

City of Willcox Newsletter August 2009

Talk, Talk, Talk! Stop Talking and Start Doing!

Pat McCourt, City Manager

This is frequently the concern that is heard on the street when the City is trying to decide what direction to proceed with a new idea or a grant. Why does the City have to spend so much time talking about doing something before they just do it? The City does not need to spend a lot of time talking about what it is planning to do. The City does have to tell the citizens what it has decided to do, and that is done in the City Council Chambers during any open meeting so that the citizens know what the City is doing with their money. The question becomes is that enough? So many times we hear about decisions being made in “smoke filled rooms”, which is a way of saying the Citizens don’t have a chance to hear what is being discussed, and the background on why some actions are recommended and other actions are not recommended. In order to try and present a more complete picture to the citizens, the City uses a variety of Open Meetings to discuss important topics, allow the people to mull over ideas, and allow people time to think about and research alternative ideas, *before* the question reaches the City Council dais.

Currently, the City has a number of ideas/projects that are going through this process: The question of whether or not the City should take over the Airport; the future development of the Quail Drive Sports Park area; the use of the \$75,000 grant from Union Pacific; the grant we recently received, through the efforts of U.S. Representative Giffords’ office, for a Senior Citizen structure; and the proposed policies on use of City- owned facilities. These are all questions on how to address the future needs of the people of Willcox. There are various options, but not enough money for all the options. Your input into the questions is very important. The City is asking for your help in building the future of our community. We understand that the process seems slow when there is an option that to you individually may feel (and may turn out to be) the best option. Our goal is provide the people of Willcox the opportunity to meaningfully participate in building our community. It is not always pretty or fast, but Democracy is the form of government I want to live with.

Library Renovation Progress Continues

Tom Miner, Library Director

On June 22, 2009, Ms. Staci Seyer, Vice President and architect-in-charge of this project, and Mr. Mike Schmitt, CEO of Dick and Fritsche Design Group (DFDG) in Phoenix, met with 12 members of various groups and organizations from our City, to discuss details and come up with the final architectural design plans for the Elsie S. Hogan Community Library Renovation Project. The discussion lasted most of the day, with the result being that they both went away with a much clearer idea of our needs and desired outcomes, and a positive direction in which to proceed, in order to complete the final plans.

On June 24th, we met with the mechanical, plumbing and electrical engineers who are sub-contracted with DFDG for the design effort, and discussed all aspects of the renovation project relevant to their areas of expertise. They were very thorough, and the outcome of their visit resulted in a quality product and a set of construction documents that are almost “ready to bid out”. This phase of the

project is now completed and was received in our hands the 22nd of July. DFDG worked very hard to accomplish this within the established timeline, and are giving us the “most bang for the buck” with regard to our project budget. We hope the final outcome looks as good as the blueprints!

Between June 22nd and July 6th, when Ms. Seyer returned to brief the City Council on our progress to date, and to ensure that we were all on track with the direction we are currently heading, a massive amount of communication and coordination occurred between my office and hers, hammering out all the tiniest details.

On July 31st, the plans were sent to the City’s contract firm, W.C. Scoutten, Inc. for a thorough Plan Review. We expect that to be completed very soon, at which time DFDG will make the final corrections, and we will then be ready to go out to bid. Construction could begin as soon as September, and end in December or January. Costs are still pretty “fluid” at this point, until the final bids for the whole project are received in August, but we hope very soon to give the citizens of the community a new Library floor plan, designed with various “add options” built in, that they can all be very proud of for many, many years to come!