

WORK SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL PLAZA BUILDING, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1997.

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The work session on the Fire Department Five-year Master Plan was called to order at 4:15 P.M. by the Presiding Officer, Mayor William E. Thornton, with the following members present: Flores, Billa Burke, Vasquez, Herrera, Ross, Marbut, Peak, Webster and Thornton. **Absent:** Lott, Avila.

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Fire Chief Robert Ojeda thanked his staff for its hard work in analysis of the Fire Department's Five-year Master Plan since the March 4, 1997 City Council meeting, noting that his department's goals include providing fire protection to all areas of the city. He spoke to the creation of a 20-member Fire Department Planning issues Task Force following the March 4, 1997 Council meeting, and spoke in detail to its recommendations. Copies of that report and Chief Ojeda's video presentation are made a part of the papers of this meeting.

Among the recommendations were (1) renovation of six fire stations, for which Chief Ojeda spoke to details of how this would be accomplished; (2) replacement of five fire stations with new facilities; (3) realignment of three fire stations to other areas; and (4) maintaining the downtown fire companies with no reduction in services. Chief Ojeda then spoke to the enhancement of the downtown fire companies and their services by new fire station construction.

Chief Ojeda then addressed current and proposed response times, under the Master Plan, and spoke to four-person "average" manning versus four-person "constant" manning, as recommended by the Task Force. He also spoke to the department's recommendation for seeking implementation of four-person "constant" manning by increments and the filling of vacant positions.

In summary, Chief Ojeda provided a review of the Task Force recommendations and asked the City Council to consider adopting amendments to the Master Plan of the Fire Department at its May 15, 1997 City Council meeting.

Mayor Thornton spoke to the recommendations as a move toward equal protection for all areas of the city, and asked Council members to look at their individual City Council districts and seek community input.

Chief Ojeda noted that a series of quadrant neighborhood meetings and an inner-city meeting will be held in order to gain citizen input prior to the May 15, 1997 City Council meeting and proposed action on the Fire Department Master Plan amendments.

Mr. Peak noted that community input is important, and addressed the need to get better service to the peripheral areas of the city.

Mr. Webster spoke to his concern with little service improvements in District 10 over the span of the Five-year Master Plan, despite the district having the second-largest population of all the Council districts in the city. He spoke to the need to seek alternatives to get better fire protection, and also voiced his concern with lesser protection being provided to Districts 8, 9, and 10, when other Council districts get much better fire service. He noted that his district cannot wait six years to get relief.

Chief Ojeda spoke to the need to address this matter in the rolling Master Plan consideration.

Mr. Alexander E. Briseno, City Manager, spoke to the need for additional fire stations if new areas are to be added to the City by annexation. He further noted that 'response times' is but one factor to be considered in the Master Plan, and noted that the Master Plan can be fine-tuned each year, much like the rolling annexation plan.

Mr. Flores thanked the Fire Department for its effort and spoke in support for four-person staffing on department fire equipment.

Mr. Ross noted that Mr. Webster raises a serious issue, and that the City may well need additional new fire stations.

Mr. Ross then made a motion to direct City staff to look at its options as to what would reduce "hot zones" in Districts 8 and 10 before the Annexation Plan is presented to City Council in May. Mr. Webster seconded the motion.

Mr. Vasquez spoke to the need to look at the budget for resources for the Plan.

Chief Ojeda addressed the need to immediately look toward setting up a series of neighborhood meetings on the Master Plan amendments.

Mayor Thornton spoke to the need to move swiftly on this matter.

After consideration, the motion prevailed by the following vote: AYES: Flores, Billa Burke, Vasquez, Herrera, Ross, Peak, Webster, Thornton. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Lott, Avila, Marbut.

Mr. Ross stated that it should be emphasized during these neighborhood meetings that the City Council will be considering various options.

Mayor Thornton stated that, in the budget, mandates take precedence for funding. He spoke to the estimated \$4 million cost for amendments to the Fire Department Master Plan and the need to know the Plan's budgetary implications.

Mr. Briseno suggested that City staff prepare one recommended plan and report to the City Council next week, and speak to its budgetary implications, during a Council "B" Session.

There being no further business to come before City Council in this work session, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08 P.M.


MAYOR


CITY CLERK