

**COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.  
City Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Natrona County Assessor – Property Tax Discussion
3. Animal Control Ordinance Update
4. Agenda Review
5. Legislative Review
6. Council Around the Table

Mayor Freel called the work session to order at 4:30 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Lutz, Hopkins, Huber, Johnson, Powell, Bates, Pacheco, Cathey and Mayor Freel.

Mayor Freel introduced Natrona County Assessor, Matt Keating, to provide information about how Natrona County property assessments were calculated this year. Mr. Keating discussed how his department has worked with the Department of Revenue to become compliant. He explained that the assessments are made off of a mass appraisal system, a re-stratification of Natrona County, and neighborhood adjustments. He stated that these formulas are very complicated and difficult to understand, but his office works on the valuations until they fall within statistical compliance. He also discussed that there were a record number of property tax assessment appeals this year and his staff is working on those now. He discussed that he is meeting with the State Board of Equalization tomorrow and expects that they will approve his abstract to move forward. He stressed that his methods are fair and equitable under the current laws.

Councilmembers then asked questions about how the land valuations were made, as the assessments vary drastically within neighborhoods. Mr. Keating explained that the valuations are based on stratifications and similar validated sales. Council stressed that part of the concern on the side of the citizens is that they do not understand how the valuations are made, and they urged Mr. Keating to figure out a way to provide this information to citizens in a way they can understand. They also asked that Mr. Keating's office provide City Council with the information he referenced about the formulas that are used to calculate the assessments.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced City Attorney Henley and Police Chief McPheeters to discuss the animal care and control ordinance update agenda and the assessed effectiveness of the previously implemented ordinance. City Attorney Henley stated that for the most part the ordinance has been effective, but there are some small adjustments to the ordinance that are being requested by the animal enforcement officers. Some of the changes include a new definition for "aggressive animal" versus "vicious animal", with the former being an aberrant occasion of aggressiveness as opposed to multiple aggressive instances, which would be classified as "vicious". They would also like the label of "vicious" to be given to dogs that attack a human. They also asked that the "clean and sanitary" living conditions for animals be expanded to exclude broken glass, sharp objects, etc. He also discussed adding a paragraph that would prevent the feeding of feral cats as well as other non-domesticated animals such as deer, excluding birds and

squirrels. The officers would also like the temperature for keeping an animal in a car raised to 70 degrees as opposed to 60 degrees. They also requested that the length of time that an animal can be tethered be increased to 10 hours per day, as opposed to 2 hours, to allow for people to keep their dog tethered while they are at work.

Councilmember Johnson raised issue with the portion related to feeding feral cats and did not support it being included in the ordinance. City Attorney Henley explained the reasoning behind including this in the ordinance and described how it would be enforced. Chief McPheeters also discussed that feeding of feral cats can lead to issues with other animals such as raccoons. Chief McPheeters then explained the complaints received from feeding non-domesticated animals, such as pigeons, and the damage that can be caused to neighboring homes. He stated that he issues nuisance abatement permits that allow individuals to deal with these problems in safe and humane ways. He described the process by which he personally reviews each of these permit requests and speaks with the requestor about possible options for abatement, which can include chemical agents, pellet guns, traps, or firearms. The type of abatement authorized is determined by what means are considered safe for the circumstances and is decided on a cases by case basis. He also explained that individuals are offered traps to help catch the animals with a deposit fee, and Metro officers will come empty the traps if they catch anything. Councilmember Huber stated that he has heard different accounts that Metro officers would not come empty the traps, and asked that this be clarified with personnel. The majority of Councilmember gave their thumbs up to move the proposed ordinance changes forward to a regular Council meeting.

Next, Council reviewed the agenda for the July 7, 2020 regular Council meeting. Council discussed adding an agenda item to a future work session regarding public comment at each ordinance reading and directed staff to add this item to a future work session agenda. Council also gave their thumbs up to start the pre-meeting for the July 7, 2020 meeting at 5:00 p.m. in order to allow time to discuss the Trails grant. Chief McPheeters discussed a contract for a police recruitment video, stating that the contract price decreased from \$25K to \$10K and the funds had been originally allocated in 2019. He stated that the contract needed to be in place so the funds could encumbered before the end of the fiscal year.

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. Councilmembers discussed signage for Mike Sedar BMX, Planning & Zoning Commission's opinion on Council's stance on the Grogan Hills item, and the reasoning behind preventing people from parking at the Events Center for the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING  
A Municipal Corporation

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Fleur Tremel  
City Clerk

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Steven K. Freel  
Mayor