

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.
City Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Nominations for Council Leadership
3. Grant Application – First Street Gateway Project
4. WAM Resolutions
5. Project and Contract Management Discussion
6. Sale of Tobacco – Consistent with State Statute
7. Agenda Review
8. Legislative Review
9. Council Around the Table

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

Mayor Freel led a moment of silence for Layne Luckow, a City employee who died last weekend. Mayor Freel then gave some kind remarks about Mr. Luckow.

City Manager Napier then discussed nominations for Council leadership. He introduced Fleur Tremel, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, to explain the process further. Ms. Tremel explained that Councilmembers who will be on Council next year, including incoming Councilmembers, have been given a ballot to nominate Councilmembers for the mayor and vice mayor positions. She asked that the nomination ballots be returned to her by next week. The straw poll for leadership positions will take place at the December 1st pre-meeting.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application for the First Street Gateway Project. The grant would be awarded in an amount up to \$250K and would be used toward the First Street reach portion of the Platte River restoration. A 50% match is required for the grant, and \$223K has been approved by the Natrona County Recreation Joint Powers Board for this project. Staff is hoping the remaining \$27K will be funded through other grants or donations, but if not, the City would need to pay that amount out of the river fund. Council would need to approve those funds before the grant application can be turned in. City Manager Napier explained that the project has been constructed into phases, and the City would not proceed into subsequent phases until the funding for that phase is obtained. He stated that if the \$1.73M estimated for the entire First Street Gateway Project is required in order for the grant application to be submitted, he will not present the application to Council for formal approval. Council gave their thumbs up to move this item forward for formal consideration at a regular Council meeting.

Next, City Manager Napier reviewed the Wyoming Association of Municipalities (WAM) resolutions that are on next year's WAM legislative agenda. Seven of the nine resolution were proposed by Casper. The eighth resolution addresses taxing districts and would allow for cities

and towns to partner with each other for a 6th cent proposal to citizens without having to include the other cities, towns or county. The ninth resolution addresses the concept of changing the distribution of sales tax to cities and towns. The proposal is a 50/50 split as opposed to the 30% that currently is distributed to cities and town. City Manager Napier stated that this may be part of a negotiation if there is a decrease in the direct distribution dollars that the cities and town currently receive. Council gave their thumbs up in support of these additional two resolutions. City Manager Napier also addressed questions about the two resolutions that Casper presented to WAM that were not adopted to the legislative agenda this year. He stated that WAM thought these issues could be addressed by policy as opposed to legislation, and he agrees.

City Manager Napier then discussed a legislative issue related to the underfunding of the Plan A pension for firefighters. It is anticipated that in five years this pension may go broke and not be able to fund the retired firefighters. The City has a 30% share in that deficiency if the state does nothing else. This would mean an annual \$6M obligation from the general fund into that fund. The City will be watching this closely and hoping to aid in finding a solution to this problem.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Andrew Beamer, Public Services Director, to discuss project and contract management. Mr. Beamer reviewed the bidding process, completion dates, change orders, communication plans, responsible bidders, and lucrative damages. He also explained that Council determines if a contractor is no longer considered responsible with staff assisting in forming a basis if the contractor is responsible. He also noted that contractors are paid based on the work done, not the amount of time a project takes. Mayor Freel asked about the delays in the ice arena project recently, and Mr. Beamer stated that he did not know the specifics of that project, because it was not his department. He did say that he believed it was awarded to a local contractor and the delays may have been caused by a subcontractor.

Next, City Attorney Henley discussed changes to the City's ordinance addressing the sale of tobacco. He stated that state statute was recently changed to alter the age that tobacco can be purchased to the age of 21, and now the City's ordinance is out of compliance with state statute. The City Attorney's office has worked on the ordinance to bring it back into compliance. Specifically, changes have been made to the age requirement for sale and possession of tobacco, signage, and articulating the delivery methods of nicotine. He added that state law trumps city laws, so the City is required to comply with the state statutes in Wyoming on this issue. Council gave their thumbs up to move this ordinance changes forward for formal consideration at a regular Council meeting.

Next, Council reviewed the agenda for the next regular Council meeting on November 17, 2020.

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 Cathey brought up an issue regarding code enforcement for a dog owner, and Police Chief McPheeters stated that issue is already being addressed. Councilmember Cathey stated that he will inform the complainant that this is being dealt with. Councilmember Powell reminded citizens that things like mask mandates cannot be discussed in executive sessions, and these types of issues would have to be discussed in a public meeting. Several Councilmembers discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and

steps the City could take to help ease the spike in cases. They also discussed their support of healthcare workers and teachers. Mayor Freel urged people to stay home if they are sick and discussed the strain the pandemic is putting on the Wyoming Medical Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor