Closed Caption Log, Council Work Session, 2/28/12

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good morning.

I'm austin mayor lee leffingwell.

A quorum is present so i call to order this austin city council work session on tuesday, february 28, 2012.

We're meeting in the boards and commissions room, austin city hall, 301 west 2nd street, austin, texas.

The time is 9:05 a.m.

First item on the agenda is to go into executive session, but before we do that I would like to ask very quickly if we could get some input from council members as to which agenda items they would like to discuss so that we can make sure that staff -- appropriate staff is here.

Otherwise, they can be released to go back to their jobs.

Anyone?

>> Tovo: wait a minute.

Let's regroup here.

council member riley?

I'm interested to item 50 relating to the hostile on town lake.

If the sponsors of the resolution would rather discuss that on thursday I'd be fine with that too.

>> Mayor leffingwell: okay.

We'll have staff standing by to discuss item no. 50.

Council member martinez?

>> Martinez: thanks, lee.

I think we're going to have enough speakers signed up on thursday where it will be pulled off consent and there will be time for discussion.

I'm more than happy to try to answer any questions today.

>> If you all would like to talk about it thursday that's fine.

we're not planning on discussing item 50 today.

Is there anything else?

yes, sorry, I'm just regrouping here.

Let's see.

26, Which is -- item 26.

Item 32, I do have questions about it.

It sounds like a memo is coming, and I just want to get a sense of when that memo is coming before i figure out if we need to talk about it today.

Item -- let's see.

The one regarding ems.

I'm trying to figure out which one is.

Sponsors on that one.

I don't know if it's a question for staff.

It's really a question for sponsors.

>> Which number is that?

>> Mayor leffingwell: 54.

Anything else?

Coffee coffee yes, I have yes, I have one more.

I'm just trying to figure out which number it is.

I have questions about 48 but i think I'll pull those until thursday and I request that we go into executive session before discussing 48.

So I don't guess we need to discuss that today anyway.

>> Tovo: item 41.

>> Mayor leffingwell: 41?

So far I have 26, 32, 54 and 41.

Any others?

and again, with 32, if anybody from transportation is here to tell us when that memo will be forthcoming.

all right.

and probably we can wait until thursday, so --

>> [inaudible] this morning.

>> Tovo: this morning.

Okay.

So I think it will make sense for us to wait and hold our questions until thursday since we don't have the benefit of that.

if there are no others, without objection the council will go into closed session to take up one item, section 071 of the government code.

Council will consult with legal counsel regarding the following items, item a 1, discuss legal issues related to november 6, 2012 charter amendment election proposed ballot language, transition issues and preclearance considerations.

Is there any objection to going into executive session?

Hearing none, the council will now go into executive session.

(Executive session) closeachea test test test we are out of closed session.

In closed session we took up and discussed legal issues related to item a.1.

No action was taken.

So if there's no objection, council, I have to leave in 23 minutes for other city business that I have to do, and I think there are a couple of others that have to leave an hour after that.

So if there's no objection, I also, after we left for executive session asked if we could discuss item 15 because I see that there are a number of questions of staff that have been asked, and so we'll now take up item 15.

Does anyone have any comments?

Item 15 is the trail of lights item.

I'll just say -- just to start, there has been some discussion of fee waivers, and I would point out, number one, that this is a public/private partnership so that we would, in essence, be waiving our own fees, our fees to ourselves, so I don't think that's applicable even though there is a number associated with that, including $5,000 a day for park use that we will charge a private entity, and obviously since we're one of the operators of the event, the city is, we wouldn't want to have to pay ourselves $5,000 a day.

And I would just say that in general, this is not a new thing.

This is what we did last year.

We asked a private entity to put on the trail of lights for us in the name of the city, and this is basically a change of operator, and i think it's going to be a good thing.

It's going to be a way to bring back the trail of lights to -- in its former glory, the way it used to be beforeno carrierringconnect 57600

>> The assistant city manager.

Essentially, what we would be proposing to do is because we are bringing forward , at this point, we don't have a CONTRACT AT ALL.

We do have this proposal.

So what we would propose to do is.

>> For execution, I see.

We would have an opportunity for a second action to review the terms of the agreement.

For some reason, I thought we were posted for all of it on thursday.

We can give a synopsis of the agreement.

That is on them going out with sponsorships.

They've committed to raising half a million dollars over the next three months.

We would have intervals from here until the event occurs where they would go out and raise the funds, if they raise the funds, of course, we don't actually start the actual implementation of getting the program up and running until late in the year.

It is generally around november or so.

So we wouldn't be incurring or expending any cost.

So we would know by the time we actually start planning the actual event.

What it contributed to or committed to.

We don't feel like we will be out any cost.

If the funds are collected, we would have the ability to go out, put the event on in whole, as they would envision it.

Or maybe at a little bit downscaled event based on what they raise.

It can be adjusted accordingly.

>> The point you touched on, that is what I was trying to get it when I asked if the costs would be incurred.

The answer is incurred no later than the first event setup date, and what I was really trying to get at is how early the costs would be incurred.

I would want to get that up-front.

That is what you just verified?

>> That is correct.

>> We have that money in hand before any of the direct costs are incurred.

Thank you very much.

>> Thanks, mayor.

Obviously, the last three years, we have done everything we could as a council to keep this event alive.

The economy took a downturn and they have not been as successful as they would have liked to have been.

I'm supportive of exploring other options.

We have formed a coalition of folk who have done this before from former park staff, to reaching out to local potential sponsors and or participants, incorporating a nonprofit concept, where the nonprofits would stuff some of the static displays, in exchange of having the interaction for the public and who they are.

I think it is an interesting concept here.

For me, the biggest thing is that we really are trying to get this thing back on track to where it once was.

It is a long-time austin tradition.

So I won't say today that i think it will happen again.

Back to the way it used to be, and even better.

But I'm certainly hopeful and optimistic that is what will happen.

I appreciate staff working on this, and those that have come forward with this proposal.

>> Yeah, I think it is important to emphasize time is of the essense.

The sooner we get that effort started, the better chance it is to have success once we get that started.

Anything else?

Ok.

Kathie, you wanted to discuss number 26?

It seems like it is unusual there are janitorial contracts in the city and most of those are handled by janitorial staff.

I see from your response, austin energy does not have personnel in the janitorial job classification, building serves provides services for various city of austin locations but not a.e.

Locations.

Could you talk me through the rationale for this and not others.

Why you opted for this for janitorial services.

My final question, it sounds as if there hasn't recently been an in-depth cost analysis versus having internal janitorial personnel.

And so I guess my next question would be, is that a prudent next step before we move forward?

>> Ok.

Larry, manager of austin energy.

To my knowledge, we have not done an analysis for several years.

We have been operating this year for several years.

That analysis could be done.

The overall cost to us is in the neighborhood of $300,000, contracting, versus hiring of employees.

There is a savings that we have, as I understand, by doing it the way we do it.

Principally, we do it the way that we're operating now because we have many sites.

We have the downtown chiller sites.

We have the energy control center, which has one custodial person over there.

elmo and cramer.

It is not all at one location.

I believe that the analysis in the past was this was a better, more cost-effective way to operate.

Also, we don't bring the supplies or janitorial supplies or transportation or anything.

This is contracted services, it is the most efficient way to do it.

>> So I guess the site does make it different from some of the other buildings.

Are there other buildings -- this might be a question for someone else.

But are there other city of austin buildings where there is janitorial staff that is there for a couple of days and move on to another building?

They don't have a dedicated janitorial staff there all the time?

>> Byron johnson, purchasing.

I don't know of any building services that are not here.

weis said, with multiple locations, you contract that out as to what time, either through different cracks or -- contracts or locations.

Most of the time the staff is at a different shift.

So you have multiple staff at a location to do it.

We looked at that, looked at kind of the cost factor of what does it cost to do this.

weis said, it is a big deal to do the full-blown cost analysis of how many people it would take to do the job.

I have only done one in my whole 35 years, purchasing.

And it is a fairly big deal.

You have to look at specific tasks, figure out how many you can do within an hour, so you can have the necessary staff.

And the other key is you have to not only have that staff, but plan for people.

Turnover is a big issue on a lot of those type of staffing issues.

You have to have extra people.

When you have multiple locations, you have to buy vehicles.

Transport them back and forth through there.

So we contracted for a number of locations, austin water is another example, similar to austin energy-type facilities where we do contracting.

We have three separate contracts for austin water.

Fire and health for wic.

It is because we don't have full-time staff to be on the location.

>> If there is not enough work for full-time staff, contract people won't be there full-time either, they will be working on that site a limited amount of time.

I take your point, I hear it is a cost savings, but it doesn't sound like there are estimates to support that.

I'm not necessarily asking, the kind where you have, you said you have only done one in many years.

>> I can say.

>> You have done preliminary rough estimate, so how do the options compare.

>> I have some here on the labor sunday for austin energy.

ABOUT 13 FTEs IN ALL OF THE Facilities.

Two for st. elmo.

One for cramer east.

One for wat kin branch.

One for ccb.

We're $70,000 in savings in labor.

That doesn't include transportation, supplies, et cetera.

That is the analysis we would have to see how that all works out.

>> Thanks, maybe I could get those numbers from you after.

You said those are full-time positions.

>> Contractor full-time positions on-site.

They come to work at different shifts, I don't know what they are.

>> Those are not -- that doesn't contemplate that those people are moving from site to site?

>> That I need to confirm.

On some of the other ones i need to confirm that.

I know that is the case at town lake center.

I will find out.

>> What is the timetable on which you need to make a decision or we need to make a decision on this?

Is there a time-sensitive nature here?

>> Byron johnson, again.

Yes, the current contracts, they will expire in march.

We try to award these in time to have transition, for if some reason we are changing contractors.

We need to have a decision fairly quickly.

Not necessarily this meeting, but the next meeting for sure.

>> All right.

Thanks so much.

Ok, yeah.

>> Mayor?

>> Laura.

>> Thanks.

A few months ago, we had the same sort of issue come up when we were talking about the events at 311.

We talked about how if we have opportunities for city jobs that are full-time employees.

But that is a good thing that we need to keep in mind, to be able to provide stable jobs.

At that time, some of the issues with the call center was that we needed to have people staff up quickly and all of that.

So I know you're looking that there was going to be some additional analysis.

But the same principle still holds for me in terms of if there are opportunities for full-time jobs, contracting, that provides some stability to some people in the city of austin and clearly, if it costs us a lot more, we can't afford to do that.

I appreciate the numbers that you have given.

One thing that jumps out at me is you mention at town lake center, it is actually six full-time staff that are focused on janitorial services.

And I wonder if that might be a place where we can look.

Like for instance, at city hall, what's the staff that are dedicated to janitorial services?

I would be surprised if it was more than six full-time staff.

I'm wondering if we can get you to look at that, perhaps of doing some as actual employees of the city, where it would make sense and you don't have the transportation issues and there is a good body and contract out the rest of it.

Because if we are using as our rationale it is less expensive, I'm not sure that that will carry over to a larger group, like for town like center, especially taking into account the relative efforts, for instance, at city hall.

>> I might add that town lake center, I will have to find out.

We lease a building over there at 811.

I'm not show sure that this isn't for both of those follows.

I will find out.

>> I appreciate that, if you could look at that option.

>> Anything else?

41.

>> I wondered if the sponsors -- I wondered if the sponsors on this could change explain.

Explain what this resolution will do.

>> Mike?

>> So right near austin high, where hike and bike trail meet, kind of under the mopac bridge, that is all txdot right-of-way.

We have an existing trail that runs to the north through infield neighborhood.

So this allows -- this agreement allows all of the entities involved to come together and try to figure out how to create a more cohesive mesh of all of the trail systems, whether it is bike, all of that.

>> I appreciate it.

>> Mayor?

For years, that has been a confusing network of trails, no signage at all.

There is a disagreement, contemplate that we would get some way-finding signage in place?

I know one issue is that you can't just put up signs, you can't just put up signs, you have to work with txdot to put up signs.

I take it that is the sort of thing within the scope of this agreement, to work with txdot to get way-finding signs added.

>> It is that, as a big part.

But the johnson part of it is fairly rustic in places.

In some places it may even need safety improvement.

Cheryl, we're discussing item 41.

-- Sheryl.

>> It is important to work with that right-of-way under mopac.

You know the area I'm talking about?

>> I'm trying -- I know recently our neighborhood connectivity staff has been working with txdot to get signage in place, actually not so much for the use of johnson creek, but people heading eastbound on lake austin boulevard who want to get to west fifth street.

There is currently in place a route that takes you down to the johnson creek trail across bridge, across johnson creek, back up to the bike lanes on west fifth street.

Staff have been working with txdot.

My understanding is that those discussions have concluded and we are in the process of getting the signage in place.

I don't think that required an amendment to the agreement, but any kind of agreement with txdot.

>> I know park has been working with txdot also.

I don't see anyone from park here right now to answer questions.

This was in connection with the agreement with txdot and park.

>> I will be happy to follow up with staff and get you an answer on that.

>> Ok.

>> All right.

The last item that was named was item 54.

>> My question on that one -- well, I wondered if the sponsors could give us some kind of idea about what the possible action might be or discussion might be.

This is the item related to the change in staffing configuration of the austin travis county.

>> May I present?

>> You are lead sponsor.

Go ahead.

>> You are lead, too.

Go ahead.

>> We are talking about shifting the configuration of ems from two paramedics per truck from one paramedic to two e.m.t.

There is no formal transition of going from one-1-1.

>> We don't have a formal implementation plan.

The implementation plan that is in place is lacking a couple of pieces, which haven't been made formal yet, which there is discussion about.

And what this resolution would do, would be to direct city manager to formalize those two pieces.

The two pieces are the amount and duration of pay increase to paramedics who are working on the pilot project, that first set of trucks that are going to undergo the transition.

The argument for pay increase for those paramedics and not others, is that it would provide fair compensation for additional work.

Those first paramedics in particular, will have to adjust having not another paramedic in the truck but the that will require mentoring on their part and field training.

And may be all sorts of other things we haven't encountered because we haven't done it in a long time.

Second issue, it would be helpful to persuade the paramedics to be the best trainers, to be the first ones out of the gate, which will increase the chances of success for the entire project.

The other thing which is missing -- that is not formalized, the proposals kicked around.

This is not set how much we will pay the paramedics that are first ones to participate.

We're talking about six units to be the first to try it out on.

Six units here.

Second, we don't have a transition team.

That is people with management and paramedics and emt, and basically everybody that is involved in this stuff to sit and talk about here is what is happening, here is what additional changes might be necessary.

General order, standard operating procedure, training, things like that.

Although there is a lot of discussion about informal mechanisms, we thought it would be helpful if there were a formal group of people to oversee this transition and communicate problems on the street, to management, so we could improve chances again of the success of the whole project.

>> So on thursday, we're going to just approve a resolution for the city manager to come back to us with some language on these?

>> It is my understanding that this is in the works now a formal proposal to do both of these things.

If and when the formal proposal comes around, I will make sure everybody sees it.

We may not need this item and it may be withdrawn on thursday depending on if we get a formal proposal between now and then.

>> We're not contemplating --

>> I believe we needed a formal proposal, if we get one between now and thursday, we may not need to ask --

>> the idea is that we're making a big change.

Management is working with the ems staff to set up a working group and come up with a basically policy position that we may or may not need to weigh-in on.

Have you been having those discussions.

>> We have been having the discussions.

I met with the union.

The deputy city manager McDONALD IS PRINCIPALLY Involved in interacting with the union, including the labor relations office.

I just want to be mindful that this is an issue that the administration management enjoys some prerogative to simply do.

It is not our intent to do it that way.

We do enjoy that prerogative, but it has not been my intent to bring a specific proposal to council, seeking your approval, because that is not required.

However, I do recognize that it is a significant and fundamental change in operations from a staffing standpoint.

So certainly have every reason, we recognize, to want to understand how we go about doing this.

And certainly understand that and respect that.

And we understand the importance of the conversations that we're having with union officials, because we certainly want them to offer their perspective and have some input in terms of how this ultimately gets done.

But again, I want to emphasize that this is a matter of management prerogative to do what we're talking about here.

That is not how we have been working to accomplish it, but that in fact is the case.

>> Any further questions?

[10:54:02]

Was that our last item?

Council member morrison?

>> I don't have a particular item to bring up.

To the items, we have d1 and d2.

I suggest we do d2 first.

D1 is the austin energy rates and that can be a long discussion.

D2 is for the american fellows.

This is their last week in town.

It will be a short presentation.

I thought if we go with them first, we will be able to make sure that we don't lose our opportunity to hear from them, just a recap of what has been going on for the past month and what the future holds.

>> Ok council member morrison do you want to discuss d1?

>> I'm asking that we take up d2 instead of d1?

>> However, where is mr. matthews?

He's supposed to launch the presentation.

Doug will start first and then our guest will come forward and make the balance of the presentation.

He should be coming in the room here.

>> Thank you, I appreciate that consideration.

>> Ok.

There he is.

>> Surprise, doug!

Should have given you a warning.

[Chuckling]

>> thank you, council members.

As you all know, I know a lot of the offices have had an opportunity to talk with the folks from this organization.

They're in their final days here for their month-long visit, meeting with community members, meeting with elected

[10:56:02]

officials, meeting with staff.

To really get a picture of where the greatest opportunities lie for the work that they do, which is really creating civic applications that not only improve the way that we do business, but improve the relationship between the organization and the community.

But all the relationship between various members of the community.

I think they have got a really great story to it will so far.

They haven't gotten to the point where they have very specific applications.

They have an iterative process they go through.

I believe in march, I that will be working through that.

I thought it was a good opportunity to it will the story, give you a recap on what they learned.

We can go from there.

Take it away.

>> Yeah, thanks, again to the council and to everyone here for inviting us over and recapping so far.

So, yeah, again, my name is arrelio penno.

I'm one of the three cook for america fellows.

I've been a software engineer, developer in energy for over 10 years.

>> My name is emily wright, moore, I decided to be a 2012 fellow, and I have a background in designing.

>> My name is joseph mir iaty.

I am a developer, for those that are not familiar with our program.

It is a one-year process where we spend five weeks here in austin, meeting with members in the city.

Community groups outside of the city and take part in events in order to gather ideas, prioritize them as part of our application building process, which we will speak to during the presentation.

>> We want to recap what we have done so far and also

[10:58:01]

handle a little bit in terms of what is next for our team for cpeatx is our hashtag.

>> On twitter.

>> Or process so far or our statistic.

We are three fellows, we have been here for 35 days.

We have gone to over 80 meetings, I think.

We stopped counting at 65.

We have met with over 25 city departments.

We have created one app for the people's gallery, which was last friday.

And we have hosted one hack-a-thon.

Three apps came out of that, still in progress, pretty impressive.

Over 200 newsletter recipients, which should be noted we started at 0.

We have had 239 tweets mentioning us as of yesterday.

We have released four data sets, lots of gif layers, manipulated and requested many more that we hope will soon come to us.

We have consumed lots and lots of coffee from austin java.

And lots of soda.

>> Just an introduction.

>> Just by the numbers.

Next, we thought it would be nice to have it by photo.

We had a bunch of meetings.

This is at the dispatch center, fire department invited us over there.

That was great.

We were in this room, presenting to the council.

>> The technology commissions, we presented to two of the commissions during our stay here.

Those presentations are available on our website as well.

>> And this was our coat-a-thon, it was the calm before the storm, early in the morning.

It was great.

We had -- personally, i thought it was overall a great success.

And we'll get into some examples of what happened at the event, but there are about 50 attendees overall.

Number of employees from the city stopped by, number of leaders of tech companies here, just a lot of interested citizens.

Some people we hadn't even been in touch with, who heard about the event through the newspapers or otherwise.

It was interesting to see the tech community come together to work on specific stuff.

>> Things that came out of it was this was one example, by the end of the day, someone came in from the city, pitched aside the idea of finding a garden.

So a bunch of people got together, hashed it out, they had some of the mock-ups they had by the end of the day.

What was interesting for me was how excited that group was, like, yes, we will meet again next week.

Outside of painting that we are doing.

>> Also the person that pitched the project was a city employee that came in and get community members to help him build the project.

I believe it is completely functioning.

>> Yeah, they started scheduling their next meetings as well.

Pretty strong urban gardening community here.

One of the main ideas behind the application is to match volunteers, which they have many, with available plots of land.

So hopefully, the next few months, they will get that up and running.

You will hear more about it from us.

>> This one was also, pretty quick.

This is supposed to be a mobile app, it is projected on a wall, so it looks different like that.

It is a way to crowd source bike accidents and bike theft.

So you can report it with your mobile phone, it will show up on the map with the coordinates.

It also uses police data from the data portal.

It has past accidents involving bicycles.

You can avoid or be knowledgeable about which routes are safe for bicycles or which ones you should be careful in or avoid.

>> Again, highlighting this one.

The people's gallery, got the idea from council member laura morrison.

It was like, this should be fun.

I don't think we had an idea.

The event was friday by like thursday morning, ok, this might actually work.

Up to that point, it was like we had an afternoon.

Let's hash it out to see if we can build this.

It was good.

It was fun.

It provides another way for people to engage the people's gallery.

To tweet other comments and link back to the particular art piece, like a brochure, with a feedback mechanism.

Oh.

>> That is more of our [chuckling] we went to the animal center, fire department.

We went to different places to have us show us in the field of what is happening and base to be helpful.

>> Council member martinez, the fire department does have an unfair advantage with all of the toys.

>> I was surprised by this image.

But I had a lot of fun that day.

>> And just leading into the next slide a little bit.

Important part of our process is getting out to the departments and seeing what is going on there, rather than just meeting, processing stuff.

The big part is getting out there and doing it.

N some of the points of hearing is all within the city, outside of the city, with community groups and reflecting the feedback or getting a lot of the groups together to talk to one another.

We found that there was a lot of overlap between ideas different departments had or processes they had been talking about.

We felt like we served -- a good forum or serve as facilitator for some of those conversations.

>> Also with the code-a-thon, creating the bridge between the government and the city.

People can trust that there will be data available.

They can use it, build upon it, treat the city as something they can work with regularly, consistently and vice versa.

>> Touching, to relate that to the first part about hearing at all.

A lot of the feedback that we gathered from the community of developers and nonprofits, we brought back to city departments as well.

We heard a lot of the concerns on both sides, doing events like the hack-a-thon, it is a valuable way for opening the door to people.

>> To elaborate more on the hack-a-thon or code-a-thon, it was one of the events where there was a lot of feedback.

It was a diverse group of people.

The developers were like, wow, I can talk to a city member here or talk to someone from the department.

I think if anything, it is a spark for the dialogue.

Again, our mission of being a bridge for those groups.

It is great.

They are really excited.

Like, it is one thing for us to be expanding on the different departments, but to hear them say the same things we are saying.

It is really rejuvenating for ..

>> Sharing ideas and examples, essentially, we are a network.

Eight different cities, 26 fellows.

Everything we do here we will bring back, share with other fellows, learn from what they are doing.

We have a list of potential projects a mile long.

If we can coordinate that with other cities, we can plug it in, in an efficient way, bring it back to austin and brag about some of the great things going on in austin.

Yeah.

One of the driving forces behind our organization is building something locally and scaling it out nationally.

That feeds into the iterative process to have with the other teams, sharing ideas and examples, that is ongoing work, what the teams are doing.

But reflecting some of what happened last year, during 2011.

The fellows built over 20 large-scale applications for the cities.

Some of those were deployed in the cities and around the world where that stuff is working.

That is really motivating for us.

So sharing that message, talking about ideas, broader trends in government, participatory tools online.

Just get ideas going.

Get people thinking about things that are a little bit outside of the scope of their day-to-day work.

Bringing the creativity into the process.

You know, letting them know that we're here to help.

>> Finally, on this, like sharing ideas.

We have been learning a lot, hearing a lot, and also expand on things that we might know.

Like, a couple of startups, just a different process.

For example, yesterday, we were at this program managers meeting, ok, how does the project -- what are the next steps?

What is the lean methodology?

How do we manage our code and issue?

Tolerance for failure?

Ok.

You gotta move on.

So those things.

We were just throwing out the processes if people were willing to hear it, we were glad to expand on it.

>> There are a lot of other innovation-related initiatives in the city.

By talking about some of the software development process and the way we think of ourselves and our role.

In other words, seeing failure as an opportunity, starting with something small that works before it becomes larger and very extensively documented but it is not necessarily serving the need of the user.

Bring some of the entrepreneurial mentality to processes that often get off track or often get stuck in their ways.

So we're trying to reenergize that, make people feel comfortable, bringing those ideas to the table.

>> This is just the beginning.

[Chuckling]

>> right!

Again, this is an 11-month program.

We're two months in.

So you want to expand on this a little?

>> Sure.

One of our largest goals is making the data more accessible.

Increasing awareness within the city of what it is for as well as outside of the city that it is there and it is useful and not going anywhere.

So I think we have a pretty big mission ahead of us to explain what the data is, why it is useful, what they do with it.

So we started that process.

We definitely need a lot more work there, we're working on it.

>> Yeah.

>> It is gettin' there.

>> A lot of notes to get down, follow-up throughout the year, just really growing the relationships we had with everyone.

With all y'all.

I will use that when I go back to california.

[Laughter]

>> it is very useful.

[Laughter]

>> yeah, I mean, there is a couple of key groups that we want to reach out, to we didn't have time when we were here.

Three on one.

We're still looking at it for one example.

Just lots of follow-ups on our part throughout the rest of the year.

>> You want to touch on upcoming events?

>> Sure, we have a panel on south by southwest, we will talk about government sector, cool like you, so should be good.

I'm hoping we can have more code-a-thons and host more teaching code-a-thons, teaching the community.

I think we started something good.

I hope we can continue, take the feedback we got, implement it however we can so the next one they will know we're listening and available.

>> Yeah, I think expanding on it a little bit again.

Guy at lot of feedback from the tech development community, like this is great, can we have more of it?

I think they're watching -- the people that weren't there are wonderfuling.

I was getting tweets, how did it go.

I wish I was there.

I was at another conference.

Now, personally, I feel like now they're watching.

It is up to us to prove to them.

It would be a real shame if we kick start this and it doesn't lead to something throughout the year and beyond.

One last thing, the south by southwest, our founder jan palka, I suggest checking her out.

A great speaker.

We got bought in by her speeches.

That is why we are here.

[Chuckling] yeah, just moving forward after this, too.

Keep in touch, right?

That is a big thing for us, keeping people involved in our process and having an opportunity to provide feedback all along the way.

We have been sending out newsletters, as we referred to earlier.

Also a website for our team, we're recapping some of the press and feedback, there is a form for people to submit ideas or data sets to us with respect to the hack-a-thon.

This is an event wiki that documents the projects we talked about but also the ideas that started and stumbles for whatever reason.

Maybe a data set was missing, maybe we didn't have the right technical or project management resources otherwise.

All of that is available online.

All of our work going forward.

Yeah.

>> Again, we're going to head back to san francisco, but we plan on coming back here throughout the year and throughout the whole process, you know, like we will very much try to practice what we have been preaching.

We want to be transparent.

We don't want there to be surprises from us.

>> Say hi if you see us.

>> Thank you very much.

It has been great.

>> Any questions, colleagues?

Council member morrison.

>> First a comment, it has been a delight getting to know you a little bit.

It is clear to me that you have been adopted by the community and city staff as honorary austinites, especially now that you know how to speak the language with the all y'all, that is terrific.

>> Yeah.

one of the really great benefits or things about your visit here this month has been the timing of it.

It has coincided with a lot of visibility and technology and open government and resolution and website.

People are prime for discussing it.

That worked out really well.

And an important element of what you are doing, I think, is really trying to shift our culture, to help move along a technology being and making systemic changes to the way we do work here.

One of the things I did want in terms of getting some structure in place to ensure that through the year but after your year is over.

I think I heard the code for america briggage to town that?

Maybe doug might.

I have been work with the code for america folks, with janet and others.

Since they're going to be here with south by southwest, we're working with them to launch the code for america brigade here in austin stay city hall.

The idea being that there is about 50 or so city hackers.

They can participate, even though they're not committing a year of their lives to do it.

We want to leverage that.

We have been in conversations about how can we establish a system of innovation as an organization?

How can we see the idea and how can we create?

How can we create a safe space for risk?

As joe mentioned how do you create a safe space for what could be considered strategic failure.

Refine it to a point where you can then share it with other partners.

So I'm sure that you all can add to that.

>> Yeah, I think you just threw out the whole 4.5 weeks.

We still have meetings, still, we will meet up throughout the rest of the week.

We have been kind of like um, that guy would be great.

You know, actually met with students, where it is like apply to be a 2013 fellow now.

You would be great for this.

So there is definitely I think a good kick start of it again, this past weekend of people who -- we didn't even meet prior.

Just show up.

It was like this is really cool, how can I get more involved those are the people we tap on to throughout the rest of the year.

Once the fellowship is over, ok, you are glad to be an honorary austinite.

They would be very vested in that.

Other things, too.

We met with -- went to ibm yesterday, the smarter cities initiative there.

What they're trying to do is along the similar lines.

Not just them, but other companies as well where it is ok, a precursor to other local companies adopt what we do, like, ok, if we develop an app, are there other groups that can carry that on after our fellowship is over?

>> Yeah, and so I'm glad to hear that the whole brigade concept will be kicked off in march.

I think that that is -- the challenge I see there is that I think it would behoove us as a city government to nurture and support that.

But that it not be of the city government, that it be a community-driven resource.

Finding that balance will be interesting.

One last thing, I know one of the topics you all have talked about that is important to probably everybody here, that we didn't get to touch on was your interest in and possibilities you see in terms of addressing what is known as the digital divide.

And so I wonder if you could talk real briefly about that.

It is not just about creating cool apps.

>> Yeah, we are certainly interested in addressing projects that reach the most people.

It is tricky because we want to continue moving forward while not leaving anyone behind.

One of the projects that I am really excited about is a way to teach kids all over the city programming.

I think programming is a skill that takes you really far.

And I think there is a lot of people that programmers like to explain things.

Maybe they can go and explain them.

>> Guilty.

>> There are people that can really benefit from that knowledge the most.

We try to use text messaging to balance out smartphone applications whenever possible.

If any of you have any ideas of how to address more people, we are certainly always listening to those suggestions.

>> I really appreciate y'all coming, spending the time.

I did show up at the code-a-thon.

It was fun to see, I don't 30, saturday morning.

Looking drowsy.

>> Thanks a lot.

People noticed.

People have come up, e-mailed us, like the city representatives were there, like a bunch of folks from different other departments that we met.

It was great.

>> Great.

Council member martinez.

>>Martinez: great job.

I haven't met you guys.

I know everything you are doing because I follow your hashtag.

Thank you for the energy you brought to this message and to our community.

There are things, though, that I want to share with you.

It is something I think we can expand upon, I think you are embarking on some incredible tools, applications that can be useful to our citizens.

I'm sorry, I don't remember your name.

Emily.

I'm sorry.

You specifically talked about using text messaging to expand your reach.

One of the things that we know exists here in austin is hundreds of thousands of mainly spanish-speaking residents and they're not necessarily connected into mainstream twitter media, but they are on texting list serves for radio stations.

They're in the tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands.

These media outlets use their cell phone database to communicate to their customers, communicate to their audience and generate more ad revenue.

It is another tool to add into your base of information and your outreach.

Because once we all develop these applications that really create efficient, open, more efficient, more open government, there is a huge segment of our population that could be missed, if we don't incorporate them into this.

When we talk about energy conservation, water conservation, traffic congestion, all of these things that all of the apps, really, you will have a tremendous impact on, you know, cutting out 10 to 20% of your citizenry, you know, could cause more problems if you will, or could not have as much of an impact.

Keep that in mind.

We have about 40% of this city is hispanic, and of that, there is a large, large number who are primarily spanish-speaking only.

We need to be mindful of, that not all of the citizens and residents are tied into the main street technology and aspects of that.

I look forward to seeing the rest of it come to fruition.

>> Any other comments, questions, colleagues?

You guys did a backup job.

We -- bang-up job.

We are proud to have had you, welcome to austin.

Councilman morrison said you are honorary austinites.

>> Mayor pro tem.

>> All the sentiments expressed about how we feel of having you here.

I met you a few weeks ago.

Your arrival was -- we're excited to receive you.

I think in many, many ways, you energized our organization and caused us to think about things we don't take the time to think about in terms of technology, benefits, opportunities there are as a result of having access to those things.

We look forward to the ongoing relationship with the organization.

>> Thank you.

>> It was a lot of fun.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor?

>> Council member tovo.

there is one other item I wanted to ask a question about, if now is appropriate.

I wanted to see if anybody knew that the mugs were going forward for consideration on thursday?

I had heard some indication that there might be a request for postponement.

>> That is correct.

>>Tovo: on both?

>> On both the hearing.

are both the municipal utility districts considering.

>> Sue is right there.

>> Sue edwards, assistant city manager.

Yes, we are postponing until the 8th of may, both the public hearing and decisions on both muds.

>>Tovo: I missed the dates?

>> March 8.

>> Council I have a question under d 1 about austin energy.

I know we did the proposed city council work plan last special session that we had.

We have on that plan discussion of out of city rates as item nine.

I believe in light of this as being important to the overall scheme of things that we are trying to do and some preliminary discussions we had with the out-of-city mayors and council members.

And they're concerned with our transfer that we need to consider moving that discussion up.

I think we talked about the potential that we would have that in one of those locations out of state.

Do you have any feedback?

I simply propose that we just -- I'm not going to deal with the specific date, but we just put either have it under 5 or 5, but to go ahead and make those -- try to fill down the dates and times.

And have it as a priority.

Council member morrison.

from my perspective, we probably want to make sure we get the topic that we have under session 2 before we go out and meet the out-of-town customers.

To have it done.

To have the general fund transfer and additional transfer discussed prior to do that.

I wonder if there will be other issues that come up from the out-of-city customers.

>> That is the one I know is the main one front and center.

So I will work on outreach efforts to get that.

It is easier to try to do that without a lot of other potential items.

I will try that.

>> The only thing I might suggest is we have got a draft of actually a time line to go along with the sessions that just got to you, I believe.

>> I don't have it.

>> Did it pass around?

>> I'm sorry, it got stuck by me.

>> Mayor pro tem, would you mind saying again?

I'm sorry, I missed the other one.

>> Out-of-city and actual going there and having that discussion.

>> The only thing I was going to suggest is we try and juggle that offline.

>> I will make a couple of comments about the schedule, it is a draft, we probably need to adopt it as a draft.

We are likely to have scheduling conflicts and we can work around those.

The boards and commission rooms in city chambers are scheduled for the next couple months.

Finding lots of time was a challenge.

There are additional options.

You see here options that do not conflict with council meeting, don't conflict with work sessions, don't conflict with subcommittees.

Hopefully they don't conflict with what I mentioned.

Hopefully don't conflict with council subcommittee meetings.

If possible, one out of council week meeting and two out of council week meetings.

It is an aggressive timetable, but it seemed like there was a will for a council for a more aggressive decision-making timetable to get about the business of making final policy decisions.

So with that --

>> let me just say that the issue with the out-of-city ratepayers does not involve -- is not just the rate that we charge.

That is essentially about losing on our entire utility.

The sooner that we kind of are willing to talk about doing that.

I'm thinkingaybe w can do that -- I need parameters because I'm not dealing with us.

I'm thinking, if we can just say the week of the 19th THROUGH THE 23rd?

I want to be able to it will them, this is the week we're coming.

>> Right now, it is scheduled for the week of --

>> 21st, that is just before we make a decision.

>> If I may?

>> Council member morrison, I'm sorry.

this is hopefully what we will address or consider this thursday.

We don't have to make final decisions on it right now.

I understand your point that session 9 move up to the week OF THE 19th.

>> And we don't have to adopt it.

We can't take action now.

I'm trying to get a feel from you, after one or two, can we say.

can you wait until thursday?

>> Yeah.

>> Mayor pro tem.

>> Council member martinez.

you said the out-of-city issue -- i understand you want to move up.

You said it potentially affects losing our entire utility.

>> I should not have said that.

Nothing contemplates -- chris made me say that and chris looked at me at that time.

I said I don't know why I said that.

It does affect a large portion of our customer base, which is 50,000 customers.

Not losing our entire utility?

>> Exactly.

Any other comments so we'll finalize this on thursday?

All right.

We are adjourned.