CITY OF ELLENSBURG Minutes of Council Meeting, Special Session
Date of Meeting June 14, 2010
Time of Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Place of Meeting Council Chambers, 501 North Anderson Street

Roll Call.


Absent/Excused: Bottcher.

Others present were City Manager Barkley; City Attorney Pidduck; Community Development Director Smith; Parks & Recreation Director Case; Planning Supervisor Bailey; Planner Eyerly; Deputy Clerk Keno; and 12 members of the audience.

DOWNTOWN COORDINATION AND SUPPORT – DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION

The purpose of the special meeting is to discuss the City’s continued role in the support and coordination of efforts to promote a prosperous and healthy downtown environment.

The intent of the meeting, from the February 16, 2010 regular meeting, was to discuss the roles, responsibilities and interplay of the Ellensburg Downtown Association (EDA), Ellensburg Business Development Authority (EBDA) and Downtown Task Force (DTTF). City Manager Barkley outlined the agenda materials.

Members of the Downtown Task Force (Martin Kaatz, Jim Jongeward), Landmarks & Design Commission (Anne Denman) and Ellensburg Downtown Association (Timothy Bishop, Jim Armstrong) addressed the Council.

Mr. Kaatz provided a historical overview of the Downtown Task Force and its roles and responsibilities as well as his perspective on the boundaries of the Task Force, the EDA, the LDC and the Chamber of Commerce. Possible changes to the City Code for clarification purposes were discussed.

Community Development Director Smith advised the Downtown Task Force is more of an advisory body while the Landmarks and Design Commission has statutory authority. The Task Force has some jurisdiction on signs while the Landmarks Commission only looks at signs in the Historic District. The current sign code gives authority to the Task Force.

In answer to Council inquiry, business ownership is a requirement for Downtown Task Force membership and is a hurdle to recruitment. Jim Jongeward, Task Force member, advised many business owners do not have the time to devote to membership. The Task Force focuses on concerns brought up by Council or others. The issues of membership terms and meeting times were
discussed along with perhaps revisiting assignments, association and function issues for the city commissions/committees.

Timothy Bishop, Ellensburg Downtown Association (EDA) Director, spoke about the confusion the Association experiences as a result of an overlap of duties/responsibilities between it and the DTTF. The EDA’s primary focus is the 16 square block of downtown bordered by Ruby, Water, 2nd and 6th Streets which is distinctly different than the CC and CC-II zoning in other parts of downtown area.

Council discussed transferring the promotion piece of the Downtown Task Force to the EDA/Chamber of Commerce and transferring the regulatory piece of the Task Force to the Landmarks and Design Commission.

Anne Denman, Landmarks & Design Commission member, advised the LDC has had difficulty recruiting members and membership is down. The Commission has benefitted from having a dual member from the Task Force on their Commission. Any reorganization should consider that input by utilizing one of the other downtown groups.

Planner Eyerly advised the proposed sign code amendments coming to the Council in the future contemplate the assignment of sign code review to the LDC.

Have staff prepare a report detailing necessary steps to eliminate the Elliott Downtown Task Force and have that ready for the second meeting in July.

Amend to include ordinance language to effect the elimination of the Elliott Downtown Task Force.

Staff will need to perform a search of the City Code to find all references to the Downtown Task Force as well as review Task Force minutes to determine what issues they have been working on. City Attorney Pidduck stated Council needs to take four issues into consideration when making appointments to commissions with regulatory authority: 1) the qualifications of individuals to serve on the commission; 2) the availability of resources for training commission members to help them with their responsibilities; 3) the commission’s need to have ascertainable standards; and 4) an appropriate level of staffing for the commission.

Director Smith suggested an August time frame for the staff report and ordinance language would work better for staff.

Amend motion to specify the second meeting in August. Elliott Downtown Task Force.

Vote on motion as amended. Approved

City Manager Barkley advised the City’s yearly contract with the Chamber of Commerce is $78,550
for tourism and $135,200 for tourism marketing/advertising. All of these funds are paid through City lodging tax. One councilmember expressed interest in seeing quarterly reports from the Chamber on where the money is going. The EDA receives $50,000 annually in monetary support from the City.

In answer to Council inquiry, the EDA has approximately 100 members--about half of which are downtown business property owners with the remainder consisting of private sector support.

Mr. Bishop updated Council on the transition process for his replacement as EDA Director.

Council would like to have a cost breakdown on the City department-supported programs, projects and activities outlined on Attachment D of the agenda packet which contribute to the infrastructure, events, historic preservation and public safety downtown.

A May 3, 2010 memorandum to City Manager Barkley from Parks and Recreation Director Case was distributed responding to questions asked by the Downtown Task Force at its April 22, 2010 meeting. The status of the downtown concrete planters was discussed. Mr. Bishop gave an update on the specifications for the new combination planter/trash cans.

**ADJOURN** Motion to adjourn at 8:58 p.m. Lillquist

Approved

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Mayor

ATTEST: ________________________________

City Clerk