

# DRAFT

## MINUTES - CITY OF ASHTON SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

March 1, 2005 – 7:00 pm  
NF High School Auditorium & ASHTON CITY HALL  
ASHTON, IDAHO

**PRESENT:** Mayor Teddy Stronks, Council Members Brett Pincock, Linda Janssen, Jerry Funke and Richard Huntsman,

**Also present:** Many concerned citizens – sign up sheet attached

Mayor Stronks called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

### **Purpose of the Special Meeting:**

1. To hear public comment on acquisition of old high school by City of Ashton.

Mayor Stronks called the meeting to order at 7:00 and welcomed everyone. He then spoke on the purpose of the meeting and encouraged comments from the citizens.

**Lynn Bowman** representing the Fremont County Library Board was the first to offer his opinion. He stated that "If we can't afford it, we can't afford it" he stated that if the City took it over that the Library would be interested in renting a space – if the price is right.

**Dave Jacobson** is very involved with sports. He is adamant about the gym being saved. He said that the basketball team desperately needs gym space. He would like to see it as a Community Center and hopes that we can do something. He hates to give up that gym!

**Brian Loosli** agrees with Dave, although he is very concerned with the financial burden on the city. He encouraged everyone to talk to the School Board and ask that they reconsider tearing down the building and keeping it. He estimates that the class room availability is valued at around 1.5 million dollars. He stated that he appreciates the city trying, but wishes the school board would keep it.

**Marta Smith** said we need a community center for our kids to keep them off the streets and have a place to practice. She would like to see some sort of tourist attraction and use the building for arts, dancing, etc. She is in support of the city taking the building.

**George Smith** agrees and suggests an annual fee to raise revenues

**Suzette Bollinger** would like to keep it if funds are available but if the funds aren't she said the council should say no.

**Bob Comstock** suggested, after talking to Dr. Parker, that we should form a recreational district to help raise funds for the buildings. He doesn't think that the city should give anything away in exchange for the building- such as water/sewer as the costs for maintenance will be on the shoulders of the City anyway.

**Alan Baum-** said we need this gym! He said we need at least 10-16 hours of court time per day for the kids. He said that the Stake Center has helped but shouldn't look to it as an alternative as it is against the church's policy. He said the city tax payer shouldn't shoulder this and he thinks the school should step forward. He would also like to see the numbers.

**Rex Wade** can't believe they want to tear this building down. He is very supportive of keeping it. He said he doesn't want to see them throw this building away.

**Gladys Parkinson** said that it is so costly to demolish the building and build a new gym- she would like to see the old building as a middle school. The elementary is so very crowded. She said they have kids packed in the modular unit and in every corner! Why not move the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades over? She wants the school to step up and use the building. She said the operetta

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practice is so crowded and the kids will have to be bussed over to the new school. Wouldn't it be better to use what we have? She realizes it will be costly either way. Maintenance is a huge issue, we need it to be clean and taken well care of. She said the fire code and safety issues should be addressed and to remember that the roof leaks like a sieve in the dressing rooms.

**Trenna Howell** commented that we can not afford to let it go! She would like to see a museum be brought in and to use the auditorium for mellow dramas. She is in support.

**Maria Eidam** asked how we could afford to let this go?

**Leon Martindale** asked if it would be cost effective? "If's don't pay the bills. Let's not break the city by doing this."

**Flint Marshall** agrees with Leon. Although he has wonderful memories and would like to keep it.

**Debbie Drexler** would like to see the school donate the money that they were going to use to demolish the building to the city to use for fixing it up and maintaining it. As a city home owner we shouldn't be asked to foot the bill for the whole north end of the county. Would like to negotiate to have the school help, she thinks it is a county wide tax problem not just citywide. She said that there is a lot of damage in the building and wishes that they would have taken care of it. She would like to see a solid commitment of funds before the city takes it on.

**Lyle Galloway** walked through the building and is concerned how the city can take on the responsibility. He said a huge amount of work needs to be done.

**Julie Jacobson** wants to keep the building. She thinks that it is moving too fast. She asked if the school board could extend the deadline so we can find out more. She said that there are youth programs in Bonneville Co that are wonderful. She said they are funded entirely with grant funds. She would like to explore some of the grants and take the time. She thinks the school should help and should step up to the plate and find alternatives. She would like to see a community committee formed.

**Tom Howell** asked why won't the school use the money of tearing down the building and give it to the city to ix it up. He said the Gun Show would use it and other big events could be had. He asked the library if they are interested and would we like to move the Community Center over and sale the old C.C. **Bowman** said the Library doesn't have the money to remodel it. He said the school has already offered it to them, but they can't afford it.

**Shannon Hill** Doesn't want the city to shoulder the costs of the old building. He is grateful to the city for allowing this sound off, but feels the school should keep it. He wants to pres school board members and would like to see the numbers. He said it is a highly emotional issue and that we absolutely need the gym. He is tired of the old wars between the north and south end of the county and he is against the school getting water and sewer for free. They are accountable to us. The city shouldn't have to shoulder this cost. He then thanked the council.

**Klara Vargas** stated if the city is moving forward could we ask for a vote. She said it is not fair to older people that don't have kids. We can't afford this!

**Dick Griffel** does not want the city tax payers to shoulder this burden.

**Kurt Eidam** said that we have an Economic Development specialist that makes a good salary. Why don't we use her services to bring in other companies? He said that there are grants out there. Maybe we could consider hiring a professional grant writer.

DRAFT

**MINUTES - CITY OF ASHTON**  
**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**Doug Hess** said that he felt the elementary is too small and the cheapest alternative he can see is to save the old school. He asked what the future plans are for the school?

**Tom Howell** said he wishes they would slow down and possibly keep the new Jr. high part and tear down the old.

Mayor Stronks then read a letter submitted by Susan Steinman. She opposes the city taking on the property.

There was additional repeat comments and **Richard Laux** said that he would like see the city take the building and tear down the old part and use the new for the community.

Teddy asked that the meeting be moved to the City Building where they would enter executive session to discuss the property.

**2. Executive Session at the City Building**

Janssen moved to enter executive session to discuss acquisition of property, Funke seconded, motion carried by roll call Janssen Y, Funke Y, Huntsman Y, Pincock Y.

Mayor Stronks asked to go out of executive session and open the meeting.

Ms. Janssen asked Mr. Baker if intent would slow the process of demolition down, he said yes it would stop it.

Pincock moved to file a letter of intent to enter into negotiations with the school on the transfer of property. Motion seconded by Huntsman. Mayor Stronks asked for a vote- 3 eyes and 1 nay. Motion carried.

Mayor Stronks thanked Mr. Parker, Mr. Baker, and Ms. Stanford for coming. He then entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn made by Pincock and seconded by Janssen, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Joni Amen, City Clerk.

Attest:

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Joni Amen  
City Clerk/Treasurer

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Theo R. Stronks

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Mayor