

**GRANDVIEW CITY COUNCIL  
STUDY SESSION MINUTES  
OCTOBER 6, 2008**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Norm Childress called the study session to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Present were: Mayor Norm Childress and Councilmembers Pam Horner, Diana Jennings, Jan McDonald, Bill Moore and Joan Souders. Councilmembers Mike Bren and Jesse Palacios were absent.

Staff present were: City Administrator Scott Staples and City Clerk Anita Palacios.

Present on behalf of the School District were: School Board Members Lydia Moreno and Paul Jepson, Superintendent Kevin Chase, and Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Brad Shreeve.

**2. JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

- Update: School Resource Officer Program

Superintendent Chase provided an update regarding the School Resource Officer program. He advised that Officer Rob Colley was still serving as the School Resource Officer. For the last two years, the SRO has spent a majority of his time at the middle school. A new schedule has been developed for both the middle school and high school. The high school schedule consists of before school, during lunch and after school in the parking lot area. At the middle school, Officer Colley provides security during school hours in the hallways. Officer Colley taught the GREAT program last year at the fifth grade level and the program would be expanded to the sixth grade level this year. Superintendent Chase was pleased to advise that the culture and environment at the middle school this year has dramatically changed and the students were much more compliant. He contributed this change to Officer Colley's work with last year's fifth grade students in teaching them to stay out of gangs, how to make good choices, and how to be an effective student. He commended Officer Colley on cultivating positive relationships with the staff, parents and students in the schools.

- Update: City/School Coalition Efforts

City Administrator Staples provided an update regarding the City/School coalition efforts. For the past two years, staff members from the City and School District meet the second Friday of each month at 9:00 a.m., to discuss issues in common. Recently, the Barrios Unidos of Grandview has joined the coalition meetings. Barrios Unidos consists of a group of high school students that want to curtail youth involvement in gang violence by providing positive alternatives.

Mayor Childress requested that a daily announcement be made to the high school students who drive to and from school to adhere to the speed limits in the neighborhoods adjacent to the high school.

- School Truancy Process

Superintendent Chase provided information regarding the Becca Bill. Washington's truancy law, often termed "the Becca Bill," was intended to stop truancy before it becomes a problem. The law requires students to attend school. If a student does not attend school, the law requires the School District to take action. After a single unexcused absence, the school must contact the parents in writing or by phone. After a second unexcused absence, the school was required to schedule a conference with the parent and student to discuss solutions to the truancy problem. An unexcused absence means a student has failed to attend the majority of hours or periods in an average school day. If a student has five unexcused absences in a month, the school may take stronger steps to end the truancy problem. The school may file a petition with the Yakima County Superior Court and enter into a written truancy agreement also known as an agreed upon order with the family establishing attendance requirements. Last year, the high school had 170 agreed upon orders. Court action would be required when a student has seven unexcused absences in a month or ten in a year. The truancy law requires that the school district file a petition in Superior Court against the student, parent or both. After a petition has been filed, several things may happen with a student's case. Depending on the circumstances of each individual case, a student's petition may not be immediately heard in juvenile court. The first hearing in any truancy action would be the preliminary hearing when the court would hear evidence from the School District, the parents and the student to determine whether the allegation of truancy were true. If it does determine the student truant, the court would enter a written order directing the student to go to school. The court may also enter other orders to compel compliance with the truancy laws. If the student successfully obeys the court order and goes to school without any unexcused absences, they most likely would not be called back to court for additional hearings. However, students and parents who willfully violate the court order and continue to have unexcused absences would be summoned back to court for a contempt hearing. When a student or parent was held in contempt, the court may impose a coercive sanction to correct the student's attendance issues. The court may order a student to write a report, do community service, or spend time in juvenile detention. The court may order a parent to do community service or even pay fines of \$25 for each day their child misses class.

Superintendent Chase concluded that attendance rates at the high school were in the upper 90's. He added that it was not the students that were attending school that were truant, it was the students who had been expelled or dropped out. The School District has hired two graduation specialists that work with students that have not been attending school or who were failing academically. The School District has also implemented a drug and alcohol prevention program and contracted/alternative learning programs during the day and evenings.

- Update: Grandview United

City Administrator Staples provided an update regarding Grandview United, a grassroots effort to break down barriers and unite for peace and safety being re-established by local resident, Brad Smith. The group has organized a march for peace and community unity has been scheduled for Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunnyview Park. Jointly coordinated by Grandview United and Barrios Unidos of Grandview and supported by the Grandview and Sunnyside School Districts, the rally would begin with a joint march from both cities to meet in the park located between the two cities. The symbolism of marching from each of the cities to unite in the middle would bring a special poignancy for community members plagued by the recent rash of gang activity and violence.

The next meeting of Grandview United has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m., at Compass High School.

- Euclid Park

City Administrator Staples advised that this past July, the Mayor and Management Team developed a list of budget ideas to reduce expenditures, which included the sale of Euclid Park.

Superintendent Chase explained that the School District was interested in the purchase of Euclid Park with the intent to leave the park as a recreational facility with the athletic fields and tennis courts for school and public use.

Council concurred with pursuing the sale of Euclid Park to the School District. The next step would be to obtain an appraisal on the property.

- Recreation Partnerships

City Administrator Staples indicated that the City's Recreation Department implemented an after-school program known as "Frenzy Friday" approximately a year ago at the middle school. The attendance so far this year has been very impressive. This was an example of a very successful partnership between the City and School District. The City has been working with the School District to identify other after-school programs or recreational activities that the City could provide to the School District on a reimbursable basis of City staff time.

Superintendent Chase added that due to the City's budget crisis, the School District has offered to provide support to the City's Recreation Department due to the importance of keeping the students off the streets and providing a positive environment after school. The School District would identify programs within the elementary and middle schools that they could contract with the City to help provide revenue to the City's Recreation Department. The students need a variety of activities and the School District was exploring the possibility of adding dance, art, music, etc., for after-school programming.

- RUAD (Reduce Underage Drinking) Grant

School Board Member Jepson discussed the RUAD (reduce underage drinking) grant being pursued by the School District in collaboration with the communities of Sunnyside, Granger and Grandview. This grant opportunity in the amount of \$10,000 would implement curriculum for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students targeted at media literacy and the influence of alcohol advertising at grocery stores adjacent to the schools. He indicated that the City of Sunnyside has adopted an ordinance prohibiting outdoor advertising of alcoholic beverages visible from any public park, playfield or school property. The goals of the grant would be to (1) reduce the number of alcohol images visible to persons under the age of 21 in the community, (2) implement media literacy in middle school leadership classes in Sunnyside, Granger and Grandview, and (3) develop community coalitions including educating local and elected officials, law enforcement, and at least two businesses in each community on the positive effects of reducing alcohol signage.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

The study session adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

