

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.
City Hall - Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Mayor/Vice Mayor Straw Poll
3. Mayor Salary & Term Length
4. Wyoming Business Council Grant
5. Dog Parks
6. City Hall SAFE Project – Part 2
7. Council Participation on Boards
8. Financial Guidelines – Phase 3
9. Agenda Setting
10. Legislative Review
11. Council Around the Table

Mayor Powell called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Johnson, Freel, Huber, Pacheco, Hopkins, Cathey, Lutz, Bates, and Mayor Powell.

City Manager Napier discussed creating a more streamlined process for taking items off of consent in the regular Council meetings. He explained that it is preferable that Council do this as much in advance of the meeting as possible, so that staff is able to answer questions. If that is not possible, he suggested having a scripted portion of the meeting for removing things from consent. Council discussed doing this, but agreed that they need to take things off consent in advance of the meeting instead of doing it on the floor.

Next, Council discussed changing the mayor's salary to \$300 per meeting and gave their thumbs up to move forward with formal consideration of the change to the ordinance. City Attorney Henley also explained that the term length for the mayor and vice mayor is one year per a charter ordinance.

Next, Council held a straw poll for Mayor and Vice Mayor for 2019. Fleur Tremel, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk, first collected the ballots for Mayor and she and City Attorney Henley counted the votes. Ms. Tremel announced the results of the straw poll for Mayor which indicated a super majority of votes for Councilmember Freel. Ms. Tremel then handed out and collected ballots for Vice Mayor, and she and City Attorney Henley counted the votes. She then announced that the person who received the most votes for Vice Mayor was Councilmember Lutz. Mayor Powell stated that the positions of Mayor and Vice Mayor would be formally voted on at the first regular Council meeting in January.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed an application for a Wyoming Business Council Grant that would fund improvements for a portion of the downtown area adjacent to the river. Jolene Martinez, Assistant to the City Manager, then described the project which included a trail river front park with trail replacement, picnic tables, a boat ramp, and a gateway into downtown Casper.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$786K and would require a 25% match from the City, for which staff is looking for additional grant funding to cover the matched amount. The City is currently in talks with the Platte River Trails Trust to acquire the private portions of land for the project, and the estimated cost includes the cost of this land acquisition. She then described the specificities of the boat ramp which would allow river access by the Fire Department for water rescues. Ms. Martinez then gave a brief update on the Platte River Restoration project. Council gave their thumbs up to move forward with formal consideration of the Wyoming Business Council Grant proposal.

Next, City Manager discussed options for dog parks. He explained that Council had previously asked staff to do research on parks within the City and to look at potential improvements for the dog park proposed on the east side of Casper. Tim Cortez, Parks and Recreation Director, then reviewed potential options for the east side park and the associated costs of these options. Some of the options included grassy areas, water features, fencing, and off-street parking. Council then discussed combinations of each of the options and discussed how much funding they wanted to put towards a dog park. They asked that staff narrow down the options and look at different cost options for grading, fencing, aeration, park size as well as areas for fenced-in off-leash use at other parks around the City. They asked that this be presented at a future work session in January.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the City Hall Safe Project. He presented clearer drawings and discussed 3-year and 5-year phasing options, with the 3-year option costing an estimated \$3.1M. He explained that staff believes that the City will be able to sell assets in the coming years to generate funding for the project, and in the meantime the project can be funded using the Revolving Land Fund, which has a balance of \$1.1M, and another fund that has been used for LAD projects, which has a balance of \$2.4M. These funds could be used to cash flow the project in the short-term and could be back-filled once the previously discussed assets are sold. He also discussed using future one-cent funding for this project, because the building was originally funded with one cent dollars. Council gave their thumbs up to continue moving forward with the project under a 3-year timeline.

Next, Council discussed councilmember participation on boards. City Attorney Henley discussed his analysis of conflicts of interest that could emerge while a councilmember is serving on a board. He gave an example of a council member voting in a manner as a board member that conflicts with the general direction of the City Council. He then explained the difference between voting members on boards as opposed to liaison positions. He stated that as a voting member of a joint powers board, the councilmember is formally appointed by Council, and they are allowed to be an active participant who does not need the entire Council's permission to vote a certain way. Council asked that the advice of the City Attorney be added to the Council Handbook, and also discussed that when speaking at board meetings, councilmembers should make it clear that they do not speak for the entire Council. City Attorney Henley also stated that if a councilmember is in violation of this, the Mayor should approach the councilmember privately to discuss this. City Attorney Henley also emphasized that Council be cautious about objectivity when it comes to organizations they are liaisons to, and about putting those entities' interests above the interests of the City.

Next, Tom Pitlick, Finance Director, discussed the third phase of finance policies which included revenues, expenditures, budget guidelines, and reporting. He discussed working towards the goal of using one time revenues for one time expenditures and getting away from the City's reliance on over-the-cap funding. This policy will also require an annual review of utility rates and quarterly financial reports for Council. He then discussed internal service funds and recovering the entire cost of these services. He then discussed why the City uses 5-year plans for many of its projections. Council gave their thumbs up to the policies discussed.

Next, Council reviewed the agenda for the December 3, 2019 Council meeting. Councilmember Huber stated that he will be absent from that meeting. Council also discussed that when a councilmember calls into a meeting, they are counted as present and are paid accordingly.

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. Council discussed pushing back against proposed legislation that would remove municipalities from state health insurance. Mayor Powell discussed that CAEDA will now be called Advance Casper. Council then discussed creating an advisory equality council for the LGBTQ community, similar to the recently formed Disabilities Council. Council gave their thumbs up for staff to begin forming the advisory council. Council also asked that staff present more information at a future work session related to the matrix that was used to score the City on support of the LGBTQ community. City Manager Napier then discussed allowing employees to have either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve off as a paid holiday. Mayor Powell discussed interviews for vacancies on the Amoco Reuse Joint Powers Board, and asked who would like to represent Council at these interviews. Councilmembers Hopkins and Huber volunteered to be representatives.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING

ATTEST:

A Municipal Corporation

Fleur D. Tremel
City Clerk

Charles Powell
Mayor