

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LUFKIN, TEXAS, HELD ON THE 18TH DAY OF MAY, 1973, AT 11:00 A. M.

On the 18th day of May, 1973, the City Commission of the City of Lufkin, Texas, convened in special meeting in the regular meeting place of said City, with the following members thereof, to-wit:

Pitser H. Garrison	Mayor
R. A. Brookshire	Commissioner, Ward No. 1
J. T. Hopson	Commissioner, Ward No. 2
Joe E. Rich	Commissioner, Ward No. 3
Edgar C. Wareing	Commissioner, Ward No. 4
W. O. Ricks, Jr.	Commissioner at Large, Place A
E. G. Pittman	Commissioner at Large, Place B
Harvey Westerholm	City Manager
Roger G. Johnson	City Secretary

being present, and

Robert L. Flournoy	City Attorney
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being absent, constituting a quorum, when the following business was transacted:

1. Meeting opened with prayer by City Manager Westerholm.
2. Park Land - Purchase of Cousins-McConnico Property - Disc.

Mayor Garrison explained that this special meeting had been called to consider the purchase of property owned by Mrs. W. R. Cousins, Sr., (Mrs. J. E. McConnico) to be used for a future park. Mayor Garrison stated that application for 50% matching fund grant had been approved, but legal agreement had not been completed conveying property within this area being considered for purchase, causing a delay in consideration for City's purchase of property. Mayor Garrison also stated that property in question had now been settled clearing property for purchase accordingly. Mayor Garrison further explained that the City had earlier applied for a 50% matching fund grant from the State of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department without obligation to the City. It was further explained that this 275 acre tract off Loop 287 bordered on the South of Moffett Road, on the East by FM 842 and on the West by Shirey Creek had earlier been adopted by the City Commission to be used exclusively for park land purposes. Mayor Garrison stated that this property touched upon the existing City Limits and offered a beneficial opportunity to the City for future park purposes and consideration for purchase must be concluded by June 1, 1973, in order to qualify for 50% matching fund grant which had been approved by the Parks & Wildlife Department.

There were several persons present appearing in behalf of various groups or in objection to the purchase of this property as follows:

Americans In Action

Representatives: Bobby Medford, Victor Bruce, Doyle Bruce
and Harry Castleberry

Speaking in Opposition: Tom Meredith, Publisher, Lufkin News

Mayor Garrison called on Mr. Tom Meredith, Publisher of Lufkin News, who asked members of the City Commission several questions regarding the purchase of this property. Mr. Meredith expressed his concern as to when the City Commission first considered the purchase of this property and if members of the City Commission were aware of costs that may be in line for the City. Mr. Meredith further commented on the fact that he personally believed the City had enough park land and more space would be made available when the present sewer plant was re-located. Mr. Meredith further

expressed his thoughts that these areas would need development which would require extra money. Comm. W. O. Ricks, Jr., explained that the City Commission had been contemplating the purchase of this property, as evidenced through discussion in several previous City Commission meetings, and property was not getting cheaper. Mayor Garrison explained in considerable detail the fact that members of the City Commission had considered the whole aspect of this purchase, looking to the future, and agreed upon the fact that the City could not afford to wait until it needed a park. Mayor Garrison further stated that the City sewer plant area, once removed, may be too costly to develop as a park since adjacent property sold for an extremely high cost per acre. Mayor Garrison also stated that the City Commission may consider the sale of old sewer plant property as a source of funds to develop other park areas, if necessary, and the City Commission was striving to the best of its ability to develop the City in the best interest of all citizens. Mayor Garrison further pointed out the fact that more than one million individuals used City park facilities in the past year and that the public was in great need for recreational areas. Mayor Garrison explained that the Kit McConnico property, being considered for purchase, had been appraised at \$800 per acre at a total cost to the City of \$231,527.60 of which 50% would be paid through grant application.

Mayor Garrison called on Mr. Harry Castleberry of Americans in Action, who explained that he was not present to appear in favor of or against this proposed purchase of property, but wished to inform members of the City Commission that AIA was in the process of circulating a petition. Mr. Castleberry explained that the AIA only desired to express their objections to the purchase of this property as an additional tax burden that may be placed upon the citizens of Lufkin. Mayor Garrison explained that the City had voted a bond election in 1965 and proposed park bond money was available in the amount of \$150,000 which was to be used for park improvement purposes only and was available in cash at the present time and would not result in any increase in City taxes. Mayor Garrison explained his personal attitude toward tax increases and his desire to hold current taxes at the present rate, if possible.

Comm. E. C. Wareing informed individuals present that the City had maintained its present tax structure quite well with the last change four years ago yielding a decrease in taxes of 5¢ while other Cities experienced increases. Comm. E. C. Wareing further stated that the present tax, at \$1.45 per \$100 evaluation, had not increased since 1969.

Comm. Joe E. Rich informed members present that a municipal golf course was not proposed for construction if McConnico property was purchased.

Mayor Garrison called on Mr. Victor Bruce, also of AIA, who had several questions concerning present City park property and Mr. Max Griffin, Parks and Recreation Director, who explained that Ellen Trout Park had approximately 128 acres of which all but 13 acres was developed with the remaining 13 acres to be developed within a year. Mayor Garrison informed visitors that most current park properties should be developed within a five-year period. Mr. Castleberry also asked members of the City Commission if the park bond money would purchase and complete improvements on all City parks. Mayor Garrison explained that some revenue sharing funds were being used since operating money was necessary to manage parks.

Comm. W. O. Ricks, Jr., then made motion that the Kit McConnico property be purchased by the City in the amount previously discussed providing a 50% reimbursement from a matching fund grant. Motion was seconded by Comm. Joe E. Rich.

Prior to vote on motion, Comm. R. A. Brookshire expressed his concern that he did not agree with the purchase of the McConnico property contending that small neighborhood parks would be better than large areas of this nature. Comm. R. A. Brookshire further supported his concern not to sell current sewer treatment plant property in order to develop it for park use. Comm. R. A. Brookshire expressed his belief that development of the McConnico property would require a considerable length of time. Mayor Garrison agreed with Comm. Brookshire's desire to have small neighborhood parks as in line with planning recommendations, but further expressed his belief that development of existing parks, as well as future parks, would not require as much time and money as anticipated. Mayor Garrison then asked members of the City Commission for a vote on motion that had been previously made to purchase property and the following vote was recorded:

Voting Aye: Mayor Garrison, Comms. J. T. Hopson, Joe E. Rich, Edgar C. Wareing, W. O. Ricks, Jr., and E. G. Pittman

Voting Nay: Comm. R. A. Brookshire

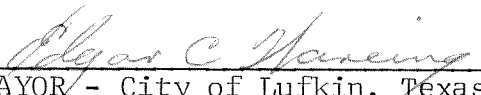
Mayor Garrison declared motion carried by majority vote of 6 to 1 in favor of motion.

Comm. E. G. Pittman suggested that this property be considered for a future landfill site in area that had already been cleared since expected park use of this property would not be made for a considerable length of time. Comm. E. G. Pittman explained that he had reservations regarding the purchase of this property, but believed the use of it as a landfill site would serve a two-fold advantage to the City and also be in line with current park development recommendations. Members of the Commission were in agreement with suggestion as presented by Comm. E. G. Pittman.

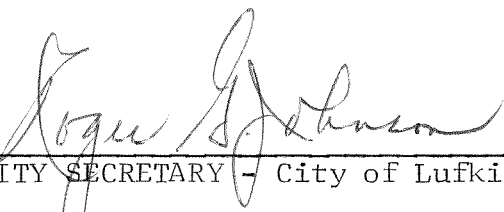
Comm. R. A. Brookshire expressed his concern that money should be made available for park development and the purchase of this property would take a considerable amount of development money. Mayor Garrison stated that the City would develop its parks through each budget year accordingly.

Mayor Garrison again called on Mr. Victor Bruce who expressed his concern that large park facilities of this nature may possibly burden the City with an additional police patrol and extra park maintenance placing a burden upon the citizens of Lufkin while also attracting various undesirable groups from out of town. Mayor Garrison stated that the City was currently maintaining the parks program in an orderly procedure and anticipated no future problems with similar type development.

2. There being no further business for consideration, meeting was adjourned at 11:45 A. M.


MAYOR - City of Lufkin, Texas
PRO TEM

ATTEST:


CITY SECRETARY - City of Lufkin, Texas