

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION
December 1, 2009

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Pro Tempore Bronson presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: City Commissioners present: Bill Bronson, John Rosenbaum, Mary Jolley and Bill Beecher. Also present were the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Acting City Attorney, Directors of Community Development, Fiscal Services, Park and Recreation, Planning, Public Works, the Interim Library Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief and the City Clerk.

1. CENTENE STADIUM PROPOSAL

Park and Recreation Director Marty Basta reported that this work session was to present a proposal to complete the renovations to the Centene Stadium. Mr. Basta introduced Vinney Purpura, Great Falls Baseball Club President; Bill Harp, Vice-President; Jim Keough, General Manager; and Lorie Harris, Director of Marketing.

Mr. Basta provided a synopsis for funding to complete the renovations. The overall cost estimate for the final phase of the stadium improvement project is \$1.4 million dollars. Staff has worked with the Baseball Club to identify the most critical of those improvements and determined those to be the field box addition estimated at \$329,065, as well as landscaping and irrigation estimated at \$123,749. The Baseball Club is requesting that the city fund the field box addition in the amount of \$329,065, and the match for the CTEP grant for landscaping and irrigation in the amount of \$16,707, for a total of \$345,772. The Baseball Club has indicated that it could raise the remaining funds to complete the stadium renovation. Staff proposes that the city's portion could be borrowed from the central garage fund. Interest would be paid to the central garage fund at a rate of 3.25%. In 1999, the Baseball Club entered into a 50 year lease for the stadium. The loan could be repaid over a 15 year period using the annual lease payment in the amount of \$8,800, as well as the Pasta Montana annual lease payment in the amount of \$18,000. Currently, the Stadium lease payments go into the general fund, and the Pasta Montana lease payments go into the Park Trust Fund.

Mr. Basta reported that additional discussions have taken place about the possibility of partnering with the Baseball Club for the city to have outdoor events in the stadium, which could generate additional revenue for the city.

Vinney Purpura discussed his involvement with the Baseball Club. He reported that, if the city would partner with the Baseball Club on this project, he could likely raise the balance of the money needed to renovate the park from the private sector.

Mr. Purpura provided a PowerPoint presentation about the history of the park, Baseball Club, stadium, and Voyager and Legion team games. He discussed the major improvements that have already been completed at the park, and showed photos of what Centene Stadium's new outside rendition would look like; a new berm area for families to rent, a new field box, new concessions

area and main concourse. Mr. Purpura reported that this project would also involve correcting the deficiencies at the park, including asbestos removal, electrical and drainage issues.

After discussion, the Commission requested additional financial information about the loan proposed from the central garage fund, as well as the other city commitments, and then revisit this matter at the next work session. Commissioner Beecher discussed the private funding being in place before the city contributes financially. Mr. Purpura advised that the Baseball Club would provide the city with a written guarantee. He already has interested outside investors that would loan money to the Baseball Club immediately so that the renovation project could begin in January.

City Manager Doyon stated that he would get the Commission additional information.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Pro Tempore Bronson adjourned the work session of December 1, 2009, at 6:45 p.m.