

**BELTON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2010 – 5:00 P.M.**

The Belton City Council met in special session in the Smith Room of the Harris Community Center, with the following members present: Mayor Jim Covington, Mayor Pro Tem Marion Grayson, Councilmembers Clifton Peters, David K. Leigh, Wayne Carpenter, Craig Pearson, and John Agan (arrived 5:10 p.m.). There were no members absent. Staff present were Sam Listi, Connie Torres, Fred Morris, Gene Ellis, Roy Harmon, Jerri Gauntt, and Rex Robertson. The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Receive a report from the 1874 Church Committee on a Stabilization Plan and consider approval of Plan.

The City Manager introduced Harry Sweet, Chair of the Church Committee, who gave an overview of the structural evaluation report on the 1874 Church (oldest church in Bell County) prepared by Sparks Engineering, Inc. He indicated the group voted to recommend proceeding with Option E, stabilization for up to 5 years (below), at a cost of \$18,000, at its August 24, 2010 meeting, and requested they be allowed time to pursue additional funding for the project (currently \$13,000 on hand).

Option E – Stabilization for up to five years

1. Add additional interior braces to north wall and gable end walls. Requires cutting existing floor and pouring footings for braces.
2. Blue roof (tarp)
3. Plywood all openings
4. Weatherproof collapsed wall area
5. Stack and store fallen stone
6. Install temporary electrical GFI outlet and lighting, with motion detector and photocell
7. Install mechanical ventilation fan
8. Install hinged gate with lock
9. Install large project sign

The City Manager explained the Committee has until October 12, 2010 to commence start of its emergency stabilization work, in order to receive the \$5,000 grant from the Texas Historical Commission.

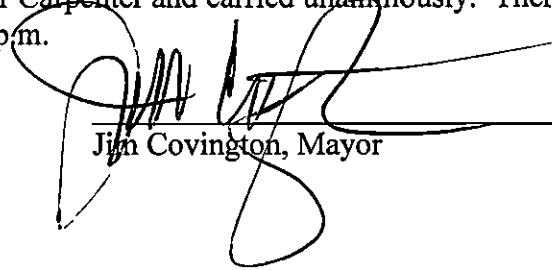
Building Official Rex Robertson reported on structural damage and identified safety issues. He stressed the temporary fence needs to become permanent, and the front door needs to close securely. Mr. Robertson stated the Church has been in poor condition for some time, and urged that something be done soon. He stated he believes Option E will help stabilize the building, but this is only a short-term solution, not adequate for five years.

Several Councilmembers expressed dislike over a blue tarp over the roof for any period of time. Several also questioned if the Committee could raise the funds needed to restore the building given today's economy and the amount needed for full restoration (\$530,000). Mayor Pro Tem Grayson asked if the Committee considered Option D – Interpretive Ruin (\$25,000). Mr. Sweet replied the group didn't select Option D, as it was their consensus the building would become an Interpretive Ruin for 75 years, and thinks it would be their last choice.

Councilmember Leigh asked for a reasonable goal/timeline, and Mr. Sweet stated he thinks if the group can't raise \$75,000 within two 6-month periods, a total of one year from now, they need to look at other options. Committee Members Rae Schmuck and Michael Cooper agreed, and Mr. Cooper suggested perhaps the building could be dismantled in such a way that if funding became available and someone wanted to reconstruct the church, it could be restored.

Development Services Director Fred Morris requested the Committee present its information to the Belton Heritage Preservation Board (BHPB) for review, and Mr. Sweet concurred.

Councilmember Pearson made a motion to approve Option E, stabilization for up to one year, with review after 6 months and another review after one year, and to present the information to the BHPB. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter and carried unanimously. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

  
Jim Covington, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Connie Torres, City Clerk