Minutes of Special Meeting held February 27, 2006

Special meeting with the following present: Aldermen Mark Bowen, Gerry Elias, Sam Cortez, Ruble Farmer, Jr., Erik Dahler; City Secretary Josie Campa; Museum Board members: Margaret Trouart, Bobby Roberts, Juan J. Garcia, Nora Garcia, JoAnn Null, Lupe Castro, A.Jay Frausto.

Mayor Fincher opened the public hearing at 6:30 p.m. by announcing that the purpose for the meeting was for the Council and Museum Board to discuss questions they have to each other.
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Margaret Trouart, Chairman of the Museum Board, told Council that they are wanting to know what Council sees for the museum, and would like some questions answered.

Mayor Fincher told the Council and Museum Board members that he had been present when the termite man had been at the building and that carpenter ants had done some damage on the left side of the house. The Mayor asked the board members if they had traced how far back the house was built. Mrs. Trouart told Council that the house was built before 1910.

Mayor Fincher asked the museum board what the plans are for the museum.

Mrs. Trouart told Council that the house can't be climate controlled, so a house museum is seen for this section, since artifacts won't be able to be kept without climate control. Mrs. Trouart told Council that estimates have been obtained for different things from different contractors and that they are high. She said three people have gone under the house and all feel the house needs to be leveled first and then have some piers replaced.

Mayor Fincher asked what the board's plan of action is, and do they have more than one building in mind for the museum.

Bobby Roberts told Council that the board hasn't got a plan yet, as they wanted some guidance from Council. He said climate control for the existing building would cost a fortune. He said the Board needs to know what Council wants to see in the museum, and what its long range goal is.

Members of the board told Council they can see keeping the present building, if it doesn't cost too much to fix up. They feel the fixing up would include leveling the house, replacing and adding some piers.

Alderman Dahler asked if the old structure would be used for time period piece and board members said it could be.

Juan Garcia thanked Council for the appointment to the board and asked about training for museum board members and if city would fund this training.

Mayor Fincher asked the City Secretary if the city had funds, and the City Secretary told everyone that at the present time she is using the miscellaneous line item from the culture and recreation budget. The City Secretary also said that money will be sent to the new museum board from the other board in the next few weeks.

Alderman Bowen asked Board members if they have talked to other cities about how they set up their museums.

Mrs. Trouart told Council that they have a museum network through the Market Trail program and she has found that when a museum is funded by a city or county they do better than others.

Juan Garcia asked Council if they have a person come to Lytle to train the board members, could those people be reimbursed? Council agreed this could be done.

Alderman Dahler asked the Board members to find out which museums have failed and why.

Mayor Fincher told Council and Board members that he would call the city's grant writers to see if there are monies available and possibly working on a grant for a museum.

A.Jay Frausto told Council that in his opinion the present building should be fixed and then later add on to this building or add a new building later on.

Mayor suggested that Council write down what they see for the museum.

Board members and the Council discussed items that should be in the museum.

The museum board members asked Council if committee members had to live in the city and Council agreed this rule only pertains to Board members.
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Mrs. Trouart asked if the museum would benefit from a gift shop, and it was explained that the museum would have its own account.

The Board asked if the name of the museum in the ordinance had to be the name given to the museum. It was explained that the words used in the ordinance describes the museum, and a name can be chosen by the Board.

Alderman Dahler suggested a contest for naming the museum. Council and Board members discussed this matter and getting people involved.

City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that she has discussed the museum at length with Margaret Trouart and some of these board members and to expedite matters maybe the museum Board should prepare a proposal to Council for the March 13th Council meeting.

Bobby Roberts talked to Council about trying to get the old train depot for part of the museum and asked what he could offer for the depot. A lengthy discussion was held on the old train depot and its condition.

City Secretary Josie Campa asked Council to consider appointing a liaison for museum. Mayor Fincher agreed this should be on the March 13th meeting.

Mayor Fincher asked the Museum Board to get their proposal ready for the March 13th Council meeting, and that he will call the grant writer to see about funding for the museum.

Bobby Roberts told Council he would go out to see the old depot and take some pictures.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.