

**POLSON CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES  
CITY HALL – CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
DECEMBER 7, 2010, 6:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE: Commissioners: Don Smith, John Campbell, Judy Preston, Mike Lies, Elsa Duford, Fred Funke, and Mayor DeVries presiding. City Manager Todd Crossett present. City Attorney James Raymond absent. Others Present: Building Inspector Ron Melvin, Water & Sewer Superintendent Tony Porrazzo, Parks Superintendent, Christi Buffington, Mike Maddy, Tana Seeley, Hu Beaver, Todd Bassett, Tim McGinnis, Peter Daniels, and Margie Hendricks.**

**CALL TO ORDER: Mayor DeVries called the meeting to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA: Mayor DeVries advised removing the vote from the agenda as the meeting was a work session. She added that the meeting would be reviewing possible City uses for the property that the Mission Valley Aquatics had proposed. She requested that the workshop not extend beyond an hour and a half. Commissioner Lies moved to approve the agenda as proposed with no vote on item 3, seconded by Commissioner Funke. The motion carried unanimously.**

**LOCATION OF MISSION VALLEY AQUATIC CENTER: City Manager Crossett advised that this was a continuation of the work session from November 30<sup>th</sup>. They would be giving a presentation on the potential for storm and wastewater applications. He asked that speakers stay respectful of everyone's time and stick to the point in respectful discussion.**

Building Inspector Ron Melvin directed attention to maps of the area around the existing lagoon sites. He reviewed the uses for the building as a utility service building for service and storage. The stormwater runoff and sewer systems all ran to that area, so there were proposed wetlands, settling ponds and other components planned for the 20 acre area around the Tamsco building. The need for the stormwater storage would increase with the completion of the Skyline project, bringing all the runoff from Skyline directly to that area. The Tamsco building was centrally located on the City property that was set aside for those purposes. The uses for the area were being put together, but they had not time to bring any proposal to the City when MVA came before the Commission. He noted that they was also a huge need for office space and vehicle and equipment storages. The envisioned the building primarily as a public works facility. City Manager Crossett noted that there was also a critical need for storage space for records retention and secure documents, particularly in the police and court system. The needed more adequate storage to meet state code requirements for document storage. Commissioner Campbell noted the convenience of the location, and for many years they had envisioned irrigation and storage ponds in that area. Water & Sewer Superintendent Porrazzo reviewed the PER completed in 2009 and noted that it was completed prior to the Skyline project, which would increase the storm and wastewater calculations. Commissioner Smith expressed that the area would be good for recreational purposes, and saw the aquatic center along with other recreational facilities. He inquired about other property options. City Manager Crossett noted that much of the utility infrastructure was already installed in that area. The property owned by Montana Rail Link along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue was discussed. Parks Superintendent Sargeant and Tana Seeley both noted that

MRL was not interested in selling, donating, or leasing any portion of the land for recreation. Water & Sewer Superintendent Porrazzo cautioned that putting a recreational facility with 100 children alongside a sewer treatment facility and retention ponds was not advisable. He added that regardless of the type of sewage treatment there would likely still be a prevalent smell from the facility. Todd Bassett of Glacier Bank reviewed various options for loan payment terms if the City opted to purchase the Tamsco building. Building Inspector Melvin noted that they were not that far along in their plans, any building purchase would have to fall into their sewer treatment and stormwater system timelines. The modern MBR and MNBR sewage treatment plants were discussed, along with the estimated life of the current lagoons and sewer treatment system. Fred Funke expressed his feelings that the area was set up for recreational purposes like the Skate Park and baseball fields and that there was enough space to accommodate several departments. Commissioner Smith inquired about the building's market listing. Mike Maddy advised that the building was up for sale and they were anxious to work with anyone to find a use for the building. The last appraisal had been about \$700,000, but they were interested in negotiating with anyone. The water and sewer departments funding for capital projects was discussed. Todd Bassett advised that with the real estate business down, buying power was at its peak and he was seeing many buildings sold for less than the cost of constructing one. He noted that Glacier Bank had seen the financial statements, and he felt that the water and sewer departments had sufficient funds for such purposes. Building Inspector Melvin noted that if they were to pursue purchasing the building a new appraisal and certificate of survey would be obtained. Christi Buffington expressed concerns in regards to the suitability of the land for water storage. She directed attention to the maps of the wetlands in the area and went over the soil tests that she had obtained from the Tribal offices. She inquired what information was available and being used for the decisions made for the property and building. Water & Sewer Superintendent Porrazzo reviewed the various firms and studies that had been performed on the surrounding property along with historical data. He advised that they were familiar with the soils and water saturation they were dealing with in the area. He noted that the property was good for ponds because the water did not filter out, it was held in place. He noted that putting in recreational facilities had proven difficult on the property because of the amount of water that goes to that area. Building Inspector Melvin noted that the Commissioners had voted against retrofitting the building for a wastewater treatment facility, however as far as a public works office space and storage it would be perfect. City Manager Crossett pointed out the advantages to the building. Tim McGinnis commented that the City had an unhealthy relationship with the building and only expressed an interest in it when someone else did. He felt that the property was perfect for a recreational facility and hoped this was not another game the City was playing or a tactic to get the building for nothing. Murat Kalinyaprak commented that it would help if there was more public information available on the matter and asked if there was property already donated for the aquatic center. Hu Beaver advised that there was a parcel of land that was donated, but it was not platted yet and there was no deed at this time. The Tamsco building was an alternate site and they had not been aware of the City having any intention for the building. He added that they were not looking to interrupt any needs of the City. Ken Siler inquired if the facility could be built in an area with such a high water table. Hu Beaver advised that they need an engineer to look at the property, they may be shot down. At this point they were looking to the City to see if they could pursue the property. Margie Hendricks commented the citizens voted for the vision at Ridgewater and expressed concerns that the public was not being heard. Tana Seeley advised that the Ridgewater location was conceptual, and the voting

language was for the operation and maintenance of a facility but did not include a location. Margie Hendricks commented that the public had the perception the site was decided and that they knew that's what they were voting for. She added that she was not comfortable with Ms. Seeley's answer. Suzanne Luepke inquired about sewer department funds. Building Inspector Melvin advised that the operating budget could cover the cost, but for the entire wastewater treatment facility 8-12 million would be needed. They would be looking for grants and other funding as well as other financing options. Christi Buffington felt that they needed additional information and research on the water in that area. She also wondered if the storm and sewer water all had to flow to that area. Building Inspector Melvin advised that they were coupling the engineering studies done by Stelling on the Skyline project with the completed studies on Polson's water and sewer system and 2009 PER. City Manager Crosssett advised that they could move the water, but the cost would be great to alter and move the current infrastructure. He added the Commission did not have the authority to tell the building owner who he could sell or sublease to, and the City was in no way trying to shut down the aquatic center. Commissioner Preston expressed disagreement that the City is intentionally putting a wrench in the sale of the building. The Commission did vote against retrofitting the wastewater treatment facility at that location, however they always had other intentions for the area. The City had to make the best decision for the City, the timing for this issue was because of the potential for the building. Tim McGinnis commented that staff had brought up before other uses for the building and that they needed the room. Murat Kalinyaprak commented that he didn't know what games Mr. McGinnis was talking about, no one had been against the building for other uses, only against the treatment plant. And there had been concerns about the City getting a fair price for the building. Todd Bassett advised that if you looked at the water and sewer liquid assets, this was a good time to make such a purchase, especially with the growth in the City. He added that the City could use a debt program to make the purchase. Mayor DeVries mused that a pool seems like a good fit with the recreation in the area, however with storm water retention ponds and wetlands safety concerns made it seem like it would not be a good fit. She wondered if a pool fit into the commercial/industrial zoning of the area. Building Inspector Melvin commented that it could fit into the commercial aspect of the zoning. Commissioner John Campbell that when he had began working for the water and sewer department in 1979, the area was always set aside as sewer land, with the exception of the skate park. He pointed out that the whole reason the Tamsco building had been built on the City land was the promise of jobs, which never came true. He reviewed soil problems and the increasing depth of the ponds. Mayor DeVries noted that she heard the soccer fields were planned to be moved. Parks Superintendent Sargeant advised that the soccer association had received land in Ridgewater. The current fields near the Tamsco building could not be used by the older children or adults due to the hard clay. It was cheaper for the association to build new fields in a more suitable area than to repair the City fields which would cost between \$150,000-\$200,000. She added that she had worked closely with Superintendent Porrazzo and he had been generous to give the parks the land for the skate park, however there were always drainage problems with the area and irrigation was an issue. She had always known the area as sewer lands for the expansion of the City. She added that the goal was to make Polson the best place to live. Margie Hendricks commented that the current lease for the Tamsco building was to encourage jobs, and it seemed extraordinary that they gave the owners a 50 year lease seeing as how it didn't turn out. Mayor DeVries asked the Commissioners for a sense of what they would like on the upcoming agenda. Commissioner Duford felt there needed to be more discussion and thought before it was put on the next agenda. Mayor DeVries

expressed that she felt they owed MVA an answer after holding two workshops on the subject. She wondered about alternate properties the City could lease to the facility. City Manager Crossett concurred adding that all of the Commissioners and City staff wished the aquatic center success. He offered that he was willing to put together a committee to look at options. Building Inspector Melvin and Superintendent Porrazzo both agreed that they were in favor of a committee to look at other options. Commissioner Preston inquired how key having a building like this one was to the MVA. Tana Seeley replied that it was a draw to have the building. Commissioner Duford was apprehensive about having a pool facility near a smelly sewer zone. She felt that they had not answered all the questions and was puzzled how they could vote. She felt the needed more projections and figures on paper. City Manager Crossett advised that both options have merit and it was up to the Commission to make the decision.

**The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**

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**Mayor Pat DeVries**

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**Attest: Kala Parker, City Clerk**