

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, September 11, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.
LifeSteps Campus

AGENDA

1. LifeSteps Campus Tour
2. Sales Tax Issue Explanation (Dan Noble)
3. Accepting Natrona County Hazard Mitigation Plan & Emergency Response Plan (Lt. Harlin)
4. Health Fund Update (Tom Pitlick, Tracey Belser)
5. Alcohol Sale Hours (John Henley)
6. Smart Water Meters (Darren Mizokami, Tom Pitlick)
7. Additional One Cent City Projects (Carter Napier)
8. Agenda Review
9. Legislative Update
10. Council Around the Table

Mayor Pacheco called the meeting to order with the following Councilmembers present: Powell, Hopkins, Huber, Johnson, Laird, Morgan, and Mayor Pacheco. Councilmembers Walsh and Humphrey were absent.

Mayor Pacheco thanked the Casper Housing Authority for setting up the tour of LifeSteps and for welcoming Council for the work session at LifeSteps campus.

City Manager Napier introduced Dan Noble, Director of the Wyoming Department of Revenue, to discuss the sales tax issue where a vendor paid taxes in Natrona County that were supposed to be paid in Sweetwater County. He explained that Casper mistakenly received \$1.7M before the error was detected through an audit. The State of Wyoming worked out a five year payment arrangement with Casper. He stated that the correct amount of taxes were paid but to the wrong jurisdiction. He discussed some of the steps that are being taken to prevent this from happening again, including implementing programs that may detect payments in incorrect jurisdictions by vendors. He explained that he is prevented by law from disclosing the name of the vendor to City officials, but that if a valid business reason is given, the Department of Revenue can disclose the name in writing. Council discussed that the City had received a letter from Solvay admitting they were the vendor who made the mistake. Council also discussed the State coming up with a policy where fees are assessed to vendors for mistakes such as this in order to provide an incentive to handle their taxes correctly.

Next, Lieutenant Harlin, Natrona County Emergency Management Coordinator, reviewed the Natrona County Hazard Mitigation Plan and Emergency Response Plan. He explained that it is a five year document that helps prepare the community for historical and perceived threats. Council gave their thumbs up for the plan to be moved forward for a vote for formal adoption at a regular Council meeting.

Next, City Manager Napier began the discussion on the health fund. He explained that the fund is in an unhealthy position and that staff is working on ways to help mitigate losses. Tom Pitlick, City Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the health fund reserves and showed that the fund would be in a position of negative \$15M by 2023 if no adjustments were made. He also showed that increasing premiums alone will not correct the situation. Then, Tracey Belser, Support Services Director, discussed the status of catastrophic and pharmacy claims compared to last year and plan design changes that have helped save the City money, such as changes to the pharmacy plan. She also discussed the implementation of new wellness and pre-diabetic programs for employees.

City Manager Napier then discussed some possible options for improving the status of the health fund. These included ideas such as not being self-funded, joining a larger pool, and narrowing the City's network. He stated that he would like the City to evaluate the health fund as they do enterprise funds and commit to a long term approach to handling rates. Councilmember Huber asked what the City's healthcare costs are compared to the State's plan, and Ms. Belser responded that she will research that and get the information to Council. Council directed staff to bring a proposal forward in the near future for an approach to correcting the downward trajectory of the health fund.

Next, City Attorney Henley discussed changing Sunday's alcohol sale hours so that they are the same as all other days of the week. Police Chief McPheeters stated that the change would affect his calls for service and staffing levels. Council gave their thumbs up to move forward with a formal vote on an ordinance change to the alcohol sale hours.

Next, City Manager Napier began the discussion on smart water meters and introduced Darren Mizokami, Meter Services Supervisor, to present on the topic. Mr. Mizokami explained that smart water meters allow staff to collect billing data without physically going to each location and they also allow homeowners more detailed information on their water consumption. He stated that using the cell towers around town would be costly, and it would save the City money to contract through a cell provider. He also stated that staff would not suggest allowing residents to control the meter. City Manager Napier stated that if Council wants, staff can prepare more information on specific costs of the implementing the program. He suggested that if it is implemented, it should be implemented city-wide. Council asked for more information on smart water meters and specifically asked for city-wide implementation costs and cost-savings from reduced labor costs.

Next, City Manager Napier reviewed the spreadsheet for One Cent allocations, including the second tier priority projects that Council requested. Council asked that staff create a master list of all the community projects as well as staff's recommended second tier projects. City Manager Napier stated that staff can get that out to Council tomorrow and asked that it be returned back to staff with each Councilmember's vote for allocations by noon on Friday.

Next, City Manager reviewed the grid document for upcoming meeting items. He pointed out that a vote on one cent allocations is scheduled for the meeting on October 2nd.

Next, Councilmember Powell gave a legislative update. He stated that direct distribution funding for municipalities is being discussed by the Revenues Committee.

Next, Council went around the table to discuss their respective board and committee meetings and share ideas and concerns related to public matters of interest. Councilmember Morgan asked if building permits and vehicles could be given in-kind to organizations, and City Attorney Henley responded that he will look into that. Councilmember Laird discussed creating a resolution where a city employee is paid \$25K if someone tries to kill them while on the job. Council discussed that they would like a legal recommendation on this and City Attorney Henley stated that he will look into it.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur D. Tremel
City Clerk

Ray Pacheco
Mayor