

**CALLED MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014 @ 5:30 P.M.
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 214 S. LOVE STREET**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gandy at 5:30 p.m.

Present and answering roll call: Mayor Gandy, Commissioners Campos, Butcher, Bengé, and Trujillo.

Also Present: City Manager James Williams, Assistant City Manager Jared Cobb, City Clerk Carol Ann Hogue, Administrative Assistant Imelda Gutierrez and City Attorney Patrick McMahon.

Not Present: Chief of Police Danny Bryant

Invocation: Commissioner Bengé gave the invocation

Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Bengé led the pledge

NON-ACTION ITEMS:

Discussion of Lea Community Foundation for the Arts Lea Theater Project Funding: Connie Sevier on behalf of Lovington MainStreet addressed the Commissioners to fill in the new members of the Commission of what the Lea Theater Project is all about and how it all got started. The Lea Theater has a historical value and Lovington MainStreet would like to preserve the value. The restoration of the Theater is split into 2 phases. Lovington MainStreet approached the Commissioners in August 2013. Mrs. Sevier introduced Elmo Baca who is a contractor for the Lovington MainStreet and works for the State. Elmo Baca addressed the Commissioners thanking them for the opportunity to talk about a great theater. Mr. Baca stated that Lea Theater was built in 1949 post WWII “Boom” and has an iconic marquee, listed on national register of historic places, distinctive “international style modern architecture and is intact. The value of a theater to a community has 4 benefits: economic, cultural, entertainment, and educational. City Manager Williams stated that there was some confusion when realizing what “guaranteeing” the loan meant. The City would have to put up the \$400,000 to guarantee the loan and put into certificates of deposits. The whole issue came down to the interpretation of the word “guarantee” said Mr. Williams. Commissioner Trujillo stated that he would like to see a clearer plan from A to Z and back to A on how the money will be paid back to the City.

Commissioner Campos stated that he would like to explore other options but the Commission needs to be careful in what kind of steps they take from this point on. Commissioner Bengé stated that she is all for the project and would like to see it move forward. I don't want to deplete the LEDA funds. Mayor Gandy stated that if the City had to purchase the theater which he absolutely does not want to do this but here's \$50,000 sink or swim. Mayor Gandy does not want to do that. Commissioner Butcher stated that he does not want the City to own more property. Connie Sevier stated that the theater has not been appraised but spoke to a real estate agent and they roughly appraised it at \$100,000 to \$150,000. The bank will only lend you 70% of the loan amount stated Mrs. Sevier. The foundation was formed to pursue match funds. Commissioner Trujillo stated that he would donate \$500. Commissioners decided to research their options and hopefully make a decision at the next regular commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Elaine Vejil addressed the Commissioners stating that if the theater is going to operate 5 days a week, the concession will bring money each week and that could be used to pay the loan. Former Mayor Dixie Drummond stated that she is a member of the foundation and that the foundation will go out looking for funds and will pay back the money, if the City will just get the project started. Ms. Drummond stated that she would donate \$1,000 to the foundation.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
SCOTTY GANDY, MAYOR

ATTEST: _____
CAROL ANN HOGUE, CITY CLERK