

## COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.  
City Hall – Council Chambers

### AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Council Committee Assignments
3. Casper 311 Demo
4. Casper's Council for People with Disabilities: Transportation-Related Initiatives
5. Repealing Ordinance for Tobacco
6. Purchase of Fire Chassis and Body
7. Voluntary Unpaid Leave and Furlough Recompense
8. Agenda Review
9. Legislative Review
10. Council Around the Table

The Council work session was called to order at 4:35 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Knell, Pollock, Lutz, Engebretsen, Gamroth, Vice Mayor Pacheco and Mayor Freel. Councilmembers Johnson and Cathey were absent.

There were no items to discuss regarding Council follow-up.

City Manager Napier began by discussing Council committee assignments. He stated that there were four spots left to fill: a seat on the Casper Council for People with Disabilities, a seat on the Contractor's Licensing and Appeals Board, a seat on the Utilities Advisory Committee, and a seat on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Councilmember Knell volunteered for the Contractors and Licensing Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission, and Vice Mayor Pacheco volunteered for the Casper Council for People with Disabilities. None of the Councilmembers present volunteered for the Utilities Advisory Board, so Mayor Freel stated that he will ask Councilmembers Johnson and Cathey if they would be willing to serve. If they are not willing to serve, Mayor Freel stated that he will volunteer for that board. Mayor Freel also stated that Vice Mayor Pacheco will be taking one of the Economic Development Joint Powers Board seats and the other seat will be filled by either Councilmember Pollock or Councilmember Gamroth. The two Councilmembers stated that they will discuss who will serve on the board after the meeting and will let Mayor Freel know what they decide.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the Casper 311 app, which is a customer service app being rolled out by the City using the City's new enterprise-wide Tyler-Munis operating system. The app will initially be used to receive feedback from the public regarding things like potholes. He stated that the system will allow staff to get to repairs faster than before. He then introduced Michael Szewczyk, IT Manager, to elaborate on the system and demonstrate the application. Mr. Szewczyk explained that there is currently a work order submittal system on the City's website, but it is not as user-friendly as this new system and requires employees to create work orders from the submittals. In contrast, the new system will put the citizen request into the operating system

and the employee will be able to choose to turn it into a work order without having to input additional information. Mr. Szewczyk then demonstrated the app to Councilmembers and showed how a citizen could submit a request on the website or through a mobile app. He said that the mobile app still needs some work but will be available soon. The website submittals will be available immediately. He stated that initially the app will accommodate three different requests: potholes, damaged containers, and missing road signs. Staff is hoping to expand requests to all types of work order systems throughout the City's different departments. There will be a press release and an announcement on the website to inform the public that the system is ready to use.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Zulima Lopez, Risk Manager, to discuss Casper's Council for People with Disabilities (CCPD) and their work towards changing transit and transportation options for people with disabilities in Casper. Ms. Lopez stated that the CCPD deployed a survey to the disability community from June through September asking questions related to transportation difficulties. The survey showed that the majority of people in this disability community have difficulties finding adequate transportation and that this limits their ability to take part in activities and affects important aspects of their everyday lives including getting to medical appointments. Ms. Lopez then reviewed some of the goals that were created by the CCPD in response to these survey results including continuing their partnership with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); pursuing rideshare/taxi options; expanding resources for people with disabilities, including a one-stop shop for transit options with schedules and rates; and pursuing grants. She then introduced Masha Flinn, a member of the CCPD, to discuss seasonal challenges people with disabilities encounter in this community. Ms. Flinn described her difficulties with getting around in a wheelchair, her main form of transportation, when sidewalks and ramps are not cleared of snow. She described how this is a safety hazard for many people in this community.

Councilmember Gamroth advised the CCPD to look into rideshare partnerships, as these are used in many other places throughout the country. Councilmember Pollock asked about maintenance of snow and ice around access points around bus stops, and City Manager Napier replied that the City is responsible for the area directly around bus stops, but businesses and residents are responsible for keeping the sidewalks clear in the areas adjacent to their business or place of residence. He stated that code violations for citizens not keeping the sidewalk clear is complaint-driven, and staff does not routinely patrol for these types of violations. Vice Mayor Pacheco asked what the City Council can do to help this situation, and Ms. Lopez responded that it would be helpful to bring different departments and members of City Council together to offer up solutions and better help the CCPD understand how to utilize resources. City Manager Napier added that if there are possible capital needs that could help to address some of these concerns, any high priority improvements could be considered during budget season. He stated staff can work on some recommendations that may aid in these improvements.

City Manager Napier then introduced Jeremy Yates, MPO Supervisor, to give an update on the MPO's transportation initiatives. Mr. Yates stated that the MPO has released several transportation surveys to CATC bus riders as well as stakeholders. They have also tried to hold stakeholder meetings with consultants and bus users, but attendance at the meetings has been lower than

anticipated due to the pandemic. The MPO is hoping to hold another round of stakeholder meetings in order to develop a five-year business plan and marketing campaign.

Next, City Manager Napier reviewed a follow-up item regarding Council's decision not to adopt the language of the state statute pertaining to the age of tobacco use. He suggested removing the ordinance language completely from the City's code, so there is no conflicting legislation with the State and to avoid enforcement issues. City Attorney Henley then explained that it would be necessary to repeal the City's ordinance in lieu of adopting the State's language. He described how police officers can still cite state statute and the case would go to circuit court as opposed to municipal court. When asked if there was any benefit to having the cases go through municipal court he replied that it is a faster process and gives more control and time towards these underage smoking cases. Council discussed reasons why the vote to pass the ordinance failed with the previous City Council and gave their thumbs up that they would like to reconsider the ordinance to mirror the State statute with the newly seated Council.

Next, City Manager Napier reviewed the potential purchase of a new fire engine, including the purchase of the chassis and body, which helps the City realize savings. The unit being replaced is 14 years old and has accrued maintenance costs of \$380K. He introduced Deputy Fire Chief Speiser to expand on why this purchase is necessary. Deputy Chief Speiser stated that the engines are on a replacement schedule of 10-15 years, and some retired vehicles get put into a reserve rotation to be used if primary engines are unavailable. In this case, staff decided to trade-in the old engine to be used towards the purchase of the new engine. This old engine was manufactured by a company that went bankrupt, and therefore new parts and engines from this company are no longer being made. Consequently, these engines are worth less money and are harder to maintain. He explained that the new engine will operate out of Fire Station #3 which is one of the busiest fire stations in the City and responds to all types of calls. The engine is being paid for by one cent dollars, which was a top one cent priority in the citizen survey. There are three more engines that need replaced and are planned for purchase later on in this one cent cycle. Council gave their thumbs up to move this purchase forward for formal consideration at a regular Council meeting.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed recompensing employees for salary lost during the voluntary unpaid leave and furlough that was required of employees last year. The recompense would be paid for by CARES dollars; this potential use of the money has been approved and is eligible for reimbursement. The proposed repayment would compensate employees who chose the voluntary unpaid leave to be reimbursed dollar for dollar of unpaid time and those that chose the furlough option be reimbursed for their unpaid time less any unemployment they received. The cost of this repayment would be \$550K. CARES dollars for the payments have already been set aside so that the accounting for this expense will be clean and consistent with the rules governing CARES funding. The payments to employees would be in the form of a one-time payment. Staff is requesting that if Council approves of the recompense, the payments be made in an expedited manner that would require a budget amendment. City Manager Napier stated that staff is not suggesting the extra paid time off be taken away from employees that earned this through the voluntary unpaid leave option. Council discussed whether this extra paid time off could be a reimbursable expense through the CARES funding. City Manager Napier responded that this

option could be looked into but he would rather use that funding for different expenses as the City does not incur any monetary costs from the paid time off, because it is not paid out upon separation from the City. Council gave their thumbs up to move forward with the recompense plan.

Next, Council reviewed the agendas for upcoming regular Council meetings and work sessions. Mayor Freel asked to be updated on liquor license renewals at the next meeting, as there were issues with late applications last year. Mayor Freel also explained that there is an option for Councilmembers to have a City-issued cell phone, and if any Councilmembers are interested they should let staff know.

City Manager Napier reviewed state legislature items that the City is watching carefully, including a fire pension issue that would have a large financial impact on the City. He stated that staff will include some of the legislative items that are pertinent to the City in the information packet for Council this week and welcomed any questions on those items from Councilmembers.

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 Knell discussed the need for a new police station, the possibility of closing Ft. Caspar Museum during the winter months, and the possibility of allowing parking on parkways. Councilmembers Knell and Engebretsen asked about long-term goals for Council, and Mayor Freel stated that Council goal setting will be discussed soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING  
A Municipal Corporation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fleur Tremel  
City Clerk

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Steven K. Freel  
Mayor