

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.
City Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Proud to Host the Best
3. Snow Plow Plans – Cost Saving Proposals
4. Wind Turbines
5. Code of Ethics Discussion
6. Balefill Clerk
7. Agenda Review
8. Legislative Review
9. Council Around the Table

Mayor Freel called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Lutz, Bates, Huber, Pacheco, Johnson, Cathey, Hopkins, and Freel. Councilmember Powell was absent. Mayor Freel reminded those in attendance that the massage therapy ordinance is not being discussed tonight.

City Manager Napier introduced the Proud to Host the Best Committee to discuss youth sports tournaments and their economic impact. Karin East, Proud to Host the Best Committee member, began by giving a history on how the Proud to Host the Best Committee has supported the bids for tournaments to be hosted in Casper. She discussed how the arrangement with the Casper Events Center to not charge for use of the facility has supported Casper's bids for these tournaments and has helped in Casper continuously winning the tournament bids year after year. She also discussed their partners and volunteer members. Next, Brook Kaufman, CEO of Visit Casper, discussed the work that Proud to Host the Best has done, including raising between \$150K and \$180K annually. She reviewed the economic impact of the youth sports tournaments, and summarized each of the individual tournament's economic impact, which totals \$13.97M annually. The Casper Events Center's expense to the Committee is \$143K, which includes variable expenses, and the total Committee expense is about \$200K. She stated that the Proud to Host the Best Committee is very important to the community and needs to be supported by community leaders and citizens. Megan Miller, President of the Proud to Host the Best Committee, then discussed how the tournaments will be different this year due to COVID-19. She stated that there will be higher costs this year and less revenue due to less overnight stays. Councilmembers expressed their support for the Committee and stated that they would like to help in any way they can in the future.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed possible cost saving revisions for snow removal. He described that staff developed several options for Council to consider in reducing these costs. Shad Rodgers, Streets and Traffic Manager, to discuss these options in more depth. Mr. Rodgers stated that there is already a policy for the snow to be plowed to the side of the street if there is less than 4 inches of snow and before December, because the snow will melt fairly fast. He discussed why Option 1, plowing the snow to the side under different conditions, may create more problems than

are worth the cost savings. Option 2 would help cut costs by reducing plow routes by 25%, 50%, and 75%. He stated that once past the 25% reduction, there may be impacts on school bus routes. Option 3 includes changes to snow shift hours from the current two twelve-hour shifts in a 24 hour period.

Councilmember Huber stated that snow removal is a safety and economic issue and is not just an issue of convenience. He also asked about asking citizens to move their cars during snow removal. Mr. Rodgers stated that when used in the past, this policy has not been successful due to low enforcement. Mayor Freel responded that this was time consuming when used in the past due to having to call tow trucks. Mr. Rodgers stated he could bring some research from other communities on this issue if Council wishes. Councilmembers discussed whether cost savings from each of these options were worth the cut to services. City Manager Napier recommended possibly choosing Option 3, which would change the shifts to two ten-hour shifts with no snow removal between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 a.m., which is a similar schedule to the Wyoming Department of Transportation's snow plow hours. He stated that he believed the other possible options, including cutting snow routes, would be tantamount to cutting of services and may not be supported by many citizens. Vice Mayor Lutz expressed concern with cutting routes which may affect the ability of citizens to get to school and work. Mr. Rodgers discussed ice melt savings, and stated they are already using a minimum amount to reach desired results. Council gave their thumbs up to support the Option 3 shift change.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the program to dispose of wind turbine blades. He stated that many Councilmembers took advantage of the tour of the landfill to learn about the innovative disposal processes that the City uses. He then introduced Cindy Langston, Solid Waste Division Manager, to discuss the disposal process in more detail. She stated that this is one of the most environmentally-friendly disposal processes for the City, and since the wind turbine disposal program was implemented in May 2019, the City has made \$603K. She explained that the turbines are GPS tracked to allow for repurposing in the future. She also stated that there was an error in the memo for the FY21 revenue which was listed at \$35K but should have been \$158K.

Next, City Attorney Henley discussed citizen suggestions to the Code of Ethics Ordinance, which were initially brought forward during the first reading of the ordinance at last week's regular Council meeting. He summarized some of the changes that were made in the proposed ordinance from the previously adopted ordinance, including a section devoted to conflict of interest and the process for disclosing and abstaining from voting if there is a conflict of interest and a section describing how Councilmembers voting on a matter shall be precluded from taking financial ownership in the matter voted upon for the entirety of time that they are on Council. He stated that the purpose of these additions to the ordinance was to provide more guidance to Council on these issues in order to prevent unnecessary disruptions to the process. He also suggested that Council carefully consider citizen suggestions while understanding that there are legal and practical considerations, such as confidentiality laws, that need to be considered. He then reviewed the suggested citizen amendments, included in the Council packet. Mayor Freel and Vice Mayor Lutz discussed investigations of ethics violations and stated that responses should be required for citizens who bring up issues involving Code of Ethics violations. Councilmember Huber asked

questions regarding the definitions for personal conflicts vs. conflicts of interest focused on personal economic gain. Mayor Freel asked about including business partners in the definition, and City Attorney Henley stated he believed this was already covered with the current wording. Councilmember Huber also asked about the process for reprimanding a Councilmember who broke the Code of Ethics, and City Attorney Henley responded that this would need to take place in a public forum, and that language for this process is included in the ordinance. He added that if there was a law broken, that would handle by the court system. City Manager Napier reminded Council that in order for any citizen suggestion to be brought to the floor during second reading of the ordinance, a Councilmember would need to sponsor it and motion for the amendment to be considered on the floor. He suggested that Councilmembers let City Attorney Henley know of any possible amendments before the second reading, so he can help draft them for the Council packet. Councilmember Huber said he may have an amendment regarding the conflict of interest definition.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Ms. Langston to discuss the addition of a balefill clerk position. Ms. Langston stated that there was the recent loss of a valued employee who was a balefill clerk. She described how the Balefill is very busy and currently operating with mostly part-time clerks who cannot help with many parts of the job. She stated that staff is asking for an additional balefill clerk, which would be in addition to the position that is already open due to the loss of an employee. The new position would be funded out of the balefill enterprise fund, and would not impact the general fund. Council gave their thumbs up to fill this additional balefill clerk position.

Next, Council reviewed the agendas for upcoming regular Council meetings and work sessions. City Manager Napier reminded Council that there is a special meeting on September 29, 2020 to approve easements near Wyoming Medical Center that are urgent due to the sale of the hospital. Councilmember Bates stated that he would like the item on the grid addendum regarding Hogadon to be added to an upcoming work session agenda.

Next, City Manager Napier stated that the Wyoming Association of Municipalities adopted nearly all of Council's recommended resolutions. He stated that he will be discussing possible additional resolutions at an upcoming work session.

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 discussed that the Massage Therapy Ordinance Development Committee met last week and will be meeting again soon to help in the development of a proposed ordinance that will be discussed at the October 13, 2020 work session.

Mayor Freel stated that he has been discussing the pandemic and preventative measures with the Casper-Natrona County Health Department, and asked that citizens wash their hands, social distance, and wear masks in places that require a mask. He also encouraged people to stay home when they are sick and get flu shots this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor