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The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, met on Tuesday, June 13, 1978, at 7:30 o'clock p.m., in the Council Chamber, City Hall, with Mayor Kenneth R. Harris presiding, and Councilmembers Don Carroll, Tom Cox, Charlie Dannelly, Laura Frech, Harvey Gantt, Pat Locke, George K. Selden, H. Milton Short, and Minette Trosch present.

ABSENT: Councilmembers Betty Chafin and Ron Leeper.

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PURPOSE OF MEETING.

Mayor Harris stated this is a specific meeting for a public hearing on the proposed FY79 Budget and the Planned Use of General Revenue Sharing Funds.

HEARING ON PROPOSED FY79 BUDGET CONTINUED.

The continued hearing on the proposed FY79 Budget was called.

Mr. Roddy Dowd, President of the Mint Museum, stated before Council is another letter citing some compelling reasons for Council to reconsider the capital budget cut of some \$10,000 from the Mint budget for closed circuit surveillance television.

He called their attention to the letter from Mr. Spivey of the Insurance Advisory Committee which speaks to the possibility of some insurance problem.

He stated one of the major reasons they feel that a closed circuit television, the upgrading of their's is so necessary is that it will take the place of a security officer - this little bugger never catches a cold; he is never absent; he always has his eyes on everything. You do not pay him every year.

Mr. Dowd stated they are trying to upgrade their insurance, and downgrade the premium; and they think they will be successful in that, and it will bear on it to some degree.

Attached to his letter which he has passed out to Council is a letter from Russ Peithman of the Nature Museum. That Russ is a panelist, and possibly could be one of some who will give or deny their accreditation. That he thinks he has a valid point, and he would appreciate each one reading Mr. Peithman's letter.

He stated they simply ask Council to consider their request; and will be happy to live with their final words.

Councilmember Carroll asked if his first point means if the TV is installed in July or August it would take one person out of the operating expenditure for next year? Mr. Dowd replied no; that they did not delete the personnel request; but feel for the future it would substitute and they would not be requesting another security officer in a subsequent year's budget - not this year. Councilmember Carroll stated then that would not reduce the security staff; it would just hold off asking for someone else? Mr. Dowd replied that is right.

Councilmember Selden stated in his letter he states there are some \$6.0 million worth of valuables that this would help protect? Mr. Dowd replied that is correct; that all of them are agents of a lot of magnificent objects, and he hopes they can maximize its protection. That is approximately the valuation of the collection.

Councilmember Short stated he was absent from one of the budget meetings, and he believes it was the one where this was deleted. He asked why this was deleted? Councilmember Locke replied to try to save some money; that it is not really saving it in the long run; that they were trying to cut some things to put other things in - housing and sidewalks and such. Councilmember Short

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stated we went to this procedure at the neighborhood centers at a savings of some \$54,000; he wonders if there is not some logic in this comment that it would save money as against the cost of a human guard. Councilmember Locke stated she is inclined to change her vote; and she will ask this Council to do that; that \$10,000 is not that great amount of money for a longer protection of \$6.0 million worth of valuables. Councilmember Cox stated he thinks Council was just in a cutting mood that day, and this was one that was cut; that he thinks Mr. Dowd is proper in recalling it to Council's attention.

Mr. Burkhalter, City Manager, asked if they would be interested in knowing what accreditation means? Councilmember Cox asked how much effect it would have on the insurance rate?

Mr. Block, Director of Mint Museum, stated the Museums which have professional staff and regular hours, full time uninterrupted non-profit organization such as the Mint are examined to see if the premises, the facilities and security is adequate. In event they are, they get accreditation. Of the 6,000 museums in the United States and Canada, about 3,500 are accredited museums. The accreditation makes the difference when you put in for federal grant monies; the accreditation weighs heavily on their consideration; it helps sort you out from tourist traps and flea bag operations. In addition, accreditation is often a standard that is held up against the ability to borrow the finest exhibitions and programmings developed by other museums as they are not going to lend that material to a non-accredited museum.

As far as the insurance goes, they are renegotiating the whole policy type insurance that covers the museum collections now. To do this they have had several companies come to the museum, look over the entire combination of protective devices, fire alarms, direct observations like guards and TV monitors, and so forth, with a fresh eye. They gravitate when they finish to a rate based on the relative effectiveness of the various systems. They have not been wont to notice that we have a 12 year old security equipment with a terrible image on the TV screens. This also involves some renovation in the foyer as it does not set the receptionist far enough back in the guard room so that she can glance over her shoulder when the guard is making his rounds. If they allow this system to deteriorate further to the point where it does not operate, they have no choice but to ask for another guard to take up this slack; and they have to pay him \$10,000 every year.

Councilmember Locke asked what the savings will be in fire insurance? Mr. Block replied he cannot quote a direct rate; but Mr. Spivey assures them the rates will be lower; they have in fact projected \$200 less in this year's budget based on the premiums they are getting, with the overall rate based on having adequate equipment in the new policy.

Ms. Lawrence Starrett, 1308 Interurban Avenue, stated she has been before Council before with Carolina Action; that they are ones about to be washed away; they live right beside a nice little stream that was a beautiful spot; but through the years it has washed away and it is getting nearer and nearer to their house.

She stated they have already spent about \$1,000; but it is going to have to be fixed right. She is here tonight to ask them to reconsider; they feel like it has been wiped off the agenda. They have met with Mr. Short at his office, and they felt as though they were getting some where. But they feel now they have been left out. They ask that Council reconsider the drainage problem. That they know about Mr. Finley on Ideal Way and the different ones who have this problem. Since it is city drainage they feel like the city should take care of it.

Mayor Harris asked how much is in the budget for this problem? Mr. Finnie, Budget Director, replied right now there is \$178,000 in current revenues available - this is the current year.

Councilmember Carroll stated the Committee is presently working on ways to try to tackle what is a very large problem throughout the city; Mr. Selden is working with the Technical Committee appointed by the Operations Committee.

That Mr. Selden says they will come up with at least some pilot projects to try during the next year. He stated he thinks we will try to find ways to come up to finance those; that he thinks we are committed to dealing with the problem.

Mayor Harris stated the last estimate he remembers Council getting from Mr. Hopson was around \$200.0 million.

Councilmember Selden stated the proposal will distribute the costs more equitably; they hope to come to Council with this via the Operations Committee within another 60 days. He thinks we will need a little more money than shows in the budget in order to accomplish this.

Councilmember Frech asked if this project is in the group they are evaluating? Councilmember Selden replied it is on the list; they have a list of 11 projects; but it is the formula and the application of the construction cost they are developing as a systematic means of meeting the problem. He believes that formula will be a more practical approach.

Councilmember Short stated the meeting Ms. Starrett mentioned with him was meaningful to him, and the matter is not in limbo at all. On the positive side are the things these folks are saying; we do have an excellent technical committee that sent them a report today of ways they are going to propose for dealing with this problem. On the negative side, he has to say the same thing he says to her and Mr. Finley a lot of times. This problem is going to take a long time to solve, if we ever solve it completely. He thinks the money involved here is probably as much as all other local problems combined. It is tens of millions of dollars.

Councilmember Cox asked what has happened that she feels left out? Ms. Starrett replied she does not know; she cannot put her finger on it. Councilmember Short stated he does not blame Ms. Starrett and others. That he thinks the Council, and he was probably more vocal, suggested that this was not the sort of one time thing that we have normally done with the general revenue sharing money. He thinks that point cut across the desires of a number of folks and of Carolina Action who had hoped a \$1.0 million or so of general revenue money would go for this. But this is a continuing problem that will go on for decades. If we continue our policy of using the revenue sharing money for one of a kind thing - such as annexation and so forth - it does not fit this situation.

He stated he thinks it would be unfair to 98 percent of the people who are in Ms. Starrett's situation if we did just utilize one time money to take a little side swap at this long, continuing problem.

Councilmember Selden stated the 11 projects that were considered to be pressing problems, of which Ms. Starrett's was one - was estimated to be \$1.6 million to fix the 11. It is a very expensive project.

Councilmember Short stated we should thank people like Ms. Starrett and Mr. Finley and the others. We would not know of the problem and not be trying to address it if we did not have these people working with us.

Councilmember Frech stated she would like to differ a little with Mr. Short. The use of general revenue funds - she thinks we are not going to use it for operating expenses; she does not think we are precluded from using it for this type of thing. She would like to get a feel for what the majority of citizens of Charlotte would want it used for that purpose.

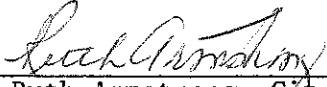
Mayor Harris stated he gets more calls on weekends after a rain about this subject, than any other subject.

Councilmember Frech stated if she ever got the feeling that the people of Charlotte wanted to take all the general revenue sharing money and use it on the drainage problem, she might be willing to do it. She does not think we cannot do it. But he is correct when he says there are so many drainage problems and it would cost hundreds of millions to fix them all, and perhaps it is not fair to fix some for a few people, and not fix everyone's. That is what we are up against.

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ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting, stating Council will have a work shop on the budget in the Training Center, following the adjournment.

  
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Ruth Armstrong, City Clerk