOR VOTE:** Glenn Friendt; **ABSENT:** Bernie Heier

THIS MEETING WAS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS:

PUBLIC BUILDING COMMISSION PRESENTATION

HEALTHY PEOPLE 1010 MENTAL HEALTH ADDENDUM

DISCUSSION ON JOINT CITY/COUNTY STAFF POSITION

PBC PRESENTATION - Mr. Don Killeen and Ms. Linda Wilson and Mr. Larry Hudkins made the presentation for the Public Building Commission. Mr. Killeen noted that the PBC had been asked to make a brief presentation on an over-view and history of the Commission. He noted that the Commission was established in 1991 with Linda Wilson and Larry Hudkins being members since its inception.

Mr. Killeen handed out an outline of the History, Establishment and Accomplishments of the Commission. [Copy on file in the City Council Office] Mr. Killeen indicated that Ms. Wilson would review the History, he would review the Establishment section and Mr. Hudkins would review the Accomplishments portion of the presentation.

Ms. Wilson reviewed the happenings of the period between 1969, when the “new” County/City Building (currently the Justice and Law Enforcement Center) was constructed, through 1991, when the Building Commission was established. In 1969, two architects were utilized -one for County and one for City; two contractors were used -one for County and one for City. Operationally: the building was operated as two separate buildings -the north half being City and the south half being County. People really adhered to this - nobody wanted to be on the “other” side. If the County wanted to celebrate a holiday -or vice-versa- the south half of the escalator and bank of elevators would be shut down. Ms. Wilson recalled a holiday which was being celebrated by the County, but not the City, and the south bank of elevators weren't working....people were coming in to transact business and becoming very confused.

For a City Agency to move to the County side, or a County Agency to move to the City side, considerable discussion and negotiation between the two parties was required. The Budget cost of operating the building was divided in lump sum form between City and County Government. There was no incentive for agencies to conserve on space utilization. It isn't like it is now where every Department is billed by square footage...it was just a lump sum in the City and County Budgets.

Capital projects were difficult to fund due to a lack of a consistent process. There was no way to really get together to discuss those projects. Ms. Wilson indicated that when she first became a Council Member, Joe Hampton and Bill Danley were the City representatives who would meet monthly with the County representatives [Leo Schear and Jan Gauger] to talk about things, but nothing was really decided since they were merely an advisory committee..

Ms. Wilson explained that the one issue that really suffered under this arrangement was the Jail construction back in 1987 or '88. The County Board decided they wanted the Jail to be built south and judges and others wanted it to be built to the west. Mayor Harris and the Council got involved with the County Board's decision....and tempers did flare! There were comments in the newspaper by some Council members and by County Board members...people were at odds. It was not a good situation. If there had been a Building Commission - if there had been a Master Plan, that wouldn't have happened.

Mr. Killeen reported on the Establishment of the Building Commission. The Nebraska Legislature passed LB1003 in 1971 allowing cities where over ½ the population was in a respective county, to create a Building Commission. This initial legislation applied to metropolitan class cities, which at that time was only Omaha/Douglas County. The Omaha/Douglas County Building Commission was formed soon thereafter. In 1990, LB1098 was passed which allowed primary class cities to form a Building Commission. In August of 1991, the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County formed the current Public Building Commission. By statute the Commission consists of two County Board Members, two City Council Members and a fifth member from the public, chosen by the other four. If no consensus can be made for the fifth member among the elected officials, the Governor will appoint the public member.

By statute the City Attorney serves as legal counsel and the County Treasurer serves as the financial care-taker. When the Commission was formed, it adopted the Lancaster County Purchasing regulations and those are the regulations we follow. Ownership-wise - anything that the Building Commission is involved with or acquires is always held in the name of the City and the County jointly. All projects have to first be adopted by both the City Council and the County Board before the Building Commission undertakes such a project.

All the buildings that we manage are under long-term leases with the City and the County. In the legislation, the prime goal of the Building Commission has been to undertake joint projects and to manage joint facilities.

Mr. Hudkins briefly reviewed the Accomplishments of the Commission. He explained that one of the major accomplishments had been moving from a Building Committee to a Building Commission. When we went to a Public Building Commission, we've always had two City Council Members and Two County Board Members and a public member. The first public member was Dave Patrick of First Tier Bank and then when he resigned, Linda Wilson, who was off the Council at that point, was asked to take that place. The beauty of that arrangement was that we didn't have to re-train her because she'd already been on the Public Building Commission. She's done a marvelous job and we're glad that she continues to help us out.

Some of the successes we've achieved: Two that are not on the handout material are the Master Plans that we have completed. One was the footprint for this [Current County-City Building] and the second one [Space Needs Plan] was completed this year. It is very important that we always have these blueprints to avoid the conflicts that Linda outlined with the Corrections facility.

Some of the successes as outlined in the handout:

- 1993 - Acquisition and renovation of the Health Department Facility for a long term County-City Health Department campus setting. Mr. Hudkins noted that currently we're looking at another building there. He was thankful that we had acquired that land and building at the time we did.
- 1996 - Renovation of the former LES "K" Street Power Plant into a long term City, County and State of Nebraska records storage facility. This facility provides long term efficient and low-cost records storage for State and local governments. Mr. Hudkins added that what we need to do right now is to assess what we'll need for City and County needs in that facility. As huge as it is, it is filling up fast. The State and the State Historical Society are very much coveting the space.
- 1998 - Construction of the New County-City Building to house the current City/County Offices.
- 2000 - Renovation of the former County-City Building into the New Justice and Law Enforcement Center which houses the Courts and Law Enforcement offices. This project also involved abating the asbestos which was sprayed onto the decking throughout the building. and removing the old jail down in the basement area.
- 2003 - Currently undertaking the construction of the parking facility north of the County-City Building. Mr. Hudkins noted that they were pleased to have received an anonymous contribution of \$225,000 toward the connection between this building and the parking garage. Mr. Hudkins added a side note stating that when the bidding was delayed on the project from June to September, the architects were first projecting about \$800,000 over budget, but by the time we did the bidding, it was about \$500,000 under projected costs. It was beneficial to Lincoln/Lancaster County to be doing this now when commercial construction is not as heavily laden as it was last spring.
- Operations - Along with the construction and renovation of jointly held facilities, the Public Building Commission provides the means for consistent management of jointly held properties. Under the Building Commission structure, departments are accountable for the space they use in that they budget and pay for the square footage they use. This concept is something that we've adopted from the GSA Federal Government System.

Mr. Hudkins noted that he had been privileged to serve on the Public Building Commission since its inception. He commented that there have been a lot of great people to have worked with, adding that they were pleased to have Jon on board and Bob Workman taking over this year, too. He noted that Ms. Seng does a great job of keeping everyone on track with the history from the City side and it's a good mix. We need the private, the old-city, old-county and the new blood, too. It's been a privilege to serve on this Board.

Mr. Werner noted that the priorities for the next several years would be space needs, asking if that were correct? Mr. Killeen answered that that would be correct. Mr. Werner asked if the Building Commission abides by any written code of ethics regarding conflict of interests? Mr. Killeen indicated that they did not. Mr. Werner continued, stating that he felt there was a very clear conflict of interest with Mr. Camp serving on the Commission when the Commission is leasing property from him. Mr. Werner felt Mr. Camp should resign from the Building Commission. He encouraged the Commission to think about adopting some code of ethics that they would abide by because when one has a conflict of interest, Mr. Werner did not believe that was good government.

Ms. Wilson stated that at some point, if a member has a conflict of interest, they declare that. Whenever the Commission had work done by Campbell's Nursery, Ms. Campbell would abstain from voting. Mr. Werner stated that he understood a conflict declaration at that level, but when you're making plans and decisions over the next several years that would directly effect leasing some of your own property, he felt that to be a problem.

Mr. Hudkins stated that the City Council and the County Board Members, as well as the public member have been very good at recusing themselves of any decisions in which they have a personal interest. He stated that in the case of Jon Camp, it was probably to his best interest to go the way of redevelopment, yet, in our discussions and deliberations, he was looking at the over-all usage and utilization of buildings. In that case, some of us on the Public Building Commission were surprised that he took the stance that he did. He was espousing what was best for the Public Building Commission and the City and County as a whole, as we looked at the usage of the old police building and Trabert Hall and the Old Federal Building. Mr. Hudkins noted that all he could say of his observation of Councilman Camp, in that instance, was that Mr. Camp was looking at his duties as a Public Building Commissioner more so than at his own interests.

Mr. Werner noted that he was not questioning Jon's integrity at all. What he was saying, though, was that if the priorities over the next several years will be space redevelopment and the 3rd floor - and in the interim we are leasing space from Jon or anybody else....in his mind, a lot of decisions that indirectly affect that....would not be good open government. Mr. Werner thought it should be considered.

Mr. Camp stated that he appreciated what Mr. Hudkins said. Addressing Mr. Werner, Mr. Camp stated that he had checked with the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission regarding a conflict, and he had actually voted against the sale of Old Fed, which would have precluded any leasing in the outside community. It was all an above-board process. He stated that Mr. Werner has harped on this consistently from a political standpoint and Mr. Camp felt it was to Mr. Werner's own detriment that he continued to hammer at this issue with nothing but ulterior motives.

Mr. Friendt stated that he would like clarification. As County Members or City Council Members sitting on the Public Building Commission - both of those groups would be governed by the code of conduct that is in the Charter relating to conflict of interests. Every citizen that comes forward to serve could have that potential conflict and that is why it is included in the Charter. It would apply to anyone from these bodies serving on any Commission.

Mr. Werner stated that it was unfortunate that Mr. Camp brought politics into it. He was not questioning Mr. Camp's integrity. But there is a very clear conflict when you lease space to the Public Building Commission and you make decisions as a member of the Public Building Commission; that is a conflict of interest. Mr. Werner stated that we would be better served and have more open government if that were addressed and we had a different member on that committee.

Mr. Ray Stevens noted that, if it has nothing to do with politics and nothing to do with Jon's integrity, it is working fine the way it is. He commented that this is a City Council issue and that Council would have to figure it out amongst themselves; and he would just as soon get on with the business of this meeting.

Mr. Wesely stated that he thinks Mr. Werner made a good point and suggested to Mr. Camp that he should think about the concern that Mr. Werner has expressed. But he did want to move on to the make-up of the Commission - he would like to see the Mayor have some representation on this Commission. He noted that the Mayor's office is very much involved in many of these decisions. He commented that they did have an indirect, informal relationship which has worked well, but he thought there should be one person officially designated from the Mayor's Office on the Commission. Then there would be three City and two County...perhaps another County representative could be added; but he felt that this was a missing piece in the inclusive goal of the Commission.

Mr. Hudkins responded that either the Mayor, or Mark Bowen has always been notified of every one of the meetings and have always had a place at the table. Mayor Wesely stated that he wasn't included in the discussion... Mr. Hudkins continued stating that the reason there could not be three County Board Members is because that would constitute a quorum...which is the historical reason for the two/two/one membership split. He noted that during his tenure as Chair of the Public Building Commission, the Mayor's Office has always been represented and we've tried to work very closely with the Mayor's Office on issues.

Ms. Seng commented that she wanted an explanation as to whether or not the State Statute reads that we have the two/two split. Mr. Killeen indicated that it did. Ms. Seng stated that she remembered when this building was being planned that the Mayor's staff had to work very closely on that. She noted that there were times she wondered why we didn't have a Mayor's representative be a voting member on the Public Building Commission. She commented that right now, she knows we are regulated by State Statute, but wondered if we could ever work on that to get it changed?

Mr. Killeen stated that it would take a legal interpretation as to whether or not the Council could have one member of the Council and one member from the Mayor's Staff. He noted that was a possibility; they would have to ask that it be looked at. Basically, it says Two City/Two County/One Public.

Ms. Seng stated that when the Master Planning is going on, we really do need to have someone out of the Mayor's office because this is a Strong-Mayor form of government. She had always assumed it had to be done this way because that was the way it was set up by statute.

Mr. Killeen stated that over the past administrations there has always been close involvement. It would be a question to have Dana look at. Ms. Seng requested a follow-up on that. Mr. Killeen stated that he would have Dana give an interpretation of the statute.

Ms. Wilson stated that the Mayor had voted on that Master Plan. It had been a unanimous vote of the Council/County Board and Mike Johanns.

Mayor Wesely commented that going back in time is a good thing, because one forgets how far we've come. He hadn't realized that we had been that bad....noting that it sounded like Douglas County. He added that we get along very well with the Public Building Commission concept. Bringing everyone together has worked well. He explained that his few suggestions for changes are meant to be helpful and are not to be critical. He stated that the Building Commission does a great job and it's great to have everybody cooperating as they do.

HEALTHY PEOPLE 2010 MENTAL HEALTH ADDENDUM - Mr. Dean Settle, Ms. Denise Bulling and Health Director Bruce Dart came forward to make the presentation. They passed out copies of the "Healthy People 2010 Mental Health Addendum" for the Common Members. Mr. Dart explained that the reason behind the Addendum was to insure that the mental health status of our citizens is included in the Health Department's "Healthy People 2010" community health Master Plan.

Mr. Settle, Director of the Community Mental Health Center, began the report. He stated that one of the things that came out of the Healthy People 2010 study was the undeniable relationship between primary care and mental health. The fact that the two are almost always related came through clearly. This seems to be a way to begin to bridge the gap and raise, as a public policy issue, the fact that mental health and primary care need to be addressed jointly - probably from this day forward, jointly in this community. Whatever we do to expand either department, there should be questions asked on the elected official's level as to how health plans fit into a mental health expansion and how mental health might fit into a public health expansion. He felt it would be good public policy and it would also serve the people who need our services more efficiently and more effectively in times when resources are scarce and getting scarcer.

Ms. Bulling explained that the process for the mental health chapter of "Healthy People 2010" actually began in December of 2001. There were a number of focus groups throughout the community and a number of surveys conducted. Some of the surveys were done with traditional groups, some with non-traditional groups. We tried very hard to include members of the community in Lincoln that aren't always included in surveys' and focus groups. For example, there were consumers from the mental health center who volunteered to distribute surveys in the food stamp line. This would check and see what kind of mental health needs these folks may perceive that they have.

During the surveys we didn't use the term "mental health" much when we asked about things. We talked about "emotional health". This was done because there is still a great stigma attached to the term "mental health". The results of these surveys as well as a great deal of community effort is encapsulated in this Addendum. The recommendations came from that process. The bench-marks came from both the recommendations and process and from the work group listed in the back of the Addendum. All of this information was reviewed to see what we could measure in gauging whether or not the mental health of this area is improving.

She noted that some of the things included in the Addendum are self-explanatory and some aren't. For instance, we know that the poverty rate is something that is monitored in the Healthy People 2010 and that it is related to mental health. We know that there is a great gap in our service delivery to populations in the minority community; there are a lot of disparities in our mental health services to those folks who don't speak English. So, we tried to put together a document that gave people a bit of an over-view of mental health and thus help reduce the stigma as a result of the document itself; and establish a few base lines so we can look at the mental health of our community and measure it in a way that will, in the future, give us some ideas as to whether or not we're on the right track.

Ms. McRoy asked if they would be collecting data over the next few years as a baseline of where we are today to measure the different mental health areas by 2010? Ms. Bulling stated that some of the information is collected by the Health Department. Some of the areas have no baselines yet because there are issues that really need to be developed in order to give us a "big picture". Some of the information is gathered by mental health resources.

Mr. Dart added that for the first time we are creating bench-marks or starting points in order to address the mental health issues that exist in our community; and one of the issues is resources. This will give us a bench-mark or a starting point and place to go from in measuring, over time, to see how well we're doing in terms of providing services for the community's mental health needs - and where we'll need to go from there.

Ms. McRoy asked if one of the new areas for gathering information would be from the health care providers and not just the traditional mental health facilities? Mr. Dart answered that that is correct. It is important that we understand that this is an issue that is not only felt by one segment of the community and that the primary care provider is very much involved. They need to be included in any bench-mark area measuring process that we initiate in our community.

Mr. Settle stated that one of the things we've already embarked upon is a series of training workshops. The mental health center will be working with the Lancaster County Medical Society on the 28th of February training doctors' staff on how to work with persons who come into private practitioner/primary care physicians offices who may be depressed or have high anxiety, or who may have some sort of psychosis going on - to better screen quickly and make a proper referral. We'll be training receptionist and office nurses and office LPNs to that end. That is just one of many kinds of things that we think we can do to bring the two areas of care together. We had been working separately and this will help bring good, clear, crisp communication one to another. We can improve that dramatically.

Ms. Schorr stated that there were twelve recommendations in the report and asked if there was any sense of prioritization of those? Ms. Bulling answered that the recommendations are difficult to prioritize. She noted that the Community Health Partners' Foundation has taken the recommendations and actually done some prioritization. They came up with three recommendations that they have prioritized and they're now in the process of working through what the community can do to put those recommendations into operation.

Ms. Schorr asked what the three priorities were. Ms. Bulling stated that she could not recall all three, but one of them that they're working on is increasing the capability of psychiatric resources within the community - to the under-served populations. There were a couple of others as well. They took three recommendations out of each of the chapters and had focus groups help prioritize those. Of those recommendations two or three were related to mental health - and that was taking all of them together from every health sphere; so we think mental health is an issue which, at this point, is on peoples minds. As economic times become difficult, we find that people's emotional and mental health needs actually increase.

Mr. Camp offered a broad question for discussion, asking if we were seeing a trend or, over the decades, has there been just more awareness that there are mental health challenges? Or, he wondered, are there societal changes that are promoting more difficulties for people as far as stress and other mental health issues such as depression? What is happening to us?

Mr. Dart answered that there were a couple of issues. He noted that as stigma is addressed honestly, and as people really begin to understand mental health and talk about it openly, there is an acknowledgment that it is a disease, the same as heart disease and cancer. On any given day there are more people occupying mental health beds in the United States than heart and cancer combined. It is a huge problem and it touches every family and every generation. He felt that what we see in this community and this county as the population grows, are more people wanting mental health services. As we become a larger, more complex society and community, it creates more depression, more anxiety, more unemployment. Thus, there are more demands for services.

Mr. Dart added that as far a trends go, there are more people on general assistance seeking mental health assistance. The mental health center has a sliding fee scale on public mental health service, so we're seeing people who are unemployed and the working poor who have no insurance. When you think about stigma, probably the movie "Beautiful Mind" has done a great deal to get people to talk about mental health and to understand what schizophrenia may be like and how it impacts loved ones and its impact on the family. People realize that it can be a life-long confusion and heartbreak. On one hand it helped, but it means more business for us....don't know if that's good news or bad news.

Mr. Camp, referencing heart disease and cancer and the fact that the number of mental health beds is greater than those two combined, asked if mental health treatment was more costly than some of these other areas of health concern. Mr. Settle noted that historically, it was...because of the long bed days involved. But, in recent times, people don't stay long. The acute phase is stabilized and they're released quickly. He felt the total hospital cost is diminishing. Where we're behind the curve at this point is in shifting more funds into the community so that as those people are released from the hospitals, they can get involved quickly with a case manager, with out-patient treatment and with follow-up - including good medication contact and continued doctors supervision. He noted that we're short on psychiatrists in this community. One of the things done recently at the mental health center was to hire a psychiatric nurse practitioner - as a kind of 'physician extender'. That is a good thing to explore in more depth. We'll probably see expansion of the recruiting and hiring of those people at about half the cost of a psychiatrist. They can prescribe, supervise and educate persons who walk in about the medications & the interactions of their medications. So, "per head" we're spending less, but the total societal cost is probably greater. We're behind in shifting those dollars to where the people are - living in the community.

Mayor Wesley stated that he noted in the recommendations no mention of EPC, [Emergency Protective Custody] which is a big concern for both the County and the City. He commented that he understood that it has been a problem of late and his office had been planning discussion on that. He reported that in the '80s, at the State Legislative level, they had done some work with crises centers, but we are falling behind in that area now. He felt EPC should be included in the discussion.

Ms. Bulling stated that there are two reasons EPC isn't included by itself in the recommendations. The first is that it is not necessarily something that the general public is as concerned about, as are the policy makers. The second - we thought that if a lot of these recommendations were in place and operating, the problems with EPC would diminish greatly. If there were a good community-based system able to treat folks early and work with them before the problem became an emergency, you would not need as many emergency events. By moving things into the community and increasing the resources that respond to early intervention and prevention issues, the number of EPCs would be decreased. Situations are in place because people don't, won't or are unable to access the medicines to sustain themselves in the community.

Mr. Settle reported that there would be a hearing on Senator Jensen's new proposed look at commitments in total (LB710). It will be a trial experiment for the State to look at how we address commitments currently; who makes those decisions currently. As you know, now it is a uniformed police officer who makes the decision as to whether or not the person is dangerous to themselves or others. In LB710, that is expanded to include licensed mental health professionals as well. He stated that it wasn't known if that would "create more business", but noted that, frankly, more business isn't needed - there are capacity problems both at the State treatment level and at the time of release - capacity issues in the community. How do we deal with these capacities and really flow individuals who need acute treatment to that acute care quickly - then do some discharge planning and hook them up to the community supports that they need in order to remain out of the system.

Mayor Wesley thanked Mr. Settle for the information on the upcoming legislation. He expressed his concern that though the ideal world is where we want to be, we are not there and we have a serious problem with our police officers handling mental health individuals who should be in jail - which is actually prohibited by law, but they're still going to jail because there is no place for them to go. With the current budget constraints, Mayor Wesley was concerned about what the future would hold.

Ms. Bulling stated that they are monitoring that as part of the indicators - the EPC holds per 100,000 population. It is one of the measures as to whether or not we're improving. Mayor Wesley commented that he was just saying that this is a near-crises situation that is about to erupt and we need to not forget that as we deal with mental health issues.

Mr. Settle stated that last summer, as a result of these priorities, an opportunity for a grant came through his offices. County Corrections and the County Mental Health Center have submitted a grant [application] to do a mental health jail diversion project. We're still in the running on that, so we're hopeful that that might be funded. Mental health professionals would be at the booking desk, helping screen and make decisions as to people who could be deflected from incarceration. These people would then be hooked up with intensive case managers and found safe housing. We would insure that they got to the proper physician and case management. This deals directly with one of our recommendations and also deals with jail population, maybe further reducing the need to build another jail if we do that job right.

Mr. Stevens thanked Ms. Bulling for her services to the Mental Health Center, noting that she would be leaving soon. He expressed the appreciation of the County and City officials for her efforts. His comments were seconded by Mr. Hudkins.

Mr. Svoboda noted that there had been discussion on the EPCs at the Health Department Board level a couple of months ago. It was recognized at that time that as elected community leaders, it is up to us to help reduce and/or eliminate the stigma associated with mental health issues. He noted that one way to do that is to do a possible co-location as we had a number of years ago when the mental health and the health department were co-located on St. Mary's Ave. One way of doing that is to do some co-location with some cross-over in trained staffing. That's just yet another challenge for all of us.

DISCUSSION ON JOINT CITY/COUNTY STAFF POSITION - Mr. Kerry Eagan came forward and reported that, at the instruction of the City Council and the County Board, there had been a meeting with the Staff of both offices, Council Chair and himself. The first thing examined had been the duties that could be given to a joint receptionist. There was no shortage of duties. Mr. Eagan noted that Cori had been very instrumental in this meeting and had several very good ideas. The first would be to cross-train all the functions in the County Board & City Council office among all the staff, so one staff member could do the job of any others. This would provide coverage, reduce the need for temporaries, and certainly would be a benefit for the County Board. The main duties for the person in this position would be to answer phone calls for both offices, opening all the mail, handling all walk-in traffic - which would also serve as a security point. (You hate to put your people out there on the front lines, but as they said on "D-Day" somebody had to be the first one off the boat). Mr. Eagan stated that he said that only partially in jest, because security really is a serious problem that we haven't addressed. We have enormous security concerns. This position could actually help in that regard by increasing security. They would have direct access to a "panic button" and it would be a first line of defense. It is a serious consideration and one that the joint position could handle. The person in that position could also assist with copying, correspondence, dictation/transcribing, ordering all supplies; making all room reservations for both bodies, and -not a small function- handling all of the Common Meetings (Agendas, Notices, Minutes, etc.).

Mr. Eagan introduced Ms. Cori Beattie, noting that she was in the unique position of having served both the City Council and the County Board and is extremely familiar with the operation of both offices. Mr. Eagan stated that the main idea he was interested in was the cross-training and filling in of the positions in both offices during absences. Ms. Beattie introduced herself and stated that Kerry had summed things up rather well and asked if the Council Members or the Commissioners had any questions or comments.

Mr. Cook stated that he had some comments since he had attended the meeting where the arrangement of this office to make this position work efficiently was discussed. Mr. Cook asked if Mr. Killeen would come forward to help look at this matter. He explained that what had been discussed was that the City Council Office would be pushed out into the main hallway behind the stairway. That would become the main entrance into both the County Board and City Council Office. The existing County Board doors would be taken away. A desk [work station] would be put inside the new doors and that is where this joint

person would sit. When discussing what kinds of things this person could do, we felt it was important that any of these tasks be “doable” from that location or very near-by, so they could easily cover the phones and take care of walk-in traffic while fulfilling these other duties. We couldn’t have them leaving the area for tasks such as filing in another location.

Then we began discussing the lay-out of the reception area. We want to have the copy machine, and other facilities near that front desk. The existing staff needs to be able to monitor the location for back-up of the person. As the offices are now set up, the County Board staff certainly cannot see this position. We discussed possibly combining the space for Joan, Tammy and Cori in the center area, giving them a view of the door. This would also aid in the cross training issue. If anyone of them were gone, someone from the other side could take over some of the other duties. This would reduce the need for hiring “temps”. That is where the Public Building Commission comes in. How flexible are you, Mr. Killeen, as to the arrangement of offices and that kind of work spaces.

Mr. Killeen noted that it is “do-able”. He stated that at the last meeting of the PBC, this issue had been discussed. We’re starting to lay out the possibility, noting that it would not be a major undertaking to add the space out into that fairly unused lobby area. That would, in some manner, cut the traffic which now comes through the County Board Office. That office seems to be “first choice” as people walk in the front door of the County-City Building. We don’t have a dollar figure at this time, but it looks doable and we should have that cost figured fairly soon.

Mr. Cook asked how soon we might want to move on this position? The County Board really does need some additional help. Certainly, we’ve needed extra office staff. We’ve discussed it for many years in a row, but haven’t been able to find a place in the budget for that. If we had this joint position, certainly Council Staff may be able to implement some of the things we’ve put on the back burner about getting all of our documents and correspondence on line electronically. He noted that he did not know how long it would take to move things around, but he wondered if County Board wants to move ahead even prior to all the work scheduled in the Master Plan.

Mr. Killeen stated that, construction-wise, we’d be looking at a sixty day period. It’s not that big an ordeal. Mr. Camp noted that in some of the initial discussions we had at the Public Building Commission, the idea had been mentioned of maybe doing a phase-in whereby you might work with the existing individuals and be able to do the cross-training and see how it works as opposed to immediately hiring a new person or actually adding a position. Mr. Camp asked Ms. Beattie if, In light of that discussion, it is possible to step into this looking at it from a budget standpoint (while still meeting your functional needs) without immediately adding to personnel costs. Do you have any thoughts on that? Ms. Beattie commented that anything is possible. She noted that there would be quite a training curve, and the position could be phased in. She stated that she would prefer that someone come on board immediately so there would be adequate time to train & learn everything the position will entail. She asked Ms. Ray if she didn’t agree? Ms. Ray responded “No”. [Laughter]

Ms. Ray, in explaining her response, noted that an additional person would be needed for the plan to be feasible. We need someone to come in so there would be adequate man-power. The three current staff members trying to fill the duties would not address the need for additional help as expressed by the County Board, and would therefore not be of any benefit that she could see. She noted that the additional person is the whole point of the changes being proposed - [including the security concerns].

Mr. Hudkins stated that when we found that the area immediately in front of the City Council [Offices] did not go up to the sky-lights, and an extension could just protrude out to the north, we realized it would make that space easy to recapture and utilize. He did not see a deterrent to that. He stated that he had always been concerned about the backdoor out of the Chambers into the Council Office not being as secure a set-up as it should be. If that area were secured by moving the reception office out to the north, it makes a lot of sense to do so.

Mr. Hudkins complimented Ms Ray on “telling it liking it is”. He added that with the budget constraints, since the Human Services office moved from the building, there has been a lack of personnel to handle the duties of the County Board office. Even though everyone in the County Commissioners Office tries to help out, in reality, we’re looking at the fact that another person needs to be there. He admitted that it is something that the City Council probably doesn’t need as much as the County does, but by the same token, we would ask the City to give it consideration. These opportunities come along where we can work together and he felt there is a lot of synergy here that should be shared by both bodies.

Mr. Friendt stated that this begs the question that the *County* needs this. He observed that City has two staff working with seven part-time folks and the County has one staff working with five full-time folks. It seemed to him that perhaps the County ought to go ahead and add the position. The County would have two, the City would have two, they could be put together in a synergy that would make for more efficiency. He stated that he was not sure that he saw a burning City Council need for this. (other, of course, than a desire maintain congenial relationships with our fellow elected officials). He noted the pressing need has to do with staff support the County Board required, but had lost with the departure of the Human Services personnel.

Mr. Workman stated that they had been unfair to Cori by delaying this for over a year now. She is doing much more than we should ask her to do. Our big problem is manning that front desk. We’re asking her to do that, answer the phone, open mail, schedule meetings, do all of our secretarial work single-handedly. We do have to hire someone very, very soon. Our hopes were that we could have a half-time employee and a half-time for the City, if the City had that need. Our hours of business are exactly the same, the locations are very close and to have someone funded by both City and County to man that front desk would be a positive situation and beneficial to both bodies financially. His question is, if this new arrangement were to come about, who would supervise this area? There would be at least three staff people there....would the City supervise, or would the County?

Mr. Cook stated that this had been discussed. The thought, initially thinking of the lay-out of the current space, was that perhaps Joan would supervise the position; but, then, after talking about re-arranging...maybe the supervisory issue wouldn’t be so clear-cut. Cori had suggested that perhaps Kerry should be the direct supervisor of this person. Mr. Eagan would do the reports and evaluations, but he would receive input from both Council and County Board staff. That seemed to make the most sense, since Mr. Eagan is here all the time in a supervisory capacity. This person would, more directly in day-to-day operations, be answerable to both Joan and Cori for what needs to be done. Things would be prioritized according to the importance of what needs to be done. Of course, the issue of costs is a concern. Mr. Cook stated that it makes sense to share the costs here because this person will be on the front-line for both offices...answering the phone for both offices...opening the mail for both offices. If one governmental entity gets more benefit out of this position than another, we could talk about how that cost sharing should be done. But he did feel that it would benefit both bodies.

Mr. Eagan responded to the comments noted above. The City Council does need to decide if it has a need for this position. There is no question that the County Board has had a pressing need for this position since we split Human Services out of the office. As far as supervision, that is always a tough issue that arises in any inter-local agreement between the City and the County. We have a number of departments that are run and supervised by City employees. You need to be comfortable with doing that and it would have to be very carefully set forth in an interlocal agreement. The devil is in the details. That is where it would have to occur and there would have to be a clear understanding. He felt that, fundamentally, the City Council has to decide if they have a need that would justify the position. Certainly both sides would benefit from the extra security that it would add. He addressed Council Members noting that “our security is your security problem, too”. If someone gets into our area, they’re into the offices throughout the entire area. That would be a unified point of entry which would be, in and of itself, beneficial.

Mr. Friendt commented that it sounds as though - if the County has a pressing need, maybe the County shouldn't wait for the City to solve it - especially for Cori's benefit as well as the benefit of the County Commissioners. He felt the City could participate in solving the security issue in terms of how we re-arrange the offices without adding staff. He thought that one of the trade-offs he saw would be the City Council would participate in the cost for an additional staff member if Kerry becomes the supervisor for the combined staff. Therefore, we would get the benefit of his supervision and joint management.

Mr. Camp stated that regarding security, the long-term Public Building Commission review will be done on the entry to the building. We have some elements there that will help. But at the same time, we still have our individual legislative security needs. Secondly, thinking through the comments made here, he saw the synergism of not having to hire temporaries, which actually gets more efficiency out of our existing staff. Because when a temporary individual is brought in, that individual can't come in and do things. He offered a compromise for discussion. What if we went with a shared individual and begin an annual review, but do a 3/4-1/4 split with the City Council picking up a quarter of the costs....on the basis of not having the need... with the County Board picking up three-quarters of the costs. Then at the end of a year, we could evaluate and, with Kerry's supervision, we could see how it works. We could look to see if the synergies are working. He noted that Ms. Beattie could have a lot of input since she had worked for both entities. We could make an effort to fine-tune. Simultaneously, Don could be supervising the physical elements of long-term security and functional needs.

Ms. Seng noted that we always need to look toward any way we can do consolidation. She thought it needs to be a long-term over-view on this. She had handed out material to the Common Members which showed all of the joint City/County offices. She encouraged the Common Members to keep moving toward consolidation, whatever we can do jointly, noting that this is one more step. She stated that prior to service on the Public Building Commission, they had talked about the design of the Council and County Board offices with the thought of moving toward having one entity with a joint position in the reception area. We lost some of that along the way, but the idea was planted there when this building was being planned.

She noted that we need to move in this direction, and thought she would let someone else worry about the cost splitting. But she felt the need to move toward that direction of sharing. Many times she has walked in with City or County Staff gone....particularly with just one person. If they've stepped outside the office parameter, then no one is there. It is the same for both offices. She felt this would be so helpful to have another person setting outside from where we're located now.

She stated that we also need to begin thinking about the other entrance into the Chambers (where we're going to wipe out Jon's office). That speaks to Larry's concern about the entrance to the back of the dias. She encouraged everyone to think seriously about this. She noted that the Council and the County Board would be setting the standard of moving toward consolidation. This policy making group needs to do that, because then we can end up having other departments and divisions and agencies moving in that same direction under our example.

Mr. Werner offered to allow Mr. Camp to share his office. [Laughter] Mr. Camp stated that we all know that it makes a lot of sense to have that entrance to the Council Chambers. Mr. Werner stated that he agreed with this concept because of security reasons and for the same reasons that Coleen had just outlined. He also agreed with Mr. Friendt though. He personally thought that we, the Council, should be prepared to do our part; but he is not prepared to say that we should hire another person. He thought the County could do what they have to do to cover the County Board's portion of the staff, and the City would have to do what is necessary - which may be to utilize the people we have for staffing the position.

Mr. Hudkins stated that he thought we should further explore the idea. He stated that he would like to see the City Council and County Board both name two members with Don Killeen, Joan and Cori setting down to see if a proposal could be hammered out. He stated that a share other than 50/50 on it made a lot of sense. The County needs this person more than the City does at this time. If we're going to do the shared

responsibility, the space out in front of the City Council office makes a lot of sense. It's space that could and should be developed. He stated that he would like to see us move forward on this idea.

Mr. Cook commented that he was surprised at the sixty-day estimate for expansion. He noted that he believed this would just involve the moving out of the wall and not involve the reconfiguration of the office areas. Mr. Killeen agreed. Mr. Cook thought it could be done in multiple stages beginning with the moving of the wall and basic exterior features, but there would be more discussion on how the reconfiguration and arrangements should be done inside. If we were to put an additional staff person on, we might discover just exactly what some of our needs are in the physical lay-out of the offices - needs of which we aren't currently aware.

Mr. Svoboda stated that, to wrap up the discussion, he thought the idea of the Chair and Vice-Chair of both the Council and the County Board serving on that committee along with staff and Don would be a good beginning. Mr. Killeen stated that he might just follow-up on that. He noted that moving the walls, as is being done in the Assessor's Office, is a fairly quick job. Mr. Svoboda asked the Common Members if, in recognizing that the discussion is leading towards an additional staff person, should the Common as a body direct Don to start putting together the estimates necessary so that we don't delay that portion of the plan?

Mr. Hudkins stated, just to have something on the record, that he would move that Don Killeen be authorized to take care of those estimates and the Common approve the formation of the Committee which would include the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of both legislative bodies. The motion was seconded by Ms. Seng. The Common members voted on the motion - AYES: Mayor Wesely, Jon Camp, Jonathan Camp, Glenn Friendt, Larry Hudkins, Annette McRoy, Deb Schorr, Coleen Seng, Ray Stevens, Ken Svoboda, Terry Werner, Bob Workman; NAYS: None

Mr. Svoboda stated that the next meeting date was scheduled for Tuesday, March 4th at 8:30 a.m. to be held in Conference Room 113.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

ADJOURNMENT - Mr. Svoboda called for adjournment. The motion was made and seconded and the meeting was declared adjourned at approximately 10:55 a.m.

*Submitted by
Joan V. Ray
Council Secretary*

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