

**UNION GAP CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING**  
**Council Chambers, City Hall**  
**Union Gap, Washington**  
**September 22, 2008**

Call to Order

Mayor Lemon called the Study Session Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Council Members Present

Council Members David Butler, Dan Olson, Glenn Bateman, Dan Vanover (6:48 p.m.), Roger Wentz (6:57 p.m.), and Dave Matson were present.

Staff Present

Robert Noe, City Attorney; Robert Almeida, Police Chief; William Rathbone, Development Coordinator; Karen Clifton, City Treasurer; and Kathryn Thompson, City Clerk was present.

Audience Present

Ken Marble, Carol Holden, Gene Weinmann, Debbie Matson, Fred Thomson, Stephanie Korn, Michael Murr, Tim Whitehurst, Ron Davis, Al Coyner, and others were present.

Presentation from Citizens for Safe Yakima Valley Communities

Ken Marble, Citizens for Safe Yakima Valley Communities, informed the organization was started in January 2006 with he and Bill Dolson serving as co-chairs from the YMCA. He reviewed handouts provided in the packet and stated the organization was formed because of the crime increase in 2005. He explained that for violent crimes Yakima was not too bad per 100,000 people, but property crimes was way above other areas of the same size, and Yakima was the highest in the nation in 2006. He stated they are attempting to involve all of the communities in the valley and then read their mission and vision statements into the record.

Carol Holden, Citizens for Safe Yakima Valley Communities, informed a very successful part of their program is the youth career fair and the placement of youth into real jobs. She informed Esther Huey donates a lot of time to this effort and they have more youth than they can place right now. She informed the Meth Reduction Action Team is partnering with Law and Justice and the Attorney General's office to prepare television and radio ads to discourage the use of meth. She also stated Kelly Rosenow is spearheading the Anti-Gang Initiative and so far is working with the cities of Yakima, Sunnyside, and Wapato to curb graffiti and other gang activity.

Ken Marble stated they have also met with state and federal representatives and have been successful in changing some of the laws. He then reviewed the year-to-year comparisons and stated crime has been dropping since 2005, but the goal is to be well below the U.S. average. City of Yakima and Yakima County are each contributing funding of \$20,000 a year, which pays Carol's salary. He requested Union Gap consider contributing funding and appointing someone to serve on the board.

Mayor Lemon questioned what amount of money they are requesting from Union Gap and what the money would be used for.

Mr. Marble stated the money would be used for the staff person to keep everything organized and going. He informed Carol is working way over 40 hours a week and the board would like to hire another staff person to help her. He stated a contribution of \$1,500 to \$5,000 would be very appreciated.

Ms Holden informed contributions can also be given for special projects such as graffiti and they will organize volunteers to clean up graffiti in the community.

Council Member Olson questioned when the meetings are.

Ms Holden stated she would e-mail a meeting schedule.

Mr. Marble informed the board meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month in the Chamber office. He also informed the Chamber helped with the start up of this organization and they now have a contract with the Chamber and that is where Carol works from. He stated they are in the process of obtaining tax-exempt status, but will be set up as two separate entities so they can receive donations, and still work with the legislative representatives.

Ms Holden stated it is cost effective to be at the Chamber because they only pay \$300 a month for office space, paper, copier, etc.

Presentation of Special Report of Union Gap's 2007 Housing Rehabilitation Program

Gene Weinmann, Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) Housing Coordinator, informed the purpose of this report is to show the Council some of the housing rehabilitation projects that have been completed. He informed the Development Coordinator turned the report into a PowerPoint presentation for the audience to see also. He then reviewed the report, showing before and after pictures of 5 different residences and explained the work performed at each residence. He stated 7 homes are finished and the goal is to have a minimum of 15 complete by June 2009. He stated they are on target and the finances are going well. They have run into some title issues, but that is not uncommon.

John Hodkinson, resident, requested that Mr. Weinmann explain that this program may be going away.

Mr. Weinmann informed he has been working with this Community Development Block Grant program since 1984 and in March he was informed that Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED) wants to do away with the program because they feel housing rehabilitation is not a priority. He stated housing rehabilitation such as these shown have dramatically impacted people's lives and neighborhoods so it is difficult to understand CTED's thinking.

Council Member Vanover questioned if this is at the state level rather than federal.

Mr. Weinmann stated yes, and encouraged the Council to speak with the legislators about the importance of this funding.

Adjournment

At 6:58 p.m., Mayor Lemon adjourned the Study Session meeting.

*These minutes dated September 22, 2008 were approved at the Regular Council Meeting of October 13, 2008.*

ATTEST:

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Jim Lemon  
Mayor

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Kathryn Thompson, CMC  
City Clerk