

**WASHOE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
AND  
CITY OF RENO CITY COUNCIL**

**JOINT MEETING**

THURSDAY

9:30 A.M.

JULY 20, 2000

PRESENT:

**WASHOE COUNTY**

Ted Short, Chairman  
Joanne Bond, Commissioner  
Jim Galloway, Commissioner

Katy Singlaub, County Manager  
Madelyn Shipman, Legal Counsel  
Betty Jo Vonderheide, Chief Deputy County Clerk

**CITY OF RENO**

Jeff Griffin, Mayor  
Dave Aiazzi, Councilmember  
Sherrie Doyle, Councilmember  
Pierre Hascheff, Councilmember  
Tom Herndon, Councilmember  
Dave Rigdon, Councilmember  
  
Charles McNeely, City Manager  
Michael Mellner, Reno City Attorney

ABSENT:

Pete Sferrazza, Commissioner  
Jim Shaw, Vice-Chairman

Bill Newberg, Councilmember

The Washoe County Commission and the Reno City Council met in joint session in the Council Chambers of Reno City Hall, 490 South Central Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the pledge of allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerks called the rolls for their respective entities and the Board and Council conducted the following business:

**AGENDA**

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Galloway, which motion duly carried, Vice-Mayor Aiazzi ordered that the agenda for the July 20, 2000, joint meeting be approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Al Hesson, area resident, expressed his concern with the RETRAC Project and his distrust of local government.

Cathy Brandhorst, area resident, expressed her concern with local government.

**UPDATE ON WASHOE COUNTY COURTS PROJECT**

Dave Roundtree, Director, Washoe County Public Works Department, advised that since the last joint courts meeting the County has purchased the Pioneer property with escrow scheduled to close on August 31<sup>st</sup>; that they approved the ballot question for the November 2000 election; and that they hired Tate & Snyder Architects, in association with Dan Wiley, as the architectural consultant for programming and master planning of the Regional Justice Center. He stated that the Pioneer property consists of 3 parcels, the Pioneer Hotel Casino, the Conklin Building and the Richards Building.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**Mayor Griffin arrived and assumed the gavel**  
\* \* \* \* \*

Commissioner Galloway inquired if parking is being considered as a part of the master plan or is it being looked at as a separate item. Mr. Roundtree responded that they are looking at several options for how and where parking will be provided for the courts facility.

Councilmember Doyle inquired if the County had a backup plan in the event the bond issue failed. Mr. Roundtree responded that they are developing several scenarios in the master planning effort in the event the bond issue does not pass.

Councilmember Hascheff inquired if costs were determined for demolition, abatement, and any environmental clean up between the County and the property owners. Mr. Roundtree stated that staff had estimated demolition and abatement at \$2 million; that there is environmental holdback for all 3 parcels in the contracts with the property owners for \$400,000 for the Pioneer Inn site, \$15,000 for the Conklin property, and \$15,000 for the Richards property; and based upon estimates for the 3 parcels he believes the \$430,000 will cover about 50% of the costs for abatement. Mr. Roundtree further stated that the only item in the contract that could stop the purchase from going through is the property owner failing to provide a clean title for the property.

Councilmember Hascheff requested a copy of the purchase agreement between the County and the property owners and asked when the master plan would be done for the County. Mr. Roundtree responded that the master plan will be done the last week of August or the first week of September and they will share that information with the City of Reno once they get the final plan. Councilmember Hascheff asked if Reno's Police Department was being included in the Courts master plan on the Pioneer Inn site in the event that they may want to add their police department to their municipal court site. Mr. Roundtree stated that from discussions with Reno staff they were advised that the municipal court was the only item to be included in the Courts master plan and he does not believe that the parcel will accommodate any additional significant portion of Reno's Civic Center Complex.

In response to Councilmember Rigdon's inquiry, Mr. Roundtree stated that the County would be offering the City of Reno a clean site at the cost the County incurred to purchase, demolish and abate that piece of property. He further stated that they have offered to provide land for the City of Reno's parking requirements at no cost and Reno staff has suggested a little over 23,000 square feet.

Councilmember Aiazzi stated that there should be a cap on the cost of abatement that the County has proposed to be included in their purchase price to Reno.

Commissioner Galloway stated that the proposed Regional Justice Center is significantly different than the original master plan; and that this Regional Justice Center is estimated at \$86 million, which is considerably less than the \$200+ million estimated for the original courts master plan.

Chairman Short stated that the Judges are working together to get the bond issue passed because they believe the Regional Justice Center will benefit everyone.

Commissioner Bond stated that nothing can be determined until the courts master plan is completed and then, if there are any issues, they can be refined at that point.

Mayor Griffin clarified that the City of Reno did not ask County staff to consider every variation and every possibility in their master plan explaining that the critical element here is that they have the resources to go forward with the municipal court and they need to move forward to reach that goal. He added that they will find out what the possibilities are at that site when the master plan is completed.

Councilmember Herndon stated that he supports the collocation of the courts and believes that it will benefit all citizens of Washoe County in the long term.

Cathy Brandhorst expressed her concern about the court system.

Judge Jim Hardesty, Second Judicial District Court, encouraged the support for collocation of the courts and mentioned that the City of Reno placing their police department together with their municipal court is a good idea.

**00-706      RENO STAFF REPORT - MUNICIPAL COURT**

Steve Varela, City of Reno, Public Works Department, reviewed his report dated July 20, 2000, containing estimated phase costs for all 3 sites.

Judge Paul Hickman, Reno Municipal Court, stated that he supports collocating the courts on the Pioneer property; that almost every judge he has spoken with supports this project as well; and that Municipal, Justice and District Courts need to be together in a larger facility and the time is right to do this now.

Judge Hardesty stated that with phasing and projected growth needs the courts will need additional space whether the bond issue passes or not.

Commissioner Galloway stated that when the courts project was first proposed at the Pioneer Inn site, one of the models included the bank site as well, and that parcel was not included in the County's purchase; and that if the City of Reno decides to put their police department on that property, maybe they should consider purchasing the bank site. Katy Singlaub, County Manager, noted that the bank has a 12-year lease on that parcel.

Charles McNeely, City Manager, stated that there would be initial costs for consolidation of the municipal court and police department, but eventually there would be cost savings. He further stated that the City of Reno would need to move their police department sooner than the lease expiration of the Bank site would allow, therefore that site would not be a viable option. Mr. Varela stated that staff needs direction on what site they need to focus on for the rest of the civic center.

Councilmember Hascheff stated that the County has retained a court consultant to master plan the Pioneer Inn site and inquired if the City of Reno could request that the consultant include in his master planning, the viability of including the police department for that site. Mayor Griffin said the consultant may take a look at that and may end up concluding that it's not possible, but if the Council wants to request that the consultant review the site for a potential police department, he will support that request.

Mayor Griffin commented that he has to leave early to catch a flight and advised that he supports the notion of having the consultant consider the cost of including Phase II on Site 3.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**Mayor Griffin left the meeting and Vice-Mayor Aiazzi assumed the gavel**  
\* \* \* \* \*

Councilmember Herndon stated that the Council members, Commissioners, and Judges all represent the citizens of Washoe County and they need to move forward with this project in the interest of saving the taxpayers money.

In response to Councilmember Aiazzi's inquiry, Mrs. Singlaub responded that the offer for parking was her idea and the County will absorb the cost of that parking to the City of Reno. Mr. Varela stated that parking needs may go up or down, but his understanding is that the minimum parking spaces that will be offered is 58.

Councilmember Aiazzi requested a better explanation of the parking offer indicating that he would like the City of Reno to have a cap of 17% on the environmental and demolition costs being passed on to them by the County. He voiced his feeling that the consultant take into consideration the best location for the municipal court in relation to City Hall.

Chairman Short suggested that Mrs. Singlaub and Mr. McNeely meet with staff and try to reach a resolution that is fair and equitable to everyone; that the consultant review the possible inclusion of Reno's Police Department with their municipal court; and that they meet again after the master plan is completed.

Councilmember Doyle expressed support for the consultant to consider the feasibility of the inclusion of the police department at the Pioneer Inn site.

Commissioner Galloway addressed concerns regarding the cost differential between the City and the County regarding the courts project and directed that staff try to resolve those differences.

Councilmember Rigdon stated that Reno is willing to collocate their municipal court on the Pioneer Inn site but it has to be an even wash for him to agree with that site.

Councilmember Hascheff stated that he is not prepared to abandon Sites I and II; that he does believe it is a good idea to partner with the County regarding the collocation of the courts; and that he would like to take a look at the tax savings to the entire community and the potential for inclusion of their police department with their municipal court before making his decision.

Councilmember Herndon stated that he agrees with Councilmember Hascheff's statement, and he believes the bottom line is public safety and efficiency, which is critical to the entire system.

Councilmember Hascheff in support of Chairman Short's previous suggestion directed that the City of Reno staff continue working on Site III with the County staff; that the consultant consider the possibility of the police department being included with their municipal court; and that they meet again in September to review the master plan and make their decision to go with the Pioneer Inn site or a different site at that time.

\* \* \* \* \*

There being no further business to come before the Boards, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

---

**TED F. SHORT**, Chairman  
Washoe County Commission

---

**JEFF GRIFFIN**, Mayor  
City of Reno

ATTEST: AMY HARVEY, County Clerk

ATTEST: DON COOK, City Clerk