



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, February 5, 2018
6:00 PM

Pre-Council

Conference Room
1A/1B
Columbia City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:03 pm.

Present: 7 - Ruffin, Trapp, Thomas, Peters, Treece, Skala, and Pltzer

This item is open to the public: Fairground Conversation

Attachments: [Dr. Thornburg Presentation: Mid-Missouri Sports Park](#)

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Griggs stated that the 2015 parks sales ballot called for a sports field. They have looked at several areas as options and were approached by Dr. Thornburg and the county commissioners to look at the use of the fairgrounds as an option. Staff felt the proposal was worth fully vetting before proceeding with a project.

Southern District Boone County Commissioner Fred Parry provided a brief history of the fairground land noting that the count purchased this land in 1999. He stated that a baseball complex has been developed, but no official action has been taken. He stated that this agreement would include a 50 year lease for 60 acres of the property for the purpose of a sports field house for training and athletic development. This may also include an agriculture park development for groups such as 4H, FFA, University Extension and Columbia Urban Ag, as well as a home for the fair. This park would fill a void for needed resources by providing four to thirteen courts under one roof. There is also room to grow, parking, adjacent sports field and it enhances Columbia as an economic activity for sports.

Dr. Thornburg introduced himself stating that he is a local physician and has worked on a Mid-Missouri Sports Park plan for some time. He explained that the mission of the Mid-Missouri Sports Park would change the way we participate in youth sports. With this model we could reduce costs and allow opportunities for all. He stated that he travels to surrounding communities with his three kids for various sports events. This would be an opportunity to keep people in Columbia instead traveling elsewhere for youth sports. For most kids, sports are an opportunity to develop skills and learn team building. He stated that he engaged Pinnacle Indoor Sports five years ago to do an economic impact study. This study showed that having seven tournaments per year (volleyball/basketball) could generate \$7 million per year. This is a sustainable and viable project if funds could be generated to build the facility. There are many kids with no access to sports and this is a tremendous opportunity for kids to be able to participate. This is a unique time to be able to partner with a city, county and non-profit that could change the future for Columbia and make us a destination city for the sports industry.

Council Member Ruffin asked what the staffing needs would be and how they would be funded. Dr. Thornburg stated that he and Mr. Griggs have had many conversations on the

elements of the agreement, which still needs to be finalized. He stated that this project would be a partnership for providing youth sports. They have started discussing pieces of this partnership, but have not considered all of those details at this time. He added that fundraising will be a large part of this process and will include tax credits and other methods of fundraising that can ultimately provide a low cost, affordable youth sports options. Weekends would be meant more for revenue generation through tournaments, etc.

Council Member Peters asked what the plans were for Gans. Mr. Griggs stated that they planned to start with four courts, then add four more, then add 6-8 tennis courts. There is space at Gans for those courts. There is room for additional soccer fields as well. Ms. Peters asked why Council should consider the fairgrounds instead of the Gans expansions. Dr. Thornburg replied that they can't do as much at Gans to grow beyond what has been planned there. Additional sports could be planned for future growth opportunities at the fairgrounds for baseball, hockey, etc.

Council Member Skala felt that the partnership with the county on this proposal is positive and the possibility to expand further is a benefit and addendum to the promise we made to fulfill this. The MOU will need to be looked at closely to ensure details are all well considered.

Council Member Thomas understood construction estimates to be \$30 million. Dr. Thornburg replied that there are phases for the project. The proposed city investment would be \$3.75 million which would help build initial facilities. The rest would come from donors and foundations. The county is putting in the property so the city would have joint ownership. Appraisal for the property should be completed soon and is expected to be close to \$4 million. The city could take revenues on properties owned outright.

Mr. Thomas asked if there were examples from other communities with a similar model. Dr. Thornburg replied that Arizona has an example of raising similar funds for a sports park but was not sure of the timeline it took to raise those funds. Lawrence, Kansas also has an ice facility partnership with the university, city and private partnerships. Council Member Pitzer asked how long it is expected to take to fundraise for the rest of the \$6 million for the starting phase outside of the city support of \$3.75 million. Dr. Thornburg hoped to have a strong sense of that in the next 90-120 days. Mr. Pitzer asked for more details on the lease of the land. Mr. Parry explained that the lease would be a 50 year lease between Mid-Missouri Sports Park and there would be joint ownership between the city and county. Mr. Pitzer asked how the \$3.75 compares to the expected cost of the project at Phillips. Mr. Griggs stated Phillip was estimated at \$4 million. Mr. Parry noted that there are already city utilities that lead up to the fairgrounds. Mayor Treece asked for more details on the plan as it relates to the various parcels and phases. Mr. Parry stated that the fairgrounds property is about 134 acres in total. He estimated that 100 acres could be developed as soccer and baseball fields with an eventual stadium. The area that currently houses stables would be the location for the field house, which is estimated at 90,000 square feet. This would be annexed into the city and there would be joint ownership between the city and county for those 100 acres. He added that the 40 acre strip of land by Hwy 63 would be separate lease agreement with Mid-Missouri Sports Park to build amenities that support the activities out there such as retail and lodging. That would be entirely controlled by Mid-Missouri Sports Park.

Mr. Skala understood that the county and city have a history of shared ventures such as the Health Department building. He asked how that partnership is going. County Commissioner Thompson stated that she is the county liaison to the Condo Board which has worked well for many years. The city and county have shared financial responsibility

for that building and that is a partnership that both parties can be proud of in terms of delivery of services to the community.

Mr. Matthes stated that this proposal might maximize impact, but would delay work in Phillips Park which had a master plan. He added that Council may also determine that this project would be a better benefit to the community. Ms. Thompson added that a benefit that has not been mentioned yet is access to the trail system. Mr. Griggs explained that the Hinkson Creek Trail would be connected from Stephens Lake Park through Clark Lane; the next phase could build all the way out to the fairgrounds. This would provide almost the entire eastern leg of the trail. Mr. Pitzer asked if the fair has expressed an interest in returning. Mr. Parry stated that this is a positive alternative to hosting in Sturgeon. Mr. Atwill added that the 911 operation has been another successful partnership. The city was paying \$2 million/year to support 911 operations. When the tax passed, the city no longer had to fund that. The coordination of 13 service agencies served by the 911 center was a major effort. Everyone had to work together to come to a reasonable solution on how this operation would be conducted and they did so successfully. This is another great example of city and county cooperation. Mr. Parry added that this would also be a satellite campus for Columbia Center for Urban Ag and that 4H would also be involved in the stakeholder process. Ms. Peters confirmed that the county is putting up land, the city is putting in \$4 million and there would be \$5 million in private funds. The extra expansion would be completed through continued fundraising over time in addition to facility revenues. Mr. Griggs added that the 2021 parks sales ballot is up to Council to consider what projects are included.

Council consensus was generally supportive of moving forward with discussions, but they would like more details and conversations on this. Mayor Treece stated that we have a process and a plan that's about ready to break ground at Phillips. He is not opposed to this mission and project, but not at the risk of the good faith and effort of plans already in place for Phillips. Council was interested in exploring this further and will come back by the first City Council meeting in March with a decision.

This item is open to the public: Motion for the City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri, to meet on Monday, February 5th, 2018 pursuant to the City Council Pre-Council agenda, in Conference Room 1A and 1B of City Hall, 701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri, for a Closed Meeting to discuss the leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by a public governmental body where public knowledge of the transaction might adversely affect the legal consideration therefor, as authorized by Section 610.021(2) RSMo; and to discuss sealed bids and related documents, until the bids are opened; and sealed proposals and related documents or any documents related to a negotiated contract until a contract is executed, or all proposals are rejected, as authorized by Section 610.021(12) RSMo.

The council did not make a motion to go into closed session.

II. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:58 pm.