

Councilmember Peppes joined the meeting at 6:14 P.M.

Mr. Rasmussen stated they had already spent a lot of time going over the plan in detail. They hired two consultants to review it and have spent over \$90,000 in the planning process.

Mayor Dunn clarified that with exception to the previous work session with the architect, the entire Governing Body had not discussed this in detail.

Presentation – Parks & Recreation Director Chris Claxton

Since the presentation in August, 2008, the plan was revised, which included removing some of the lake renovations and reducing the parking. This reduced the total cost by almost \$1 Million. The preliminary cost estimated it to be \$5.4 Million with a 10% contingency, for a total of approximately \$5.9 Million.

The project will include three phases and Phase I is an expansion of what currently exists to include; a concession, restroom, and additional parking.

Mayor Dunn confirmed that Phase I was estimated to be \$500,000. Ms. Claxton thought they could complete Phase I with this bonded money.

Councilmember Peppes thought they had already agreed to complete the first phase.

Ms. Claxton couldn't recall this money being specifically allocated for Phase I.

Councilmember Gill felt the amphitheatre needed the restrooms and agreed to complete Phase I.

Ms. Claxton clarified for Mayor Dunn that the additional parking would be located to the right of the lodge.

Finance Director Kathy Rogers stated they had the bonding authority and had originally received consensus that this money was to be spent on parking for the amphitheatre.

Mayor Dunn confirmed with Ms. Claxton that the estimate included a concession, restroom, and additional parking for the \$500,000.

Councilmember Azeltine thought they could approve a Master Plan to have a vision of their intentions; however, he didn't want people to assume they approved a \$7 Million plan. He thought they were also trying to seek private funding.

Councilmember Peppes recalled an earlier discussion with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and originally, they only wanted to spend a certain amount and not use City funds to expand it. He thought voters wouldn't want a one mill tax increase to pay for an amphitheatre and felt the expansion should be done with private funding. He asked if the City would be responsible for maintenance costs.

Mayor Dunn couldn't recall this discussion with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; however, she did recall a private funding discussion in August, 2008. In the \$12.5 Million bond issue, there was only \$100,000 dedicated to the amphitheatre, which had been spent. They could use the remaining bonded \$500,000 for this project. Currently, it's a difficult time to seek private funding, and could further discuss this when the time was right. She thought it may be possible for the City to match private funding in order to have a private/public partnership.

Mayor Dunn clarified that voters would need to approve it if it had to be bonded and that they should concur this is a good investment for the City before they agree to have it as an initiative on a referendum for the public. She was concerned with the access of this location and that the location wouldn't support a \$7 Million project.

Councilmember Cain noted that the public liked the free admission to the theatre and thought they may need to begin charging admission due to the cost involved.

Councilmember Gill confirmed with Ms. Claxton that the proposed amphitheatre was designed for up to 1,700 people, which is approximately what the current facility holds.

Paul Anderson, Chair Leawood Stage Company, stated this was designed as a multi-use facility, which would generate revenue.

Ms. Claxton clarified that the \$100,000 was spent on grading, concrete, electricity, and sewage.

Councilmember Bussing confirmed with Mayor Dunn that Starlight Theatre was a multi-use facility as well.

Mayor Dunn asked for consensus from Council if they wanted the \$500,000 to be spent on Phase I of the amphitheatre.

Councilmember Azeltine thought it was important to weigh a decision to use general obligation authority for this, versus the City's other needs. He didn't think the consensus should be to approve Phase I and wanted consensus for the Master Plan.

Mayor Dunn clarified that the money could only be spent on park needs.

Councilmember Filla clarified this would be enhancing the existing amphitheatre and wouldn't be called "Phase I" because people would assume they would complete Phases II and III. Mayor Dunn indicated the need to enhance the theatre had clearly been demonstrated.

Councilmember Rasmussen referred to the 2009 Capital Improvement Program [CIP] and indicated the \$500,000 was reflected for Phase I in the build-out of the amphitheatre. The plan is in conformance with the original intent of the development of Ironwoods Park and is a well thought out and experimented plan.

City Administrator Scott Lambers shared concern of accomplishing everything listed under Phase I with the \$500,000 and thought they would need to prioritize things.

Mayor Dunn indicated if she received consensus from Council to use the \$500,000 for the expansion of the amphitheatre, it would then come as an agenda item at a future meeting for a vote. Mr. Lambers stated they will need authorization from Council to proceed with bids at a Council meeting.

Councilmember Bussing thought they should explore a project for less than \$7 Million that could be acceptable to everyone.

Councilmember Filla felt they hadn't explored the year-around multi-use aspect and what the demand would be.

Bill Elwood, Chair Leawood Amphitheatre Committee, stated there wasn't anything else like this and they never intended for this to be compared to Starlight. He felt there wouldn't be a problem in renting the facility year-around. Upon visiting other cities comparing amphitheatres; these facilities wished they had done more.

Councilmember Azeltine thought they should act on this partly because of the money that had already been spent for the Master Plan. He asked if they had projected revenues for the facility.

Ms. Claxton stated they hadn't planned to pursue revenues until they received direction from the Governing Body on how to proceed.

Councilmember Azeltine thought they should "accept" the plan, versus "approve" it and, if accepted, wanted them to proceed with information on expected revenues.

Councilmember Gill felt this environment wasn't the right time to support a public initiative to raise taxes or support a bond.

Councilmember Cain stated she would support improving it; however, not to this level.

Ms. Claxton thought they could work on improving the facility in areas that benefited people the most and could re-visit other areas in the future.

Mr. Elwood indicated the back concession area would help buffer the sound to remain in the theatre.

Councilmember Bussing stated the project had been enhanced and the original intent was for just an amphitheatre, not a \$7 Million project.

Councilmember Rasmussen felt the focus from the beginning was for an amphitheatre and how to build it to accommodate all needs and didn't try to accommodate other uses. He thought each year Council could approve that certain parts of the plan be built and determine how to finance it.

Councilmember Filla thought they should use the bonded \$500,000 for restrooms, parking, and potentially, a concession area. She wanted to accept the Master Plan as a vision and see if it becomes manifested; this wouldn't require the City to come up with funding.

Councilmember Rawlings thought if they accepted the Master Plan, there would be expectation to build a \$7 Million project and felt he couldn't support it.

Councilmember Gill supported upgrading the amphitheatre; however, wasn't committed to the \$7 Million plan. He felt money would drive the outcome and supported seeking private funding.

Councilmember Rawlings concurred with Councilmember Gill.

Councilmember Azeltine thought they shouldn't use the 1998 election to justify anything. He concurred that the vast majority of funding should be private and agreed to "accept," not "approve," the Master Plan with that understanding.

Councilmembers Cain and Filla concurred.

Ms. Rogers stated any private funding had to be donated to the City because of the bonds on the land.

Councilmember Peppes supported improvements and private funding; however, couldn't support the Master Plan.

Councilmember Bussing concurred with Councilmember Peppes.

Councilmember Rasmussen reiterated his desire to approve the entire project.

Mayor Dunn supported completing as much as possible of the expansion and also supported the City matching some of the fundraising money; however, she felt there wouldn't be enough money raised to support the \$7 Million plan.

Councilmember Azeltine reiterated they should "accept" the Master Plan, seek outside private funding, and await the outcome.

Mayor Dunn received the following consensus from the Council to "accept" the Master Plan; Councilmembers Filla, Rasmussen, Gill, and Azeltine.

Councilmember Azeltine felt they owed the volunteers an appropriate vote in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Dunn recommended voting once fundraising begins and to vote on the plan they intend to use; however, she thought if Council preferred, they would vote on this at a future public Council meeting.

Mr. Elwood wanted to see the Master Plan approved with no commitment to funding.

Mayor Dunn stated this would be added as a future agenda item at a City Council meeting for further discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

Pam Gregory, Recording Deputy City Clerk