

SPACE CENTER ROTARY CLUB

Minutes of Special Meeting With County Commissioner James Fonteno to Discuss a Community Service Center

A special meeting was held on Feb. 15, 1985 at 2:00 pm at Commissioner Fonteno's office for the purpose of discussing the feasibility of building a joint venture multipurpose community service facility. The attendees were:

Jim Fonteno	Frank Morgan
Jack Rodreguez	Billy Weseman
Charles Hartman	Bill Webb
Bob Wren	Sam Calanni
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Charles Hartman opened the meeting by stating that the purpose of the meeting was to investigate the possibility of the County and the Space Center Rotary Club jointly participating in building a community center to be used as a senior citizen's center, a youth activity meeting place, and a permanent home for the Rotary Club. This meeting follows previous discussions on this subject between Jim Fonteno and Charles Hartman. It was noted that Rev. Rittenhouse and his church had also expressed an interest in participating.

Commissioner Fonteno explained that Harris County is very interested in pursuing and encourages joint venture projects with civic organizations such as the Rotary Club and any such arrangement causes that project to move to the top of the County's building priority list. Most other recently built community centers have used federal grants.

Commissioner Fonteno explained that when a project moves to the top of the priority list, funds are taken from other approved and funded projects and diverted to fund the joint venture project. The "borrowed" funds would be repaid at no interest to the County per a Joint Venture Agreement. He emphasized that Joint venture is the key.

Charles Hartman commented that such a facility is needed by Rotary for weekly meetings, special meetings, some storage, and he would like to see the Rotary Club make a commitment to the future.

Commissioner Fonteno commented that all of the other Centers that the County has built were almost immediately "out grown". The Channelview Center is an exception where the County is deliberately holding back on growth, whereas, the North Shore Center literally "exploded" when growth was encouraged. He emphasized that meeting the needs of senior citizens are the primary concerns of these Centers.

Discussions followed on the type of facility and the amount of land needed. The need for "open areas" for outside activities was expressed. Commissioner Fonteno gave his philosophy of only building functional buildings with provisions

for expansion and consideration for energy conservation and security.

Commissioner Fonteno outlined the procedure for further action if the Rotary Club wishes to proceed:

- a) The Rotary Club to determine the size of the desired facility and its interior features.
- b) The Commissioner to get the County Estimators to estimate the cost of the facility.
- c) The Commissioner will consult with the County Attorney for the establishment of a non-profit corporation.
- d) The County will build the facility on County land using County funds.
- e) The Non-profit corporation to lease the facility from the County for a minimal fee.
- f) The Rotary Club to repay its share, which will be one half of the construction costs (improvements only-not land), interest free, over a period not to exceed 15 years.
- g) The facility to be operated by the County at County expense. Any use fee income would probably go to the County.
- h) All landscaping and outside activity areas to be provided by the County out of their normal maintenance budget.
- i) The County to assume responsibility for all maintenance, utilities, and other operating expenses.

Charles Hartman Explained that the Rotarians present were past presidents or future officers and this mix was selected to assure continuity of the project if it is pursued. He polled the Rotarians in attendance, on their individual views on the project, and all generally agreed that the project seemed very worthwhile and should be pursued with Bob Wren and Frank Morgan expressing concern that the Club not be overcommitted financially.

The discussion then turned to the location and size of the facility. Commissioner Fonteno suggested, and all agreed, that the Clear Lake Park Pavilion area would be an ideal location. Concern was expressed that whatever site was selected, sufficient land for outside activities be included. Frank Morgan was familiar with the April Sound Community Center Project and offered to try to get the building plans which were used to construct that facility. Commissioner offered tours of any of the existing 5 centers operated by the County.

Commissioner Fonteno had no objection to naming the facility "Space Center Rotary Community Center" or other appropriate name. He explained his philosophy of a slow controlled growth of the community center program. He stated that he

would only support functional buildings which could be used for other County business if a joint venture partner defaulted. Unofficially he could not see the County suing the Rotary Club if it were unable to make an annual loan payment because of something like a Shrimporee rainout.

As the next series of actions the attendees agreed to the following:

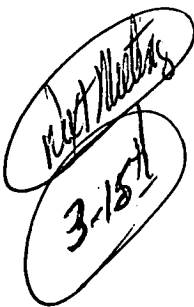
- a) The Rotary Club will identify its facility needs in more detail.
- b) Frank Morgan will attempt to get the April Sound plans for the County Engineers.
- c) Commissioner Fonteno will investigate the availability of land in Clear Lake Park.
- d) Another County/Rotary planning meeting will be held in about 30 days.

The Rotarians agreed to schedule an internal Rotary meeting on a Monday evening in the very near future for further discussions.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,


S. J. Calanni
Sgt. at Arms


next meeting
3-15-71