

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF McCULLOCH

CITY OF BRADY

The City Council of the City of Brady, Texas met in a Work Session Meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. with Mayor Anthony Groves presiding. Council Members present were Missi Elliston, Jeffrey Sutton, and Gabe Moreno. City staff present was Interim City Manager Barbara Holly, Public Works Director Steven Miller, and City Secretary Tina Keys. Also in attendance were David Ortiz, Jason Behrens, Michael Probst, Lauren and Jeff Bedwell, Aaron Garcia, Angie Turner, Annita Ellison, and Cameron Anderson.

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL & CERTIFICATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Groves called the meeting to order at 4:49 p.m. Council quorum was certified.

2. INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS

- A. Discussion regarding G. Rollie White facility. Mayor Groves said we've been trying for a long time to do something with the GRW complex. We appreciate what they're working on and the goals out there. We're still probably 4 – 5 months away to committing to something while we're working on our comprehensive plan, but the more we can find out the better opportunities we will have.

Jason Behrens handed out sheets to the council. Michael Probst said it's what was drawn up. The last page has a cost estimate from 2020 to give them a general idea. They have to take off the top one, the 4-H office and complex. It's not going to be a part of it. The shooting sports was the first thing, but that has changed. Those contests have been moved to San Angelo instead of being held here and he doesn't know if we can get it back. The arena would be their first goal; covered arena, offices, press box. Lauren Bedwell asked if this is what A&M brought. Jason said the discussion with A&M was more about funding, a lot has changed in 4 years. We want something that's good for families. Jason said they're hoping for something like they have in Uvalde and Dripping Springs. The one at Llano has about 150+ functions a year. The Uvalde people said they would be glad to come and help. It's all a non-profit where the county and city are there but not there, kind of separate. She told them what works and what doesn't work. All of them that have been built are pretty successful. The key is, our location is amazing. Mike said they have an area designated for shows. Most of them hire somebody to run it so it comes back to them, not the non-profit board. We want to get it started and get something going. We can't get anything started until we have either a lease or ownership. It's hard to do fundraising without ownership so that's where it has sat for the last 4 years. It has been talked about for about 40 years. Jeff Bedwell asked if the financing has been established. Mike said you can't get anything until you own it. They want to make sure that facility will be there for a lifetime. They were doing a little fundraising, but it wasn't right to be asking until we know what we're doing. Mike said you don't have to own it, you just have to have a long-term lease. Council Member Elliston said we were able to change at the last election that we can do a longer lease. David Ortiz said he hears about this 99 year lease which he has concerns about. The grant and potential donors, strategic plans, pictures, everything you have to have a good foundation. A business plan, a strategic plan in place, have to have already talked to potential donors. Jason said they have talked to lots of donors, they are all on board, but they want to see a long-term agreement. David said he spoke with 2 potential donors, but they said there needs to be a plan. Jason said they're willing to go that step. Lauren said after 10 years of seeing plans, things still hasn't been done. At some point you can give it back to your community members. We've waited too long. It's getting so dilapidated, costs keep going up. Jason said they spent a good deal of money on these plans and they had a grant writing company talk to them. They've done the groundwork. It all boils down to are you going to own it or long-term lease. Jason said the potential is still there. They have contacts in the horse industry. There's potential to have 200 RV sites and to tie

it into Goat Cook Off. Council Member Moreno said council has looked at that facility. One of the things they've wanted to do is to change the allowed time. They've also wanted to see what it's worth, and they've done that. Council is now at the point that we have to figure out are we going to sell or are we going to lease. Now we can as a council hear what they have and hear do you want to buy it, or do you want to lease it. Do you have the funds? He wants to see funds to get it started. Jason said you don't want to raise a bunch of funds and have it sit there. They had 3 or 4 thousand to get an architect hired and those things. Jason said being a non-profit, everything that facility makes will benefit the citizens of Brady. Mayor Groves said he was in with the original group and did the paperwork to get it going. He had high hopes that we would get help from A&M, but they view us as a competitor, not a partner. The thing he walked away with most was typically you take on a project, you don't talk about it until you have almost half of the funds to pay for it so you can go to donors and say we're looking for you to be a part of the future, and we already have "x" amount of dollars in the bank and are looking for "x" dollars. The hang up was the issues with the lease. Mayor Groves said the council needs to decide if they want to sell it or lease it or what. He believes there are things you could do fairly quickly with the shooting sports, so start there then come up with a realistic timeline for the rest. The big step is the comprehensive plan and how do we give them access, use, ownership, whatever, to the complex. Aaron Garcia said whether we decide to sell or lease, more on the leasing side, if we have whatever group saying they're ready to go, we need to protect 4-H and people who use those things. We may not need \$20 million to get started. What numbers does council want to see? He reached out to donors and within 3 weeks had about \$500,000 ready to go. The money is out there. People want to help. 4-H is one of our most important parts of our community and we need to make sure to protect the ability to do those things. Mayor Groves said not everybody realizes the property is bigger. If you go on top of the bluff, there is land that's a nice flat area that overlooks the city that you could put a restaurant or something or you could subdivide. His opinion is when the city talks of the G. Rollie White facility, they really need to turn loose of the facility which leads to selling it which leads to clear ownership of that property. He doesn't think the city should be involved in the process after it's started. A citizen associated with the Heather Myles group said he went up there, there is quite a bit of acreage at the top of that hill. Their proposal is a lot like theirs. They're trying to do something for the kids and families. They're trying to give a base for the youth to have. He's more on the show horse end and they're more on the horse race end. Brady is still lacking. These kids have nothing to do. Council Member Moreno said we have two entities that want to do something with it and we want to do something with it also. If we could all come to an agreement, that would be great. Everybody wins. They do have very similar thoughts. Jason said that property was given to Brady from an individual who wanted to help the people of his community. When you go to look at what to do with that, look at how is it going to benefit the most people of this county. Are you going to do something that generates revenue for an entity? Council Member Moreno said they want to do similar things. Everybody has great ideas. We need to see what is going to benefit our city the most. Jason Behrens said they would ideally like to have full ownership. Angie Turner said there has never been anything for our youth here. The local people are going to make it right. We want something that's going to benefit our youth. We don't know with other entities what it will bring in. Your 4-H, FFA, AgriLife, USDA, there are so many outlets that facility will provide us with. Mr. White gifted that to the community with that in mind. What better way to honor him than to do that. If you sell it, you don't know who is going to buy it or what they're going to do with it. We need to invest in our youth in this community. Lauren Bedwell said it's more attractive to a trade school to have a facility that's already in the works. You can bring in a trade school and have a place for all the county kids. That's more of a foundation than a spectacle that could or could not work in a few years.

Council Member Gomez entered the meeting at 5:26.

Representatives of Heather Myles said we're talking a practice race track, we're all talking about the same thing; having rodeos come in, how can we all get on the same page.

Angie said this land was given to the City so it didn't cost the city anything. The City has maintained it but it's in dire straits. If we sold it, we could get "x" amount of dollars for it but is that so important to get that money and lose control over it. It's not costing the City anything, so why not lease it for a fair amount? And put some contingencies in the lease. She thinks it should stay in the control of Brady and our citizens and our youth. Jeff Bedwell asked what does the city want? A cash lump sum payment? Income? Council Member Elliston said they want something that's beneficial to the community. Jeff said it sounds like we have some possibilities for a lease if that's what the council wants to do, but we need it to benefit this community. The next step would be to look at proposed lease options. Lauren Bedwell said she hopes council has an idea of the zoning and standards. You're next to a residential area. There should be a zoning standard for that. She wants to see more positive reinforcement and opportunity for these kids. Mike Probst said the proposal says if they don't do what they say, the city gets it back. Council Member Elliston said she has an issue with the proposed RV parks being in competition with our RV parks. Jason said their RV spaces will only be for people who are attending their events. It will not be open to people just passing through. Council Member Gomez thanked citizens for coming. He said the G. Rollie White facility was a big focus for him when he got on council. They worked on getting the charter changed so they could do the long-term lease. He would rather keep it locally so somebody can't come in and buy it. He has seen all the different things that everyone has had. He envisioned something like the Spur rodeo in San Angelo. Angie Turner said think about what kind of people it will draw to this town. If it's for youth you will have moms and dads and kids. There have been businesses built in this town that the draw they bring is not good. Jason said they have gone to all these facilities. He wouldn't be afraid to turn his kids loose with any of those parents that come in. It's good family fun. That's what you want in your communities. Jeff Bedwell said if you lease it, it needs a substantial amount of cleanup. There is a motorhome out there. There is a lot of equipment out there. The City has been using it as a dumping ground for a long time and asked if they are going to make a commitment to clean it up.

Council Member Moreno said the council has done a good job trying to clean up. We're trying to get rid of the red tape. Other cities have made it easier for businesses to come in, but it is a process.

Mayor Groves said we will have some discussion in Executive Session and hopefully come out of that with more guidance. We're looking for you tell us what it is you want to do, and we will pick the one that we think does the most for the city, not in terms of revenue but where we go in the future, what's going to hold Brady together as we proceed.

Council Member Moreno asked if Heather Myles' people are working on their 501c3. They said they are.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Groves adjourned the meeting at 5:57 p.m.



Anthony Groves, Mayor

Attest: 
Tina Keys, City Secretary