Council to be asked to float $800,000 parking lot revenue bond issue

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Staff Writer  OCT 1 2 1976

The Rapid City Common Council will be asked to float a bond issue to buy two more parking lots downtown.

The council's parking committee Tuesday agreed to recommend going ahead with the acquisition of buildings and property at the northeast corner of Sixth and Main and the southwest corner of Seventeenth and Main for offstreet parking. To raise the money, the council will recommend the city issue a 20-year revenue bond for about $800,000.

The bond would pay off the net receipts from parking meters and private transactions of downtown businesses.

André Horwitz, chairman of a special committee to solicit private contributions, said that after several months of effort his committee has raised $10,000 of the $16,000 needed to cover the cost of the bond.

Horwitz also said there are still more businesses to be contacted.

The solicitation was based on assessing the property owner or the tenant of $10 per meter for owners and $6 per meter for renters. He named Bennett Properties and LDS (Land Development Specialists) as refusing to contribute. Others, he said, attached conditions which we could not meet.

Asked what could be done to make certain the pledges were paid, Horwitz said he could not guarantee they would be. He said he might be possible to ask the donors to sign a promissory note to secure the pledge.

Horwitz asked the committee to recommend approval of the new parking lots and sites and start action on the bond issue.

The committee gave its blessing to the sites although there might be a problem because buildings at both locations are eligible for historical significance designation. This would mean no federal funds could be used to raise the structures.

It had been suggested the urban renewal department purchase and clear the property but urban renewal funds could not be used to tear down the historic buildings. The buildings could be removed with private funds, however, it was pointed out.

The committee also will ask council approval to retain the firm of Allison, Williams Co. of Minneapolis as the city's fiscal agent on the project.

Mayor Art LaCroix appointed Aldermen Lisie Losins, Mike Madsen and Delwayne Yates as a committee to select an appraiser for the land and buildings.

In other business, the committee will recommend setting Oct. 20 as a date for a public hearing on the Corp of Engineers proposed dike in Sioux Park as a flood control measure. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the council chambers.

The council also will consider the feasibility of adding a fourth water tower south of Highway 18 for the city's fire protection.