

Dear All:

I presume many of you have heard that the City is having a forum on "what to do with the Hall of Fame Building" - on Tuesday, December 15, starting 6:30 pm at the Century Center

I will be there and will try to present the case for HOST

Probably only in the Q&A session, although I hope to get time for a lengthier presentation.

If you can come, please do so - it should be a very interesting evening...

Here follow the two recent SB Trib articles - about the event.

[reminder - our website is at http://nd.edu/~hgberry/host/sapc_host.htm

both this note and a modified version of the update note of Nov 15 are included there]

regards

Gordon

Dec 9, SB Trib

The event, at Century Center's Recital Hall, will include arrival and check-in at 6 p.m., welcome and introductions at 6:30 p.m. and a question-and-answer session from 7 to 8 p.m.

The program will begin with brief presentations by Luecke; Jeff Gibney, executive director of economic and community development for the city; Sam Jones of the Troyer Group, part of the team that designed and built the [Hall of Fame](#); city controller Gregg Zientara; and Mark Turner, owner of South Bend Chocolate Co.

"The city would like to hear from residents about their ideas, preferences and suggestions," said a statement from the mayor's office. "In addition, general information about the building design and architectural details will be provided, along with factual details on current ownership, financing and income sources."

Article published Dec 5, 2009

South Bend wants Hall of Fame to stay through 2010

Town hall meeting to gather ideas set for Dec. 15.

By JEFF PARROTT Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND -- The College Football Hall of Fame likely will remain open in South Bend through the end of next year, or at least until the 2010 football season ends, city and hall officials said Friday.

That marks a change in the game plan of Mayor Stephen Luecke.

Shortly after the hall announced in October that it was leaving the city for Atlanta, Luecke had said he was leaning toward asking the hall to leave its city-owned downtown facility by the end of this year.

Attendance tends to dwindle in the winter anyway, and having the building empty would make it easier to market for potential new users, the mayor reasoned.

But after making those remarks in a late October Tribune story, Luecke said he heard from

numerous downtown business leaders, hotel/motel tax board members, Century Center and National Football Foundation officials who asked him to reconsider his stance.

He then met with the NFF, which runs the hall, and agreed to support the hall staying through 2010, as its contract with the city stipulates, or at least through the end of the 2010 football season, Luecke said.

Luecke said initially he doubted whether the community would visit the hall, or its marquee enshrinement festival in August, knowing it was leaving town soon.

"I certainly had some concerns about that," he said Friday. "But people are going to want to come out and see Tim Brown (part of the 2010 enshrinement class) and some other enshrinees in the class. And it's not just local people who attend or participate ... we draw from nationwide.

"That will sell room nights in hotels and bring people to restaurants, and we think that's important."

Luecke said he also no longer thinks having the building full and operating will hinder showing it to potential buyers or tenants.

When he made those comments, he was under the impression that the NFF didn't plan on having the 2010 enshrinement in South Bend, Luecke said.

But the NFF has told him it would have the festival in South Bend if it is still open there, he said.

Kristen Pflipsen, hall spokeswoman, confirmed that stance Friday in an interview with The Tribune.

"Our stance all along was as long as the city wanted us to stay open we would stay open," Pflipsen said.

"Our lease is through 2010 and it will be the city's call when we close."

The city is exploring whether it might be liable for hotel/motel tax revenue it has pledged for the hall's operations, should it demand the hall pull out before the end of next year, Luecke said. But if attendance drops way off after the 2010 football season ends, the city is looking at whether it could call for an early closure then, and only be liable for a pro-rated subsidy.

Mark Dobson, president of the South Bend/St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce, said he welcomed the economic impact that another enshrinement festival will bring next summer. He said he also thinks the downtown is better off if the building is being used next year while the community ponders its reuse.

To that end, Luecke said the city is planning a town hall meeting Dec. 15, time and location to be determined, where the public will be invited to offer ideas on how the facility should be used after the hall leaves.

The mayor also is receiving input from a 28-member advisory group he has appointed.

Staff writer Jeff Parrott:
jparrott@sbtinfo.com
(574) 235-6320