

DeFuniak Springs City Council

Workshop

January 5, 2010

The DeFuniak Springs City Council met in Workshop Session at 5:30 PM with the following members present: Mayor C. Harold Carpenter; Mayor Pro-Tem James Huffman; City Council Members: Don Harrison, James Coffield, Henry Ennis, Wayne Graham; City Manager Kim Kirby, Finance Director Sara Bowers, and City Clerk Susie Campbell-Work. City Attorney Clayton Adkinson was not in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order.

**TOPIC OF DISCUSSION:** Mayor Carpenter announced that the topic of discussion for the January 5<sup>th</sup> workshop would be to discuss the findings of the Environmental Health Report for the old Health Department Building. The meeting was turned over to City Manager Kim Kirby.

Mrs. Kirby gave a brief history about acquiring the old Health Department. She brought their attention to specifically pages 7 and 8 of the report, Conclusions and Recommendations. She also provided the audience with copies. She added that if anyone wanted a copy of the full report, to please contact the office.

Mrs. Kirby invited up Mr. John Barksdale to explain his findings and answer any questions the Council may have.

Mayor Carpenter suggested giving a summary of the conclusions and recommendations.

Mr. Barksdale said essentially they did a walk-through of the building. They checked the humidity and vapor, and check for any fumes. He said there was not any carbon monoxide detected. He said there was a long history of water damage and leaks detected that led to a high growth of mold. He said because the building has gone without air conditioning for so long, there was mold coating on doors and walls. They took samples of mold and fungal spores in the air. They tested for asbestos, bacteria, and MRSA.

He said all the samples were sent to a nationally certified laboratory. The tests for mold spores came back very high. He said it was not surprising since you could look at the carpet and walls and see mold growth everywhere. Mr. Barksdale stated that MRSA was not detected, but some bacteria was detected. He said that is common. He also said that asbestos was detected in the floor tiles. This was common due to the age of the tiles. He informed the Council that there was lead discovered in the paint on the outside of the building. Basically, all the findings are what you would expect to find in an old building that had been standing without air conditioning for a period of time.

Mr. Barksdale spoke about his recommendations. He described a few of the recommendations. He said that if you were going to demolish the building, there were a few specifics to be done with the asbestos. He said that if the City wanted to keep the building, the leaks should be fixed. He said if it was to be safely occupied, there needed to be a mold abatement protocol to ensure this.

Mr. Barksdale spoke about the removal or covering of the asbestos tiles. He also said that the exam rooms would need to be thoroughly cleaned to remove the bacteria before use. He said there is mold growth and dust that is associated with the duct work of the air conditioning system.

Mr. Barksdale added that the building is not appropriate to be in and to be occupied at this point due to the high content of mold spores. He said some people are more sensitive to these spores and could have a severe reaction.

Mayor Carpenter asked Mr. Barksdale if it were cleaned, could it be occupied. Mr. Barksdale answered that it could, there is just a cost associated with cleaning a building with this much damage. He said worse buildings have been remediated.

Further discussion about cleaning of the building took place.

Mayor Carpenter asked for questions or comments.

Art Dees, WZEP/Voter, asked Mr. Barksdale about the cost of cleaning versus the cost of demolition. Mr. Barksdale said that he could not really address that because they did not do a cost estimate for clean up. He said, based on the building, he estimated, personally it would be between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Mr. Dees asked about the asbestos. Mr. Barksdale answered that it was routine. He said they come in and remove the asbestos tiles. He said there would need to be a more comprehensive asbestos testing done before there could be a permit to demolish the building.

Mr. Don Harrison asked Mr. Ed Joyner if he could gather estimates on the different options for clean up/demolition. Mr. Joyner said after they make decisions tonight, he would gather the appropriate information for them. Mr. James Huffman talked about gutting and remodeling. He said it may cost more to refurbish it, than to clean it up.

Further discussion about clean up versus demolition took place.

Discussion then turned to the leaks. Mr. Huffman asked how many leaks were in the building. Mr. Joyner said at least four leaks were in the roof. Mr. Huffman asked what type of roof was on the building. Mr. Joyner answered it was metal.

Mr. Dees asked if these things were known before the purchase of the building. City Manager Kim Kirby stated that the City knew there were some leaks after they toured the building, but did not know that they were continuous and unattended leaks at that time.

Captain Gandy spoke about the condition of the building. He estimated, personally, it would cost \$250,000, plus, to fix the building.

Discussion about Capacity Credit for Water and Sewer in exchange for the parking lot was made, as well as problems with the building.

Mr. Harrison said that after looking at this report, he feels that there are fewer problems than previously suspected. He said that he does not consider this a negative. He said that he feels they got a good deal since Capacity Credit was involved.

Mr. Huffman said that "buying" isn't correct in this scenario, since they traded. He said they did not actually buy the building. He said it was a good deal on taking what they (the County) had. Mr. Harrison said they we are going to have to actually buy the building because we have to come up with the money to pay for the County's Capacity Credit.

Mr. Wayne Graham asked if the building, structurally, is sound. Mrs. Kirby said that she would like direction from the Council to see what the Council would like from the staff. She wanted to know what options the staff wanted. Mr. Huffman said that they should wait and see Mr. Joyner's report.

Mr. Harrison said that he would like to see:

1. The clean up price for the building.
2. Rehab cost; cost to build it back as is.
3. Demolition cost- including disinfecting costs where workers can come in.
4. Building build back cost from ground up of the same size.

Discussion was made about other vacant buildings in DeFuniak, such as Sterling and the Co-Op.

Mr. Joyner said that if they wanted this building to be an Emergency Operations type facility it would cost more, rather than one that is not. Mr. Huffman said that whatever is decided to be done, they need to make it hurricane-proof. He said there is not a building

in the city, other than the High School that is considered hurricane-proof. Mrs. Kirby said there are grants for that to offset the cost. Chief Mark Weeks agreed and said the Council is on the right track. He said no matter what they do, they are talking about money. He asked if they want to take "X" amount of money and put it into an old facility or take "X" amount of money and invest it into a new building. He questioned if the current facility has already met or exceeded its life expectancy.

Chief Weeks spoke about the utilities being on at the old Health Department. The Council suggested to save money, since it wasn't going to be occupied at this point until it was cleaned or demolished, and the air conditioning be turned off and power be shut down to a minimum.

Mr. Huffman asked Mr. Joyner how long it would take him to get the figures ready. Mr. Joyner said it would take about a month. Mr. Harrison said that they need to look into grants to build to help offset the cost.

Mayor Carpenter said that he didn't believe that they could come to any other consensus at this time and would wait for further action after they received Mr. Joyner's report. He thanked Mr. Barksdale for his report.

Mayor Carpenter asked if there were any other questions from the Council. Mrs. Kirby asked about energy efficient savings that could offset the cost. She suggested they include that information, as well.

Mr. Huffman said that DeFuniak Springs is the County Seat. He said it is growing and people are going to be coming here. He said you have to prepare for that. You cannot remain at the status quo and expect to get by with that.

Chief Weeks spoke about looking toward the future of the City as a whole and constructing a plan to fix it all. He said if we had a plan today, maybe we could implement it in a few years with other infrastructures. He said the City is going to have to spend money in the future to correct these problems. He said that it would be better to implement a plan, rather to put band-aids on things.

Mr. Huffman said that we need to prepare for the future, for the children 20 years from now and for the seniors.

Mr. Harrison said he doesn't believe the City has been lax. He said they have been looking toward the future.

Chief Weeks said that he agrees we have been looking to the future, but feels that they need to implement a plan.

Mrs. Kirby said that what she understands is that they need to bring back a cost analysis of the four aforementioned options. The Council agreed.

With there being no further business, Mayor C. Harold Carpenter adjourned the meeting.

ADOPTED this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2010

C. Harold Carpenter

C. Harold Carpenter, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

Elizabeth S. Campbell-Work

Elizabeth S. Campbell-Work, City Clerk