



**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION held  
Wednesday, October 21, 1998 for the purpose of meeting with representatives of  
the New Deal Cafe.**

The meeting began at 8:55 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager and David E. Moran, City Clerk

Pat Brent, of the New Deal Cafe explained that the Cafe had not made any money over the past year. However, she did see improvements on the horizon. She requested that Council waive the rent so that the Cafe could make some capital improvements including acquiring a cappuccino machine, mugs and dinnerware. They also wanted to purchase some additional kitchen equipment (pots, pans, etc.) and hire some kitchen help.

Ms. Brent hoped that these ideas would revamp the Cafe. She also hoped that the Cafe could work together with other organizations in the community to mutually support each other. She noted that one problem was the inability to showcase art in the dining rooms.

Mr. Putens raised questions about how other Community Center tenants are treated and how the rents are structured. He also asked if the Community Center was an ideal location. Ms. Brent responded that they would love to be at Roosevelt Center, but could not afford it.

Mr. Turnbull noted that he had been a supporter of the Cafe since the beginning. He believed the Cafe provided a unique service to the Community Center in attracting people and that a special case could be made for them. Mr. Turnbull asked how far the rent reduction would go towards acquiring the equipment needed. Ms. Brent responded that the money would go a long way to addressing their needs. Mr. Turnbull asked about a commitment to put the funds into capital expenses. Ms. Brent responded that revenue from the Sunday brunch was allowing them to get by.

Mr. Roberts asked if all the funds now going to rent would be used for equipment. Ms. Brent responded that about half the money would be saved. Mr. Roberts expressed concern about the precedent that free rent would set for other users. Richard McMullen asked that the city help by providing some additional advertising.

Mr. Putens asked about the catering aspect of the Cafe and hoped that some sort of exchange of services could be worked out between the city and the Cafe.

Mr. Turnbull believed that it was in the Cafe's interest to own its own equipment. Council discussed the possibility of the Cafe becoming a contribution group. Ms. Davis asked that the city look into allowing the Cafe to use the city's sound system. She also asked if the Cafe was available at all times to conduct a catering service. Ms. Brent and Mr. McMullen noted that they could provide services on the weekends and emphasized the need to work with other groups using the Community Center.

Mayor Davis asked that New Deal be included in future tenant meetings. She suggested that the Cafe get new signage. Ms. Davis noted that she had requested that the city look at installing a sound system in the dining room.

Mr. Roberts asked the Cafe to look into contribution group status. Mr. Putens asked that the Cafe return quickly with a proposal based on the ideas discussed at this meeting. Mayor Davis noted that Council appeared less comfortable with a complete rent elimination, but believed that something could be worked out.

Mr. Turnbull hoped that the Cafe would consider the down side as well as the benefits of being a contribution group. He stressed the need for a city economic development position that could work with groups like the Cafe.

Ms. Brent stressed that the Cafe was an asset to the city. She noted a personal example that she had moved to Greenbelt because of the Cafe.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Moran

City Clerk