

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CIVIC CENTER

January 13, 1999

5:15 PM

Chairman Wihby called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, O'Neil, Rivard, Hirschmann (late)

Messrs: S. Ashooh, Alderman Pinard, D. Charpentier, J. Taylor,
K. Clougherty, Mayor Wieczorek

Chairman Wihby addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Discussion of the site tour itinerary and possible dates.

Mr. Ashooh stated the purpose of this meeting is two fold. It is to discuss the site venue itinerary and the second item is an actual request by the MDC Board of Directors regarding our authorization to continue. So the itinerary we have laid out, lets take that first. There are four different venues with three different building managers and two or three different architects and a very aggressive travel schedule.

Chairman Wihby noted too aggressive for our Committee.

Mr. Ashooh stated, Alderman, I think it is safe to say at this point I don't think they really want to go. Steve Stern described the travel on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday is kind of brutal and we should get a break. We are in the process now of trying to cost this out to arrange this delegation. We are probably looking at a couple of grand in travel expenses because of the type of travel we are doing.

Chairman Wihby stated before we go any further, I have been in contact with some of the Aldermen who are on this Committee and they do not want to go on a schedule like this.

Alderman O'Neil asked is there any way that it could be broken up to separate weeks.

Mr. Ashooh answered first of all, effectively, I think they are all close enough and you have to remember that we are paying these guys to go up and do this and frankly I am a volunteer and it is taking time away from my business to do it. I am really not pushing for it, but I am willing to do this with the idea that we get a really aggressive schedule. That doesn't mean that this is the only schedule. We are looking at a Part II which is a further trip that would cover northeastern venues, something that wouldn't require all the plane travel because we also have to take a look at how facilities in the northeast are managed and you can imagine a more comfortable schedule that would cover, lets say, Providence, Hartford, Wilkes-Barre, PA which is a brand new facility coming on-line this year, doing that by bus in a much more comfortable schedule. That one, because of the bus trip, will allow us to bring along Police and Fire and those guys so they can take a look at the management of the facilities in the New England region. This trip, we are looking specifically at the operation of these four facilities and we think this is an effective way to do it.

Chairman Wihby stated I think what we are going to do is, this Committee was the one that wanted to go, but Alderman Rivard is not going to be here that week and I know that I talked to Hirschmann yesterday who said he doesn't mean going twice but not three and four and getting killed doing it which is basically what this schedule does. Alderman O'Neil felt the same way, as do I. I don't know how many people you are going to get from the Aldermanic Committee to go on this.

Mr. Ashooh replied we would like to have someone come along. I think it is important for the Aldermen to participate in this. What we are trying to do really is juggle a number of other concerns. One is to have the trip effective and focused on those buildings and get those out of the way.

Alderman O'Neil asked is there any chance, Skip, of generally the first week of the month I know these two guys are gone. Is there any chance that we can kick that back a week?

Mr. Ashooh asked further out.

Alderman O'Neil answered yes.

Mr. Ashooh replied that I really don't know. Juggling the schedules of the people at the facilities to greet us when this proposal was put together it was to see when we could get the building operators available while we were there. I can find out tomorrow and talk to Steve Stern who is the one who talked to the building people and see what their availability is like doing it during a different week.

Mr. Charpentier stated the other thought I had, too, was they are suggesting that maybe we try to bring it into two. I wonder if maybe we at least could explore that. I see some of these other people, as we talked about this morning aren't...I don't know whether it is because they have been to one of them and they don't want to go again or whether their schedule prevents it.

Mr. Ashooh replied what Dick is referring to is down at the bottom where Frank Russo, Jim Swords and Carl Scheer would not go to all venues either because they have involvement with the building and are aware of it or would not be able to contribute anything to that portion of it so they wouldn't be going to all venues. Frankly, the only ones who would be going to all of them would be Steve Stern and the Manchester delegation. I can investigate the possibility of splitting it up. One of the things I think we want to do is keep this in a relatively tight time-frame. I can get on it tomorrow. I can't talk to Steve tonight. He is at the East Coast Hockey League meeting and it is tough to get a hold of him tonight, but I believe I can get a hold of him tomorrow.

Chairman Wihby stated why don't you see what you can do and call me tomorrow and we can talk to the Committee and go from there.

Mr. Charpentier asked what is your idea of two. Would it be like two or three days at one time?

Alderman O'Neil answered that would be better for me. Even though I am here, this is a tough week for me.

Alderman Rivard stated it is not only Bob Rivard. There are fourteen Aldermen that are going to vote on this project and you folks have been doing a good job but I think that we need to send somebody and I think we need to be included in the schedule. I don't think you need to throw a schedule at us and say take it or leave it and I don't think that is fair.

Mr. Ashooh replied well we were juggling a bunch of schedules to put this together. Now we may very well be able to break this up and I will find that out, but getting all the buildings lined up and their people who deal with this in a relatively approximate time-frame so that you can do this and it makes some sense. Remember, we are going to four facilities with the idea of comparing all of them and then using them as a measure against Manchester. If you break it up too much, you will lose some of that effectiveness but I will explore it tomorrow and we can find out for sure if it can be done. If we can spread it over a couple of weeks and we don't lose anything on it that is fine. So the bottom line is it would

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be better for everyone if we did take it out one week later. So there are two points, can we break it up and can we do it later.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think the following week would be a better week for everyone.

Alderman Rivard stated I just think that if there are other individuals who are going to go, obviously consideration was given to these people but I don't think any of us were contacted and asked if it fits with our schedule. You folks put a schedule together that was convenient for everybody here except for the Aldermen who may go. I think maybe you need to consider the Aldermen's schedules too. I understand what you are saying, but the point is that you said you had to meet with people and we are also a part of this group and I think we should be included in the schedule making. That is all I am saying. I don't think we should take it or leave it.

Mr. Ashooh replied I understand, Alderman, and let me just say so you don't feel too slighted that I wasn't consulted on this schedule so I rearranged my schedule to go on this because this was when the buildings would be available. If you are going to do a site tour, the first thing you have to take a look at is when are these buildings going to be available and the people available to meet with us. Since the first schedule doesn't work, we will see if we can work around it.

Mr. Charpentier asked would you rather go Thursday, Friday and Saturday or the beginning of the week.

Chairman Wihby answered Thursday, Friday and Saturday are better for me. You don't want to run into an Aldermanic meeting either so Thursday, Friday and Saturday would probably be better.

Mr. Ashooh stated we can see how Thursday, Friday and Saturday works with this schedule and how those buildings can work it into their schedule.

Chairman Wihby stated even if you guys wanted to go on a Wednesday to do the first one and we went to the next three or two, that is fine. Anything is possible. Or if we wanted to go on a Friday and Saturday and that worked out better.

Mr. Taylor stated well Chicago, for example, and then Grand Rapids and then to Greenville and back and then take the other two together or something.

Chairman Wihby stated see what you can do, see how flexible they are and call me tomorrow and let me know.

Mr. Ashooh stated one of the things is, and the point was made to me that in order for the discussion to be effective, I would like to have a look at all the facilities so that you are part and parcel of all of the discussions that take place by the architect and building manager but let me see what I can do tomorrow morning first thing and get back to you on that.

Chairman Wihby addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Discussion relative to the next steps for Phase II.

Mr. Ashooh stated just to go back to February 5, 1997 when the Board of Mayor and Aldermen originally charged the MDC with conducting Phase I duties, the scope of what was supposed to have been completed to get to Phase II, in rereading those what we have been told is that we need a new authorization by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for the MDC now to proceed with Phase II duties. This is a three step process. We have gone through Phase I and we are ready to go to Phase II so Friday morning at the MDC full board meeting I asked that board to take a vote on requesting an authorization from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. With this meeting coming up with this Committee, it was a good time then to take that vote which was a unanimous vote in favor of making a request from the Board and present it to this Committee so that hopefully your Committee would then make a recommendation to the full Board on January 19 via a Committee Report and request an authorization for the MDC to proceed with Phase II. I am assuming we will ask for the same authorization when it comes time to go to Phase III.

Alderman O'Neil moved to request authorization for the MDC to proceed with Phase II of the Civic Center project from the full Board.

Alderman Rivard asked are we authorizing the \$2.6 million. Is that Phase II?

Mr. Ashooh answered no, that has already been authorized. We don't have the official authorization now to act on that Phase II budget as the MDC.

Alderman Rivard asked so you need this action so you can move forward.

Mr. Ashooh answered yes.

Alderman Rivard duly seconded the motion. Chairman Wihby called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

For the record, it was noted that Alderman Hirschmann arrived at the meeting.

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Alderman O'Neil moved to have Alderman Wihby, as Chairman of the Board and as Chairman of the Committee, be in charge of selecting who will represent the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on the trip or the trips. Alderman Rivard duly seconded the motion. Chairman Wihby called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Rivard, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee