

**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION**

March 24, 2009  
5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Ed Rieker, Mayor  
Sandra Varian, Mayor Pro tem  
David Milliron, Commissioner  
Lyda Steadman, Commissioner

**Members Absent:** Michael Payne, Commissioner

**Staff Present:** Clai Brown, City Manager  
Juliette Sims, City Clerk

*Item No. 1* Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Rieker.

*Item No. 2* Adoption of Agenda

A motion to adopt the agenda as presented was made by Mayor Pro tem Varian, seconded by Commissioner Steadman; passed with all ayes (4-0).

*Item No. 3* Avondale Charter School Initiative

Mayor Rieker welcomed Laura Leckband and Sasha Webb to the table for the discussion of the Avondale Charter School Initiative for the Museum School of Avondale Estates. The board discussed the possibility of splitting the lot of First Baptist Church at 47 Covington Road for the Museum School.

Ms. Leckband noted that for the application process it is very critical to have a location nailed down because if they don't it reduces their chances of getting their charter. Ms. Leckband asked the board to think about the information and whether they want to commit and let her know within the next two weeks. Ms. Leckband noted that they would not have to have a development agreement in the next two weeks but they would need a clear understanding that there would be a process that would be completed in a very short period of time. Ms. Leckband also spoke about the schools structured funding milestones.

It was the consensus of the board to move forward with the process for the Charter School Initiative for the splitting of the lot of the First Baptist Church at 47 Covington Road for the Museum School.

Commissioner Milliron noted that he was in agreement but since we are going to move so fast he feels that the board should draft some communication to the residents about the process.

Mayor Pro tem Varian stated she would like the official letter to residents to come from the Mayor or City Manager.

Mayor Rieker stated that a joint press release could be done. Ms. Leckband was in agreement.

Mayor Rieker stated that over the past 4-5 years the City has given \$30,000 to the Avondale Arts Alliance and the City is going to give them another \$10,000 this year so that would be a total of \$40,000. Mayor Rieker noted that the City has given the Downtown Development Authority at least \$35,000 probably more in the last 3-4 years. Mayor Rieker noted that with last years budget the City will have an excess of revenue of about \$200,000. Mayor Rieker stated that one of the things that he would like this board to consider in conjunction with what we are doing is allocating \$50,000 to the charter school this year and another \$50,000 next year. Mayor Rieker feels it is a very important investment the City could make in the community. Mayor Rieker noted it is going to bring students in, teachers in and raise property values and keep young couples from moving out of the City when their children get school age. Mayor Rieker feels there is not a better investment for the community than this school. Mayor Rieker stated that the City would take the venture money and tie it to milestones such as the City would give \$50,000 on the submittal of the application and when the charter is approved in November/December then in January the City would kick in the other \$50,000.

Mayor Rieker asked the board for their opinion regarding the funding.

Commissioner Milliron noted that he feels \$50,000 is actually quite low.

Mayor Pro tem Varian felt \$50,000 was fine and we do give to the arts.

Commissioner Steadman stated she was fine with the \$50,000 but as far as going any higher, she felt the board should see how things turn out this year.

Mayor Rieker noted this funding will be included in the development agreement.

Ms. Leckband and Ms. Webb thanked the board for their generosity for the possible funding.

Board action items included: Submit information to Consultant Bill Johnston for review and the Planning and Zoning Board, Board to develop a development agreement for the Museum School, City Manager Brown to develop an action plan timeline, Joint Press Release to the Residents regarding the school initiative, and formal letter of support of the school from the Board of Mayor and Commissioners.

Board will have a Special Called Meeting on April 1, 2009 at 5:45 p.m. regarding the Avondale Charter School Initiative for the Museum School of Avondale Estates.

*Item No. 4* Public Comment: None

*Item No. 5* Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 6:12 p.m. was made by Mayor Pro tem Varian, seconded by Commissioner Steadman, passed with all ayes (4-0).