

COUNCIL PRE-MEETING
Tuesday, July 7, 2020 5:00 p.m.
Casper City Hall - Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Trails Trust – Paradise Valley to Robertson Road Project
2. Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)
3. State Board of Equalization
4. Golf Course Club House

Mayor Freel began the pre-meeting session at 5:04 p.m. with Councilmembers Bates, Cathey, Hopkins, Huber, Johnson, Lutz, Pacheco and Mayor Freel in attendance. Absent: Councilmember Powell.

Acting City Manager Becher introduced Angela Emery, Executive Director of the Platte River Trails Trust. Ms. Emery provided a detail explanation of the multi-phase Paradise Valley to Robertson Road trail project. Councilmember Cathey asked how the fundraising for the bump-outs was going. Ms. Emery indicated that several events were planned to raise the funds. Councilmember Bates asked about the extent of this phase of the project. Ms. Emery stated that this phase would be limited, with no bike lanes, which would allow usage until further development can occur. Councilmember Hopkins asked how many people this connection would serve. Ms. Emery did not have hard numbers but speculated that many people would benefit including those living in new developments in the area. Councilmembers provided a thumbs up to the project.

Chief McPheeters provided an overview of the need for and process to become accredited with CALEA. He stated that eventually a staff position will be needed to maintain CALEA accreditation. He also elaborated on the purpose and value of becoming accredited at this time.

Councilmember Hopkins if this would be a good recruiting tool and who else in Wyoming has this level of accreditation. Chief McPheeters shared that less than 5% of all agencies meet the CALEA standards, which is an excellent recruiting tool. He also said that no Wyoming agencies are currently CALEA accredited, but that the City of Cheyenne is considering accreditation at this time. Councilmember Cathey asked when the additional staff position would be needed. Chief McPheeters indicated it would be at least a year before additional support would be necessary. Councilmember Cathey asked about the requirements for the accreditation manager. Chief McPheeters indicated that the person would not need to be a sworn officer or a member of the command staff and that because of the recent Presidential Executive Order, this will be a highly valued position. Councilmember Huber asked if this is a standard that must be achieved or if it is more like a membership. Chief McPheeters shared that this is the gold standard for the law enforcement field. Councilmember Bates asked if any other accreditation programs are better or equal to this program and about the costs involved. Chief McPheeters indicated that there are other accreditation programs, but this is the top of the line and that the associated fees are used to pay for the costs required to review and ensure standards are met, rather than paying for a membership.

Councilmember Hopkins asked about the length of time to reach accreditation. Chief McPheeters indicated it would take 3 years to complete the process. Mayor Freel shared that the City had previously been accredited, and asked why the credentials lapsed. Chief McPheeters speculated that changes in staffing and a lack of buy-in caused the lapse. Mayor Freel asked if the City could pick up from where the lapse occurred. Chief McPheeters said that the process would start over, but the department has been working in this direction for 2 years. Councilmember Bates asked how this process is viewed by the police department. Chief McPheeters that most employees are new to the accreditation process and that involving employees during policy creation and the accreditation process will help everyone be engaged in the program. Council provided a thumbs up for this item.

Mayor Freel provided a summary of the presentation by Matt Keating, Natrona County Assessor, at the June 23, 2020 work session regarding property tax assessments. He stated that a letter has been drafted to the State Board of Equalization (Board), which shares the Council's concerns about the assessment. He asked if Council supported sending the letter. Councilmember Huber shared his support and asked about the meeting Mr. Keating referenced at the work session. Mayor Freel said that Mr. Keating was scheduled to meet with the Board so they could review the formula being used at the Assessor's office. He stated that he didn't know the outcome of the meeting. He also said that the letter included samples of assessments and requested assistance in determining if the process in place is appropriate. Councilmember Cathey asked if anyone had received the follow up information that Mr. Keating had offered during the work session. Councilmembers said that they had not received information from Mr. Keating. Council provided a thumbs up to send the letter to the Board.

Councilmember Bates said that Mr. Keating would be meeting with the public to explain the assessment process, and he intended to attend. Councilmember Cathey requested that Councilmember Bates share a summary of this meeting with Council after the event.

Tim Cortez, Parks and Recreation Manager spoke about the recommended layout modifications for the Municipal Golf Course club house. He also spoke about the sprinkler project, which would be carried out after the golf season. Councilmember Cathey asked a question about the deck entrance, which Mr. Cortez addressed. Council provided a thumbs up for the project.

Next, Acting City Manager Becher briefly reviewed the upcoming work session agenda. Councilmember Cathey requested that snow plow savings plans and contractor liquidated damages be added to the future agenda item listing.

Mayor Freel adjourned the meeting at 5:53 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor