

Committee begins study of financing convention center

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An effort to provide Rapid City with a new multi-purpose civic center was launched Friday morning by a select committee appointed by Mayor Don Barnett to search out methods of financing.

The committee's purpose is not associated with location or building design, Mayor Barnett told a dozen key community leaders representing several areas of community leadership, at a breakfast meeting.

Barnett, during his vigorous campaign for mayor of Rapid City, pledged the year 1971 as a period of concern in civic center development.

During the first meeting of his select committee Friday morning Barnett said: "We must move out of the area of guessing and search out factual information concerning the financing of a civic center."

Barnett, in a memorandum to committee members, charged them with two points: Develop a comprehensive view of all possible sources of revenue and income sufficient to service a debt of \$2.5 million; and to estimate as closely as possible any operating deficit which an arena-type civic center complex might incur.

The mayor asked the committee to complete its work and present its findings to the Rapid City Common Council by Aug. 15. He said the committee should develop alternate possibilities, and suggested the organization of several sub-committees to begin immediate work.

"We need a convention-civic

center in Rapid City. It would be a good shot in the arm to stimulate activities and bring many more thousands of people into the city," Barnett said.

In outlining viewpoints on the type of building, committee members noted that the structure should be one that could be used for conventions, athletic events, and combinations of events.

Barnett said he intends to re-activate a civic center committee appointed by former Mayor Jack Allmon to work on the problem of location and design.

The mayor will serve as chairman of the committee concerned with finances and his vice chairman will be James Schneider, executive vice president of Rushmore State Bank. Serving as secretary will be Mrs. Grace Mickelsen, a faculty member of Central High School.

Eight sub-committees were formed to delve into the several aspects of financing the civic center. The committees and their chairmen are: Room tax, Vern Johnson; property tax, Larry Lytle; sales tax, Lou Haggerty; revenue bonds, Dick Berry; city, county, state and federal aid, Al Jensen; private financing, Ron Campbell; operations and maintenance, Charles Hoffman, and franchise tax, George Miller.

The next meeting of the full select committee is scheduled for Friday, June 11, at 7:30 a.m. In the meantime, sub-committees will be meeting to outline their programs.

Other members of the committee are Vic Hughes and Blair Holden.