

**CITY OF KALAMA
CITY COUNCIL TOWN HALL
COMMUNITY BUILDING
JULY 8, 2008**

City of Kalama – Facilities Master Plan

Mayor Pete Poulsen opened the meeting at 6:30pm. Councilmembers present were Adam Smee, Dominic Ciancibelli, Chuck Hutchinson, Don Purvis and Bud Gish. City staff present were Director of Public Works Carl McCrary, Police Chief Bruce Hall and Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster. Members in the audience are listed on the sign in sheet. Mayor Poulsen led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Poulsen welcomed those in attendance. The purpose of the meeting tonight is to discuss the City's facilities and he requested that everyone stay on subject. There will be a power point presentation, after which there will be a period for questions and comments. Mayor Poulsen requested everyone keep a positive perspective. He added that he knows the rumors have been flying around town, but tonight the City will present the facts so the public can have a better understanding of the issues. The City has made no commitments to any option or plan. The Council needs to hear from the community before they make any decisions. The Council needs the community to let them know what the citizens will support, as Kalama and its buildings belong to the citizens they represent. Can they all come together for the betterment of the City? Mayor Poulsen noted that this is not the best of economic times, and there really never is a good time for tax increases. He and the Council are taxpayers as well and just working class citizens. He asked everyone to ponder the question "When is the right time for the City to make needed improvements?"

The current buildings are 70-80 years old, having survived numerous floods. They are in need of attention. Should it be done now or in the future?

Mayor Poulsen, Chief Bruce Hall, Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster, and architect Rob Barrentine made the presentation. This included a brief history of where the City's various departments have been over the years and how the buildings were obtained and remodeled. The current facilities have all been in use since the early 1980's, and the only improvements were made after the 1996 flood. These existing facilities are now undersized and inefficient in their organization and require both maintenance and correction of potential environmental concerns. As the City grows, these problems increase. The City began the study a year ago in trying to determine what the needs for the future would be. They set some goals and objectives to develop a plan for how to meet the needs for the future. The problems that each department faces were presented to the public. The Police Department lacks space to separate suspects and victims for interviews, safety concerns, and to adequately store evidence and records. The building has extreme environmental problems that could affect the health of those working in the building. City Hall has no room for storage, future additional staffing, adequate customer service, or expansion of services. The Library has no room to expand and is extremely overcrowded. The building is only partially air conditioned and has continually had leaking issues. The City Hall building had been evaluated to determine exactly what the existing problems are. There is an immediate need of major maintenance and repair to the roof, the brick and the windows.

When the City started the plan we began by investigating what could be done with the existing facilities and found that enough space could not really be gained. So we began looking at other alternatives including the Blue Sky Building which was a very viable option. After much review and attempts at interior design, it was found that the Blue Sky Building might not be the best option. Some of the first ideas, such as starting from the ground up for a new facility to house all departments were thought to be too costly so were not high on the consideration list. While looking

at the proposed options, alternatives presented themselves for consideration. The following options were presented:

Option A – Purchase the Blue Sky Building and locate the Police, City Hall and Library together, selling the existing buildings. This option would meet the short term goals but not the long term ones. It leaves all the departments with either space deficiencies or organizational issues.

Option A/Alternative – Purchase a piece of property and use a phased construction plan to build a City Complex and locate all departments on this site. Sell the existing buildings. This option meets both the short and long term goals.

Option B – Build a new Police Station on the current site or other location. Retain the City Hall, make repairs and remodel. Relocate the Library with possible new construction. This option would meet the short and long term goals provided the Library can be relocated.

Option C – Purchase the Blue Sky Building and locate the Police and City Hall there. Remodel the current City Hall for the Library. This option meets the short and long term goals. Remodeling the City Hall for the Library will be difficult and very expensive due to structural components.

Option C/Alternative – Purchase the Blue Sky Building and locate the City Hall and Library there. Construct a new Police Station at an existing site or new location. This option meets the short and long term goals. It is the most expensive of all the options.

Mayor Poulsen noted the after all the information was presented he found himself in support of the City complex idea, even though it may not be the least expensive. He noted that this included the selling of City Hall which he knows creates some issues for citizens that feel it has some historical significance to the Community. He and the City Council have been extremely fiscally responsible, working to build reserves and to pay down existing debt. The costs and funding options were presented for each of the options. This included what the annual cost to taxpayers would be based upon their home values. Mayor Poulsen realistically pointed out that none of the options is viable without a bond. The annual cost to taxpayers with a \$250,000 home for each option are:

Option A	\$175
Option A/Alternative	\$225
Option B.	\$225
Option C	\$275
Option C/Alternative	\$330

At this time a 20 minute break was taken for people to review the plan boards of the options located around the room and to think about the information presented.

Mayor Poulsen reopened the meeting. He asked everyone to limit themselves to 5 minutes for any comments or questions.

Ms. Joanna Boatman, a former Kalama mayor living on Taylor Road, stated that she was born in Kalama, as was her mother. She loves the community. In her years with the City she has never seen the sidewalks downtown improved until now. She is extremely happy with what the Council has accomplished. She added that she would rather see her money spent to improve the City as on other things. The City should build a new space to provide serviceable operations for the citizens.

Mr. Mike Reynoldson, 710 Taylor Road, a former City Councilmember stated that as a construction contractor for the last 30 plus years, he knows they won't work for free. The time for the City to act is now, as it will not get cheaper if they wait.

Ms. Patricia Hamilton, 70 Summit Drive, asked why it was being considered to put all the departments in the same location? Mayor Poulsen stated mostly economics. Ms. Hamilton stated that as separate functions, they should have separate structures. Councilmember Ciancibelli stated that as a builder using one piece of property and building them together would be more economical.

Ms. Caddie Barnes stated she is excited about the plan and asked if the owner of the property for the proposed complex had been approached. Mayor Poulsen stated that it has been briefly addressed. The piece of property was looked at as a piece the appropriate size that would fit the City's needs and not necessarily as the piece the City would obtain.

Mr. Jim Dickey, 448 S. Second Place, asked how the City proposed to pay for it? Mayor Poulsen stated it would have to be with a bond. Mr. Dickey asked if it would pass? Mayor Poulsen stated that was not known, but the City would have a lot of work to do before presenting it. It was also noted that the City would look at getting bond approval before they made any commitments to purchase.

Mayor Poulsen noted that those citizens present are the ones who are always involved in the community, and he appreciates them being here. He really wished that more citizens had turned out, so he and the Council could get a better feel for what the citizens will support. In addressing the bond issue, he added that those present can be the City's advocates and spread the word on the City's needs. Ask if friends and associates would support a bond for the City to improve its facilities.

Mr. Allen Wise, 115 Horizon Drive, stated that he would like to see this included in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The City has done a good job with the Community Building.

Mr. Jim Bain, 308 N. Second Street, stated that if the City were to move the offices to the north end of town, this would stretch out the town and expand it beyond just the two blocks. It would also help to alleviate some of the parking issues.

Cowlitz Fire District #5 Chief Victor Leatzow stated that his organization had been in the same facility since the early 80's and had also expanded personnel. He has concerns with supporting issues that could impact the Fire District by requesting revenues from the taxpayers which they may be asking for. The Fire District is funded primarily through property taxes and with the limitations set by the state, any increases will have to be presented to the taxpayers for approval. They have no other means of raising revenues. The City's request can have impacts on his organization and the school district. Chief Leatzow stated he would like to see what has been the historical maintenance plan; what would be the future maintenance plan; and if there is a plan for beyond 2030. He added that he is not against growth and understands the needs. Mayor Poulsen stated that he disagrees with Chief Leatzow in that the Fire District has two new facilities within their district and new equipment, so he does not believe the City's request will cause them to lose revenue.

Ms. Anisa Kisamore, 464 S. Third Place asked what effect the proposed use of reserves would have on the City's reserve balance and what grant options are being considered. Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster noted that this Council has worked very hard to get a reserve balance into place, and in no way would they allow the City to be without a reserve again. The reserves to be used come from all departments including water and sewer, but they do not deplete the reserves nor do they keep other projects from being completed. Grants will be looked and applied for throughout the process as with all projects. Grants may be more readily available for the

Library functions than for City Hall and Police functions. Councilmember Dominic Ciancibelli stated the Council is very conservative and will continue to be.

Ms Mary Gordon, 338 Ivy Street, asked why the residents that live outside the City and use the City's facilities can't be made to pay as well? A bond would be based on property taxes and only residents inside the City limits pay city property taxes. It was noted that those outside do have to pay for their library card.

Mr. Jim Dickey asked if sales taxes could not be increased to help spread the increase around. The City is at the maximum tax rate allowed by state law. Chief Hall noted that money will have to be spent at some level as the building issues have to be addressed.

Cowlitz County Commissioner Kathleen Johnson noted that even the County has limitations on what they can raise taxes and what uses they can be raised for. In some cases they have been successful and in others not. Commissioner Johnson added that there is rural development funding available from the County, and over the last few years Kalama has been awarded some of those grant funds. There may be some available if a connection to jobs and job development can be made for the project. Commissioner Johnson stated that they will help as much as they can. Mayor Poulsen noted that Commissioner Johnson was instrumental in getting the downtown project funding from the County. Kalama owes her a lot for all her help.

Councilmember Chuck Hutchinson stated that the Council has been very responsible in how it spends money. They have looked at different revenue sources including a B&O tax. The City is always looking for grants and ways to fund projects. They try to make the right decisions, but need to hear from the public.

Mr. Dan Ohall, 235 Eli Avery, commended the Council for all the projects that have been successfully completed. Many towns are just now facing issues Kalama has already addressed. Mr. Ohall stated that whatever the City does needs to be done right. Don't do a band-aide. Costs will only increase with time. He added that he would support the alternate A and doing it right away.

Mayor Poulsen thanked everyone for their involvement tonight. He requested that they all get out and talk with their neighbors. It is inevitable that the City will have to spend some money to grow and the costs will not be less in the future. He hopes the citizens will take ownership. This year is a presidential election year, and there will probably be very large turnout. It is possible it might be the best time to get it on a ballot. There is a question as to whether this could be done in the limited time left. He would hope that the citizens would support the City the same way they support the school. Mayor Poulsen offered an apology to Chief Leatzow stating that he believes the Fire District is a very valuable asset, and it's staff is terrific. The Council will have to decide what the next step is. Will they prepare for a bond for this fall or next year? Mayor Poulsen noted that he had been stressed about this meeting, but was pleasantly surprised with the support he has seen tonight.

It was asked, what would the City do if the bond failed. The City Hall would have to be repaired, and there would be no expansion of space. The Police will have to be relocated out of the building, and that would probably be to the Community Building.

Ms. Violet Johnson, 307 Holly Blvd, former City Librarian asked why leasing hadn't been discussed. Mayor Poulsen noted that to lease a portion of the Blue Sky Building, the cost of making tenant improvements would be incurred. This was not felt to be the best use of funds, but it could be an option.

Councilmember Dominic Ciancibelli stated he felt the support for keeping the City Hall building had not been presented. The City Hall may be the most historically significant building in

Kalama. It is art deco, and he happens to like the building. However, if the citizens feel that it is not that vital he can support it.

Ms. Anisa Kisamore, stated that she had previously worked for a school district and they had pushed a bond through one fall, and it failed. During the next year, they educated the public on what the needs are and what would happen if the bond failed again. It then passed. If the public is not educated, then the City could be set up for failure.

It was noted that other property may be looked at which could be out of downtown, but the Council wants to keep the departments downtown. Mayor Poulsen noted that the City, its citizens and staff deserve to have good facilities that work for all. He thanked everyone for coming and their participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Poulsen adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m. These minutes are not verbatim. A copy of the tape can be made available for listening.

Pete Poulsen - Mayor

Coni McMaster - Clerk/Treasurer