

A Special Meeting of the Houston City Council was held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2008, with Mayor Bill White presiding and with Council Members Jarvis Johnson, Wanda Adams, Mike Sullivan, M. J. Khan, P. E., Pam Holm, James G. Rodriguez, Sue Lovell, Melissa Noriega, Ronald C. Green and Jolanda "Jo" Jones; Mr. Anthony Hall, Chief Administrative Officer, Mayor's Office; Mr. Arturo Michel, City Attorney; Ms. Martha Stein, Agenda Director and Ms. Marta Crinejo, Assistant Agenda Director, present. Council Member Anne Clutterbuck absent due to being ill. Council Members Toni Lawrence, Adrian Garcia and Peter Brown absent.

At 10:13 a.m. Mayor White called the meeting. Council Members Khan, Holm and Jones absent.

Mayor White stated that he wanted to thank the Members of the Council who were attending the meeting as a whole hearing on the 5 Year Housing Plan; that former Council Member Gordon Quan, before he left, was one of many who had advocated a multi year plan to show the allocation of various public resources dedicated to housing within their community, that they passed an ordinance but it was only fairly recently and with some great leadership under both Milton Wilson and Richard Celli that they developed capabilities in order to do a realistic plan; that there were many people that he wanted to thank for their participation in putting together the plan, that they knew who they were and it had taken a big team effort and he appreciated the participation of many people over a process which began about a year and a half ago; that it was important for people to recognize that they had different agencies and they had different reporting responsibilities but within the City of Houston they were all working for the same people therefore he would just ask the board members and the public employees that were working here to please understand that they worked as a team, there were all sort of miraculous communication devices that they now had such as telephones and emails that would allow people to communicate across the lines of organizations in order to accomplish the common purposes within individual product lines, that they had organized an agenda that was in front of them and he would encourage Members of City Council and would encourage the employees in Housing to note both the different product lines and the different sources of funds; that he would give them an example of that, that if somebody at the Houston Housing Authority did not understand and kept somewhat current and in an organized manner with what was being done to provide rental housing by the Houston Housing Finance Corporation or their Housing Community Development Department, or for that manner Harris County, their counterparts, then they ought to get on the ball and vice versa because they could always learn from each other and they often had needs and if they knew where the resources were and what the intentions were then they might be able to move resources to move more effectively; that he could go on and on so part of the learning process had been a learning process for him and others who were on the team, just to know what people were doing; that he would encourage those who put together the plan, that encourage was to slight a word, but he wanted to do an analysis that was budgeted actual versus year to date and a re-projection for the balance of the year on some periodic basis such as quarterly; that he had to say that it had taken five years to get some portions of the City to do that, not because of a lack of good faith but because of a lack of the experience and the tools, that if it was the perfect budget it would be broken down, every figure that they had in the budget, every entire figure in the budget that they would have that was annual would have an appendix showing the monthly number; that he was saying that to all the people in the room, that was their goal but they would not get there since they never even had a consolidated budget before, and in some cases there was no formal way of doing an even annual actual budget variance analysis in a formal way, then he thought this represented a major improvement; and finally he thought that for anybody who was monitoring this or the media or the interested parties, as he said at the conclusion of the Council meeting yesterday, he had heard various statements from time to time along the lines of "well the City was not doing enough to _____ or the City does nothing to _____" and these were made by members of the public and they were sincere perceptions of those individuals, and if they did

that with housing and if they were along the lines of “why has the City never done _____ and the City does it every day”, then that tells them how they had a deficiency in communication which also should be part of their job, that it was hard for them to get the feedback from their customers concerning their priorities unless they knew what they were doing and it was hard to communicate; that the final note, that within their multi CIP for Capital Improvements it was a useful tool to help organize the thoughts of various Council Members and various employees because he knew that various Council Members and public employees from time to time, when a project was proposed, could say things like “well how come I have never heard of this before”, that in some cases they voted it on two consecutive budgets, or people could say, for a new project, “okay that sounds good is it in the multi year Housing Budget or was it accommodated within”, well where did they expect the money to come from, did they see what he was saying, that unless they had some kind of plan, a budget, it was hard to analyze various particular projects or proposals in the concrete, that now he did have a tool that was separate than some piles of papers and notes, that he had made on a legal pad in his office, to know where there was or was not money to do things that they intended to do, that he would encourage Council Members and others and would encourage City managers to always be asking, with respect to any new proposals, or proposal which had been reprioritized, the effect that it had on the consolidated Housing budget, that in that connection he thought it was incumbent on all authorities and all the individuals who were represented here and the programs that they administer; that he was going to ask something, did the Mayor, under the City Charter, have some power to direct the actions of City employees, that he was going to consider it, with respect to those who they had appointed to boards, if there were changes or updates in the pace or level of their activities make it a matter of formal discipline, to Mr. Michel and Mr. Celli, if there was going to be a change, to contemporaneously, the same day, notify the person who maintained the Consolidated Housing Budget and that person should contemporaneously, within 24 or 48 hours or something like that, make the change in the projections within that budget so it was a working document in real time, that every business did it all the time, and he would ask managers, the managers who were accountable to him, or people in the position of board chairs or the department heads, he would say that they ought to expect, after they went through this today with City Council, if they finalize it for 2009, that there be procedures, and to Mr. Michel, they could circulate it in writing so that everybody knew and took a cut, and if it was not done the first time there was a warning and the second time they just needed somebody in that responsibility who was in the program, that would take discipline but he wanted to tell them that it would pay off, that they would better know where their resources were because it was not good if they had money that could be invested in projects; that finally, the worst things about plans was that people thought they were successful when they met the plan or that the plan could not be changed; that he would quote General Eisenhower, “plans are worthless but planning is indispensable”, that by that he meant that if somebody thought that changed circumstances would not permit changes in the plan they would be defeated, but unless they did undertake each activity that they undertook as part of an overall effort and saw a significance in the overall effort and then know what the various contingencies were or know what the various opportunities were, in this case resources available, then they would not be able to do their job effectively, so he was saying two different things and getting this balance and saying it right was critically important, that he was doing management and public policy at the same time, and this was where the management could get of, that respecting the plan as a document that would be accurate monthly, or periodically, was critical and not optional that they have this deal, that did not mean, and having processes by which there could be either a reprogramming of funds within the plan or a carryover from one year to the another, they ought to have processes that were fairly formal on that, but it did not mean that the plan could be changed and in particular those things that were good to go should take priority over those things that were more of an aspiration or hope where nobody had an idea when they would go. Council Members Khan, Holm and Jones absent.

Mayor White recognized Director Richard Celli to begin the review of the City of Houston

Housing Plan 2009 – 2013. Council Members Khan, Holm and Jones absent.

Mr. Celli stated that this plan was an effort by a lot of people in the City and their effort to put down and have a living document that would forecast and reforecast what their sources and uses of funds would be over the next five years; that he wanted to emphasize that it was a living document and they at the Housing Department needed everybody's help to keep it up to date and had actually given the responsibility to Mr. Bob Bradford, a new employee with the Housing Department, that he was a CPA and retired banker from J.P. Morgan Chase and a colleague of his at Ginger Vincent, that his main responsibility would be to call all of their product managers every month and ask for updates, that if in fact during the month if they had something to change on the plan they could give Bob a call; and Mayor White stated that because they were dealing with multiple entities he was asking, just as they would for an internal audit in a cooperation, if there was non compliance or non cooperation, in addition to Mr. Celli to please copy it and send it to Ms. Mitchell. Council Members Khan, Holm and Jones absent.

. Mr. Celli, Mr. Jeff Smith, Mr. Tim Seckinger, Ms. Chatana Chapheker, Mr. Sampley, Mr. Issa Dadoush, Mr. Steve Tinnermon, Mr. Chris Butler and Mr. Juan Chavez reviewed the City of Houston Housing Plan for 2009 – 2013, which was distributed to Council Members and a copy of which is in the City Secretary's Office for review.

Members of the City Council thanked Mayor White for being committed to putting more affordable housing on the ground, and thanked the Housing Department for coming to Council and presenting their report and recognizing everything in a professional and businesslike manner, and congratulations to Mayor White; and Mayor White stated that Council Member Johnson might consider a hearing on two issues, that in a way it was public safety and in a way it was neighborhood; and they could have a Mayor's Report, that one of the reports could be what were the properties they were targeting to acquire, demolish or what have you, and the second would be the status on the lawsuits;

After further discussion by Council Members, Council Member Sullivan stated that he was not familiar with the difference between all of the entities, Houston Housing Finance, Harris County, Houston Housing Authority and things like that, and Mayor White stated that there were a couple of things, that one reason they had the big binder, and look under Tab 14, that they tried on one page to give people some of that background in quite a bit of detail, and then on the product descriptions if they looked on the last tab, Tab 16, there was reference to product descriptions which was really a good way to sort of understand some of the product line that they had, that finally it took hours and hours to make sure that people understood the words, and it was at Tab 2, definitions, that they would meet with him otherwise.

After further discussion by Council Members, Mayor White stated that he wanted to thank Mr. Celli for his role and wanted to commend every person who touched and had the patience to do the consolidated housing plan and especially for those who were career public servants and wanted to make a contribution over an expanded period of time, that the road map that they had given for affordable housing would assure more continuity as those elected officials, from time to time, turn over, that it had been of great assistance to have a multi year plan in the public works arena, in the capital improvements and in their vertical construction and now they had one for housing.

There being no further business before Council, the City Council adjourned at 12:12 p.m. Council Member Clutterbuck absent due to being ill. Council Members Lawrence, Garcia and Brown absent.

DETAILED INFORMATION ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY.

MINUTES READ AND APPROVED

/S/Anna Russell

Anna Russell, City Secretary