

**AGENDA MINUTES**  
**ONE ITEM PROPERTY INVENTORY WORKSHOP**  
**CITY COUNCIL**  
**CITY OF ARCADIA**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016**  
**5:00 P.M.**

*The following minutes reflect action items of the City Council of the City of Arcadia. For a verbatim copy of the minutes, you may contact City Administration to obtain a copy of the recorded meeting.*

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. and the following members and staff were present:

**Arcadia City Council**

Mayor Susan Coker

Deputy Mayor Alice Frierson

Councilmember Judy Wertz-Strickland

Councilmember S. Delshay Turner

Councilmember Joseph E. Fink was not in attendance.

**Arcadia City Staff**

City Administrator Terry Stewart

City Clerk Penny Delaney

Marshal Matt Anderson

Finance Director Beth Carsten

Public Works Director Steve Underwood

**ACTION ITEM**

**Discussion of Property Inventory**

Mayor Coker stated the workshop was regarding inventory of the City's properties and she gave Council Members the opportunity to express any particular interests they had and there were none expressed with the exception of Deputy Mayor Frierson which was addressed later in the workshop. Mayor Coker stated that her concerns included the old City Hall, the old police department, and the old fire station #2 building which all are empty and also the property regarding a right-of-way owned by Gary Frierson. City Administrator Stewart provided a brief description of what had been provided to Council for their review. Mayor Coker asked Public Works Director Underwood to step to the podium in the event there were any questions regarding the site locations. At this time, a slide presentation was provided regarding the various properties owned by the City. After the presentation, Mayor Coker addressed the issue of empty buildings and her desire for Council to decide what to do with them. Regarding the old police department building, City Administrator Stewart advised Council that he had been approached by two (2) different people representing the historical society regarding possible use of the police

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department facility and also by a business man, Mr. Vowels, about possible use of the police facility for office space for his business.

Mr. Stewart also advised that he had looked at the lease that the City has with the school board for the old fire station and actually that lease was for one (1) year and it had never been renewed. Councilmember Wertz-Strickland stated she had also been approached about the police department by a business that was looking for office space.

Deputy Mayor Frierson then brought up the issue of the County having the coke bottling plant and thought perhaps the old livestock market might be a better choice for them away from the intersection and congestion. After much discussion regarding the EPA report of the livestock market. City Administrator Stewart advised that the State's response was that there was no Brownfield there, yet he hears conflicting comments. He suggested having a site assessment in order to be comfortable with what the property could or could not be used for. Mr. Stewart stated that he would like to get a consensus from the Council about the livestock yard in regards to doing an analysis of the property. He stated that if it exceeded his authority of approval, it would have to come back to Council anyway, but he advised he would let Council know what that entails before they move forward. He again stated that he would like to get Council's consensus for staff to move ahead regarding the assessment and Council agreed.

Mayor Coker expressed her desire to see the City re-inhabit the old City Hall. Councilmember Turner stated that he would like to see the City Administrator back in that building. Councilmember Wertz-Strickland stated that the problem with doing so is that there is much renovation that needs to be done and asked where the money was going to come from. Deputy Mayor Frierson expressed her desire for the City to utilize it rather than someone else. City Administrator Stewart advised that he wholeheartedly agreed. He stated that one of the things he had been hoping for since his tenure began here was to have City Hall operations back over there, but to keep the Council Chambers in the Margaret Way Building since there is no place to put it over at the old City Hall. He suggested freeing up the Margaret Way Building for additional office space and stated they may be able to leave some of the operations where they are currently located, but it would be nice to get the old City Hall back into use and possibly create some space for the Mayor and Council to meet with the public there as well. Deputy Mayor Frierson expressed her hopes of possibly getting a grant for it. Mr. Stewart, through his experience with such, advised that historical preservation grants are getting harder to come by through the State, but they may be able to get one from private foundations.

The discussion then turned to a grant writer. City Administrator Stewart stated that he knew he had not brought it to Council due to so many other issues having to be addressed, but advised that once the paving contract and the airport issues are dealt with, then he should be able to bring something to Council regarding such. Mayor Coker asked what he needed from Council and Mr. Stewart advised that he would need to know that this is something that Council wishes staff to work on. There was discussion about what is usually required, to include a site assessment and the retention of a historical preservation architect who is certified in that regard which makes it very expensive. City Administrator Stewart stated that if the Council would like for staff to begin working on this, he could start putting together a plan of action and bring it

back to Council for their review and for them to advise if they are comfortable with staff's proposed plan of action and then move forward from there. City Council expressed their desire to do so, but Councilmember Wertz-Strickland asked where the money would come from. City Administrator Stewart stated the plan of action would not require money, but it would inform Council of the various steps, what would need to be accomplished, what the expected costs would be and where the money might be pulled from. Mayor Coker asked if the building was uninhabitable and Mr. Stewart advised that it was not uninhabitable, but it was nowhere close to being ready to move in at this time.

Mayor Coker addressed the issue of the Speer Center and stated that it had no air-conditioning and it was in very bad shape. She asked if there were any groups that would like to rent it or if Council would even try to rent it. Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that she felt it could be put up for sale. City Administrator Stewart stated he had not given any thought to selling it. He advised that considering its location, it has excellent frontage, but if they were looking at selling it, they would need to see what it could sell for, determine if it would have to be re-zoned and he asked if the City really had a future use for it. He stated that what he sees is a building that has fallen into continued disuse and disrepair. Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that she felt just getting it up to code or to get it to where it was inhabitable, the expense would be astronomical. Regarding any building of historical significance, Mr. Stewart advised Council to be ready to be pushed back when you start talking about selling. It was discussed that the building used to be an armory and dances used to be held there when the City Parks and Recreation Department was held in it. Mr. Stewart stated that if the City were to move back into the profile where it would be providing parks and recreation services, they would need to be able to operate out of some facility.

Mayor Coker then directed discussion to the fire house on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and stated that she felt it was time for the City to take possession of it again and utilize it. Deputy Mayor Frierson asked what the City would do with it. City Administrator Stewart stated that the Public Works Department and Parks Department is currently operating out of one (1) central location. He stated to have a facility on that side of town to store equipment in and operate out of would be helpful. Councilmember Wertz-Strickland asked what was in there now and Mr. Stewart advised that the old fire truck and items that go with that are in the facility, along with desks, chairs and other equipment that the school board has stored in there and it was rather haphazardly stored and not well organized. Mayor Coker advised that one of the classes uses it once a year to decorate a float. Mr. Stewart recommended to Council that if they were to decide to take back possession, they should give the school board ample notice. He asked if it was the Council's desire to take back possession of the facility and it was the general consensus of the Council to do so. Mr. Stewart stated that based upon such, he would prepare a communication for the Mayor's signature to the school board and to the superintendent that will advise them of the City's desire to take it back and he would advise Council of the time periods.

Mayor Coker then stated there was one more property that she wanted to address which was a piece of property that Gary Frierson had brought forward which connects to his property. She advised it was originally a right-of-way with no access to it except through Mr. Frierson's property or from the radio station side. At this time, Mr. Frierson stepped to the podium and

provided information and history regarding the issue at hand. Mr. Stewart advised that Mr. Frierson had met with him on at least three (3) occasions to discuss the matter and complimented him on doing the research and gathering the paperwork necessary for providing a clear understanding of what happened, when and why. Mr. Stewart advised he had reviewed the record and stated that the person who owned the property was petitioned to provide the property to the City for the purpose of a right-of-way for an eventual roadway to provide access. Mr. Stewart further advised that the property was provided by the property owner, but it was never platted as a right-of-way and it shows as just a deeded property deeded to the City of Arcadia. He stated as such, the City cannot designate it as a right-of-way. Mr. Stewart advised that if the property had been platted as a right-of-way, Council would have been faced with a vacation of right-of-way. He stated the only person who a right-of-way can be vacated and turned over to is the owner of the property abutting that right of way; the owner of record, not the original owner, but the owner of record at the time the vacation is made. Mr. Stewart stated that in the vast majority of instances, vacations of right-of-way entail returning the property to the owners of the abutting property at no cost. However, he stated we do not have that situation and instead have a situation where it is a deeded property to the City, not counted as a right-of-way. He said he knew there was a previous discussion about this very thing and whether or not the property should be sold directly to Mr. Frierson or if it should be put out for auction. City Administrator Stewart recommended that it is not in the best interest of the City for the property to be put out for auction. He stated there is absolutely nothing that anybody could ever build on that property; it is a long narrow property like a roadway. He stated that if Council decided it was worth a value of which a value had been placed upon it by the property appraiser's office and also an appraisal had been done of which City staff selected the appraiser and Mr. Frierson paid for the appraiser to do the appraisal. City Administrator Stewart stated that whether or not the City returns the property at no cost or whether it charges for the property, it is a policy decision on the part of the City Council. However, he stated that he does not think it is in the best interest of the City because it is a property that is primed for commercial development and for that to ever happen, the property will have to be rejoined to include the piece that was originally intended for a right-of-way. He further stated that it served no one's interest to put it up for auction.

Councilmember Wertz-Strickland suggested putting it as a future agenda item and for Mr. Frierson to come before the Council so a decision can be made. Mr. Stewart asked Council if it was their desire to have it brought forward with a request from Mr. Frierson for the opportunity to purchase the property and it was the general consensus of the City Council to do so. Mr. Stewart advised that it would probably not make the next council meeting, but it would make the following meeting.

Discussion turned back to the old police department facility and after further comments, it was the general consensus of the City Council to rent it. City Administrator Stewart pointed out that once it was rented out to anything other than a non-profit organization, the City will have to pay taxes on it. Mayor Coker asked Council if there was a consensus to give the City Administrator the reins to check into renting it out and what it would need and it was the general consensus of the City Council to do so. Mayor Coker asked Deputy Mayor Frierson about the issue she had referenced at the beginning at the meeting and Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that it

was about the livestock market and the acreage that the County has for the fire station which had already been discussed.

**PUBLIC**

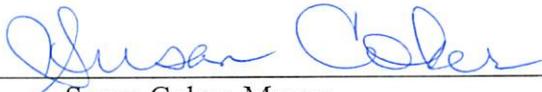
None

**ADJOURN**

Councilmember Wertz-Strickland made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Turner seconded the motion. Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:02 P.M.

ADOPTED THIS 1<sup>st</sup> DAY OF March, 2016.

By:

  
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Susan Coker, Mayor

Susan Coker, Mayor



  
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Penny Delaney, City Clerk

Penny Delaney, City Clerk