

MINUTES
OF THE
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT WORK GROUP COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO

JUNE 29, 1993

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting of the Neighborhood Services Department Work Group Committee was called to order by Chairperson Ortiz at 8:37 a.m. on the above date in the City Council Chamber located at 915 I Street.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Fargo, Ortiz, Pannell, and Steinberg

Councilwoman Ortiz explained that the new committee will be dealing with city reorganization. Staff will be given the opportunity to explain what they have been doing to make local government function more efficiently, reorganize the departments, and provide for public input.

David Martinez, Deputy City Manager, gave an overview of the committee. He explained that originally, this adhoc committee work group was formed to help staff with its Bolder Vision and determine components that should be added to the Neighborhood Services Department. The Community and Visitors Services Department's reorganization would also be presented to the committee. He stated that Jack Crist, Deputy City Manager, had put together a schedule that he would explain; and Sam Burns, Director, Community and Visitors Services Department, would discuss his department's reorganization.

1. Discussion of Process, Procedures and Timeline for Reorganizations (D-All)

Jack Crist, Deputy City Manager, stated the City Manager had suggested that they have a more formalized process and timeline for the committee to consider. He discussed the timelines and impacts on the City's budget as a result of the State's budget, and the various citywide department reorganizations. He stated that the criteria for evaluating

the various organizational changes needs to be established and suggested the addition of customer service orientation.

Councilman Steinberg asked how often they propose to meet.

Mr. Crist said that should be determined at this meeting. He said they may want to complete it before the November Strategic Planning Council workshop and that the work they do here may be the foundation for that workshop. He suggested they may want to move the evaluation criteria up a little earlier than scheduled so they will have that as they look at the concept papers. He also suggested the process as follows: develop the concept papers, criteria, review by the city manager, circulation to the departments, an initial review by this committee, then transmit to interested neighborhood groups, analysis of the feedback from the public review, a second reading by this committee, and then send on to a Council subcommittee or to the full Council. The process need not hold up Sam Burn's proposal.

Councilwoman Fargo stated that the Mayor has called for a downtown summit in the early fall and they shouldn't take action until after that meeting. She added that two major functions of the city that aren't identified in either the process or the reports are the planning process and the overall infrastructure issues. They need to look at it citywide. How they would address the issues of planning and growth in this community with regard to the inconsistencies that now exist between the community plans and the general plan. Regarding the criteria, she said it needs to clearly identify the interest they have in making sure that all the functions work closely with the neighborhood groups and with neighborhoods in general.

Mr. Crist said that would be part of the addition of customer service orientation and could be written in the terms Councilwoman Fargo stated.

Councilwoman Ortiz asked if this was the opportunity to talk about issues that may not be under the purview of a department or division that is not going to be reorganized.

Mr. Crist explained that it is appropriate to bring it up here, because planning support will be needed in the reorganization structure for the Neighborhood Department. He added the same will be true when they get into the Economic Development paper.

Councilwoman Fargo expressed concern with looking at only some pieces of the planning issue but not looking at the whole. She stated they need to be careful they end up with enough citywide planning function left so that they're able to deal with issues facing the community.

Mr. Crist stated that as they evaluate the papers, they will evaluate the impacts of all departments. The highest priorities are neighborhoods and economic development.

Councilman Steinberg asked that Mr. Crist explain the purpose and background of the administrative support concept paper and what that intends to do.

Mr. Crist said that all of the functions need some level of administrative support. Right now they have some centralized support functions and decentralized support functions within operating departments. The idea here would be to take a fresh look at administrative support on a citywide basis after these papers have been written so that the administrative support function is consistent with whatever is developed. He doesn't want an administrative support system in place that is not the most efficient way to support a new organization chart.

Councilwoman Ortiz discussed the problems of having access to the City Council Administrative Assistants, their secretaries not being close to the Council Members offices, Voice Mail, and computer systems. Asked if they are looking at trying to automate to make local government more responsive to their constituents.

Mr. Crist stated that the City Council offices will be a high priority. He said in the past, the Council did not want to spend money on themselves. They are suggesting more direct line services and moving some of their staff.

Councilwoman Ortiz said that they are all dealing with issues related to housing - nuisance abatement, landlord tenant issues, dangerous buildings, substandard buildings, code enforcement. Some or all of those need to be incorporated within the Neighborhood Services Department; the one city reorganization function that is most visible. She asked if these issues will be discussed in the context of Neighborhood Services or a Police Public Safety function.

Mr. Martinez said they are trying to work as interdisciplinary teams - housing, nuisance abatement, code enforcement are all very critical and cutting edge issues for the Neighborhood Services Department. What they want to do is present to the committee a comprehensive, alternative way of crossing departmental lines dealing with problems horizontally rather than vertically. He added they have a series of ordinances that are coming up related to housing that will give them more tools to remedy the situations.

Councilman Pannell stated the whole purpose of this committee is to try and make this organization functional for the community. He said historically there has been no check and balance, legally or otherwise. He added that there needs to be a procedure for tracking complaints and the ability to respond to the residents when the complaints take place.

William Edgar, City Manager, said they consider the timeline that Jack Crist set forth very important. They will make some adjustments depending on how these items come up. He stated that in the next couple of months they will be finishing the budget, finalization of the budget phase 2, the planning workshop, then the restructuring. In the fall they will be asking the City Council for some priorities. The organization will have a lot less resources, and the Council will have to establish the priorities for it.

Mr. Crist recapped what had been discussed: The committee feels staff should move the Downtown Issue to a later time on the schedule; move the Criteria up on the schedule; concern expressed about what was missing from the issues - mainly planning and public works, infrastructure. In the criteria, the committee wants to see some greater emphasis on working closely with the neighborhoods. The issue of technology support was brought up and housing and dangerous buildings, and some kind of analysis for complaint tracking.

3. Reorganization Report on Community and Visitors Services Department (D-All)

Robert Thomas, Deputy City Manager, gave an overview of the process used and introduced Sam Burns, Director, Community and Visitors Services Department. He stated the committee had two options: follow the timeline as scheduled that Jack Crist outlined; take it back out to the community and then back to committee before going to another committee; or if this committee is satisfied that there had been an adequate public review, they could recommend that this report go on to the full City Council if they are satisfied. Mr. Thomas said his recommendation was that they take this report on to the City Council.

Mr. Thomas talked about the process - on February 11, 1993, the City Council directed the new Community and Visitors Services Department to use these as economic development tools in terms of being more self-sufficient and drawing economic development activities around these areas. Based upon that direction they met with all boards, commissions, nonprofit organizations, and city staff and received their input. A facilitator was retained and they went through four, one-half day sessions with the management staff of all divisions and developed the mission statement and goals and objectives. The staff report before the committee was endorsed by the History Association, Science Center Board of Directors, Metropolitan Arts Commission, Zoological Society, Friends of Fairytale Town, Crocker Art Museum Association, History and Science Commission, Golf Advisory Committee, and Old Sacramento Management Board.

Councilman Pannell asked how many people were transplanted into this reorganization and asked to see the ethnic makeup. He asked if it had increased or decreased. He said he wanted all the information before making any decision in regard to where they go with this.

Mr. Thomas said they would provide the numbers. He added that it was his understanding that, other than five individuals who chose not to accept city employment, there were no layoffs.

Councilman Pannell asked is some of the money was enterprise money or self-supporting.

Mr. Thomas answered yes, both the Golf and the Marina Divisions.

Sam Burns explained the purpose of the report. He stated the new Community and Visitors Services Department would include community and visitor related divisions. The new divisions are Golf, Marina, History and Science, History Museum, Science Center, Old Sacramento, Archives and Collections and the Cemetery, Art in Public Places which is under Metropolitan Arts, and Fairytale Town which is under the Zoo. He explained the Community and Visitors Services Department will be part of the Planning and Economic Development Team - all the components of the new department enhance the quality of life for the City of Sacramento.

Councilman Steinberg asked about reducing subsidy levels from the general fund and how they were going to be able to do that with this reorganization.

Mr. Burns answered they would first cut costs in some of the things they are currently duplicating. With advertising and promotion they will bring more people to these facilities and enhance the revenues that are generated by admission. Also through some of the promotional programs they will get more visibility which will encourage people to make donations to many of the activities.

Mr. Thomas discussed the joint ticketing, marketing, and promotion of these facilities and taking advantage of the non-prime time both in terms of pricing and marketing to achieve a greater attendance to reduce the general fund.

Councilman Steinberg suggested they consider a way to allow the different entities to keep any of the surplus that they have for their own programming. He said that would increase the incentive for the Science Center, History Museum, and Fairytale Town to be creative in their marketing, maximizing the revenues. If they knew the excess would be used for their own programming, that would instill an entrepreneurial spirit in each of the entities.

Mr. Burns discussed the use of billboards and display racks. The display racks can be placed at every point that citizens go to let them know what there is to do. He talked about the divisions working together to help each other.

Councilman Steinberg said he is concerned that we plan long range for the arts master plan in regard to facilities, programming, and funding.

Mr. Thomas stated the Metropolitan Arts Commission, which is a City-County Commission, received a grant from the California Art Council. The City Council and Board of Supervisors have adopted an arts plan that talks about facilities and policies in the arts. The plan will be updated on a regular basis and will include the need for a comprehensive master plan for art facilities.

Councilman Steinberg stated that this was an essential element to the effort of marketing the City of Sacramento and making it more attractive for tourism.

Councilwoman Ortiz stated she is impressed with what has begun to happen locally in terms of local artists.

Councilwoman Fargo stated she has never really been clear about how Old Sacramento fits into this organization. She asked if the two staff members who work for the Old Sacramento Management Board would become City staff. She also asked if the Board, under this scenario, would continue to exist and what would their function be.

Mr. Burns said he thinks the board should always exist. He stated it would be impossible for paid staff to go down there and know what's going on. The Management Board has a better idea of what's needed. They are evaluating the organization now; there needs to be some type of consolidation of all of the entities. They will come back to the full City Council with a paper that everyone agrees with.

Councilwoman Fargo stated that things are perceived as getting better. A piece on television this weekend indicated Old Sacramento was still the top destination with 34 percent of visitors going there. She said she doesn't want it to get lost in the organization.

Councilwoman Fargo asked about Land Park. She wanted to know if the park maintenance staff was still in Parks and Recreation Division and how they are going to deal with that relative to the Golf course, the Zoo, and Fairytale Town.

Mr. Thomas explained there was no conflict among the parks, zoo, and golf maintenance staff. He added they are committed to looking at cross-training to use resources most efficiently.

Councilwoman Fargo asked how is it going to benefit the City. She said she would like to hear specifically how they anticipate that this reorganization would actually improve customer service to the residents. She said they had made it clear that it's better for marketing and the City's image.

Mr. Burns talked about the operational people - sharing facilities and equipment to provide better services to the community; i.e., the Zoo or Old Sacramento putting on special events. They will have all of the other divisions within the new department to call upon to help with their special events.

Mr. Thomas one of the policy reports has two recommendations. One is that they report back to the City Council if this committee agrees on the fees and charges report. He talked about the fact that residents are paying for many of the facilities through their taxes and then pay the same fees as non-residents or visitors.

The second recommendation was to report back in 12 months with an evaluation as to how they achieved some of the objectives; see what is working and what is not working; and include customer surveys.

Councilwoman Fargo stated they need to make sure that people know what is going on in downtown Sacramento, where to go safely, and how to get around. She suggested putting the display racks or other visuals in the Amtrak train station welcoming people to Sacramento. Staff should work with State and County Parks and the Downtown District with the marketing and promotion of the city.

Linda Whitney said she is interested in the history of Sacramento, especially preservation. She was pleased to see the number one policy direction for this new department would be to support the preservation of Sacramento's historic treasures. Ms. Whitney suggested adding a walking tour of Sacramento to the brochures. She asked if the Memorial Auditorium had been addressed and where it falls in the organization's structure.

Mr. Burns said the Memorial Auditorium was scheduled for the City Council in August. As far as where it was in the organization, it is part of the Community Center Administration. He said the Community Center Administration includes the property where the Sacramento Theater Company, Towe Ford Museum, Convention Center Expansion, and Memorial Auditorium.

Councilwoman Ortiz said they need to deal with the financing aspects of the Memorial Auditorium and get it into reuse. She added they should come back with discussion on the historical walk.

Mr. Burns said the historical society is working on that together now.

A motion was made by Councilman Steinberg, seconded by Councilwoman Fargo to adopt the resolution and to include the comments raised at this meeting. The motion was carried with three ayes and one absent (Councilman Pannell had to leave before the vote).

OTHER BUSINESS:


Councilwoman Ortiz said she wanted to restate the objective of this ad hoc committee. It was originally pulled together to provide staff direction for the Neighborhood Services Department. She said they have now expanded that function to include all proposed city reorganization. This is an opportunity to provide input from the public and staff.

Councilwoman Fargo suggested they give some thought to the title of this task force. She stated the committee had been called the Committee on City Organization Structure, the Council Work Group, and the Neighborhood Services Work Group.

Councilwoman Ortiz said they would come back next time with recommendations of titles - something very clear and concise. She said the timelines proposed here are flexible, and they will come back with a revised timeline the next time they meet. She said she encourages more public input.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Submitted:


Jan Mirrione, Secretary

Approved:


Deborah Ortiz, Chairperson