

CITY OF HAMILTON
Bond Election Public Meeting

DATE: February 28, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Steele, Kristi Bielski, Rod Pogachar,
Travis Martinez, Jenny West, Ken Bell, City
Planner/Special Projects Director Dennis Stranger

Mayor Jerry Steele opened the meeting at 7pm.

Agenda Item

▪ **Bond Election Public Information**

Dennis Stranger, City Planner/Special Projects Director had the City Council members present introduce themselves to the audience of approximately 40 individuals. He then presented an overview of the Bond Election proposal before opening the floor for public comment and questions.

If the City decided to remodel the Armory where would the money come from?

The City has been setting aside money for a Justice Center and currently have \$650,000 saved for a Justice Center. No bond proceeds will be used to pay the costs of improving the existing armory building.

What will be done with the downstairs where the police department is currently housed?

There are lots of options for using the space, but there is no current plan in place for what that will be.

What improvements will be made?

There needs to be improvements made to the current restrooms at Claudia Driscoll Park. The cost of building the restrooms at River Park was around \$100,000.

Will everything fit there for the Justice Center? Parking?

Currently there is ample parking, but the building will need to be added on to. Tentative plans would include relocating the City Police, Court and Prosecutor's office to the site.

I understand that there is a variable interest rate on the bond. If it is variable interest rate is there a ceiling on that? And how will you know?

The estimated tax impact is calculated based on the City's average valuation per mill, a 15 year term, an annual percentage rate of 4.5 percent, and the current tax rates established by the Montana legislature. The exact interest rate of the bond sale is not known at this time and may be based on a variable interest rate if it is financially beneficial. We won't know unless the voters authorize issuing bonds.

Will there be a jail?

No, the County runs the jail. The City is not involved in that

Can the parcel be split up?

Yes, it is subdivided already.

How is the property zoned?

Right now it is zoned as residential.

Who own the land that the park is on and the Armory building?

The State's Department of Military Affairs.

How many homes could be built on the property if it was sold to the highest bidder?

Somewhere between 20 to 25 single family homes.

How is the Arbors zoned?

It is PUD (Planned Unit Development)

What happens to the nice playground?

The playground will need to be taken down.

Could you negotiate with a new buyer?

Yes, that is a possibility.

Is there any kind of guarantee that the park remains a park if the Bond Election is successful?

The City's intentions are to keep it a park.

Down the road could the City expand the Justice Center into the Park area?

There is no plan for that.

What about the land that the City owns by Foxfield, what is it worth?

The City owns land on Foxfield and it was originally planned to build a Justice Center there. If the Bond goes through the Foxfield property will be put up for sale. It is worth approximately \$235,000.

Could that money be used in the redesigning of the Armory or to pay on the bond?

Yes

Is there any plan on putting 9th Street all the way through?

No the City does not have plans to do that and it doesn't appear that would be feasible.

Does the City have to have this done in March?

The Department of Military Affairs' timeline is to have this accomplished one year from July 2016. If the bond passes, there is a 2 month protest period we have to go through, which would put us into June and a potential for it to be wrapped up by July 2017.

Is it part of the grand scheme of things to roll the Band Shell into the park area?

If the Bond passes, the park and the land that the band shell sits on will all be City property. It will remain the way it is now. The Band Shell is used in conjunction with the park as a place for people to sit for performances.

Could the Band Shell be rotated?

No, that would not be feasible. Then people would be sitting in the optometrist's parking lot.

If the Bond Election is successful will the park be re-zoned?

Yes, the City would probably re-zone the property as Public Institutional, (PI).

If the Bond fails and the property is sold to the highest bidder could they have it re-zoned?

Yes, it is possible that if someone else buys the property that they will ask the City for a zoning adjustment.

What was the purpose of buying the Foxfield property?

To build a Justice Center.

Since you own the property at Foxfield, why wasn't that utilized for the Justice Center?

The City is putting money aside to fund the construction of a potential Justice Center on the Foxfield property. Since the purchase of the Foxfield property, however, things have changed. The City is now looking at the National Guard Armory Building as a preferable location.

Do you know how long this is going to take and do you have a plan in place?

We do not know how long it will take. The City's plans are contingent upon the outcome of the bond election.

Would you use the existing building for the Justice Center?

That is what is being considered, however it would require substantial remodeling.

The \$650,000 that you have in reserves is that enough to remodel the Armory?

Probably not.

Currently the City doesn't own the property the park sits on. Does the City do the maintenance on the park?

Yes

Does the City currently lease the property?

It does, however, there is no charge.

Is the police department in favor of either option?

Yes

Could the City be one of the bidders and get a better deal?

No. The Department of Military Affairs has to sell the property for the appraisal value of \$1.2 million. If the City is not able to purchase it will go up for auction with bidding starting at \$1.2 million. If the appraisal expires the property will be reappraised and the price could change some.

What will the Army do if no one bids on it?

We don't know.

When the Justice Center is complete how many employees would be housed there and would it allow room to grow?

There are approximately 17 in the police department, 3 in courts and 4 in the prosecutor's office. Yes with some additional space we feel that there would be room.

Will city residents have an option to purchase bonds?

They may, if the bond passes the City will find the most financially advantageous way to sell the bonds.

Where would a protest on the results come from?

It would have to be a city elector (voter). The protest would have to challenge the results based on a procedural error.

Could the City use some of the park lands that they already own and relocate the park?

The park lands that are next to the river are natural corridors. They would not be suitable for this purpose.

Are the Council members in agreement about the bond issue?

The Council cannot advocate one way or the other on the bond. The Council passed a resolution to go forward with the bond.

Is there a drop off area for ballots?

Yes, the Ravalli County Clerk and Recorder.

What will the bond money be used for?

The bond proceeds will be used to purchase Claudia Driscoll Park, the National Guard Armory Building, park improvements and the cost of issuance of the bond.

There was a shooting range in the basement of the National Guard Armory Building. Is the basement full of lead now?

It has been cleaned up.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:10

*These minutes, prepared by City of Hamilton staff, are not intended to support or oppose the ballot measure