

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue

January 4, 2016

Mayor Joyce Jay called the Study Session to order at 6:31 p.m.

Council members present: Janeece Hoppe, Monica Duran, Kristi Davis, Tim Fitzgerald, George Pond, Genevieve Wooden, and Larry Mathews

Absent: Zachary Urban

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Police Chief, Dan Brennan; Public Works Director, Scott Brink; other staff, guests and interested citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS none

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Staff Reports(s) none

2. 38th Avenue Update ~ Mark Westberg

Mr. Westberg introduced Bob Curry from Britina Design and Kristin Cypher, sub-consultant from C+D Design.

Kristin Cypher from C+B Design outlined the upcoming community engagement plan.

- The purpose of the process is to have the community collaborate on the design for 38th Avenue. The process is called Cre8 Your 38.
- Elements that will be considered at the meetings are sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, parking, signage, and travel modes.
- She's already had one-on-ones with some stakeholders to find out how best to reach the community. These meetings revealed a lack of trust and disappointment on the part of citizens.
- The values expressed by the stakeholders are safety, economic success, affordability, authenticity, gathering places, community building and storytelling.
- She's detected that people are angry and afraid, so the process has been designed to eliminate people's fears about lack of transparency, not listening to what people want, lack of trust in the City, and secret agendas. A lot of information has been put out; everyone has been sent a mailer about the process.
- She stated that concerns about the previous vote [on 2B] being disregarded are fear-based. There were "no" and "yes" votes. We aren't a binary system; it was a pretty close vote. To say the "no" votes were for only one reason isn't fair. People voted "no" for many reasons: road diet, cost, design wasn't "Wheat Ridge",

and not enough information. She also believes the "no" voters were not against everything about improving 38th avenue.

- Public input stations like banners have been put up on the street. She asked Council to urge people to come to the meetings; this is their chance for input.
- There will be three public meetings held on Thursday evenings at the Rec Center.
 - 1) January 14 – to identify and prioritize the streetscape elements
 - 2) February 11 – gather input on polished versions of the top 3 designs
 - 3) March 10 – review and gather input on preferred alternatives
- At the January 14 meeting (the most important meeting!):
 - Information and copies of previous studies (speed, travel times, safety, etc.) will be available.
 - An interactive presentation to show people what a safe sidewalk or safe travel lanes look like.
 - People can sit where they want.
 - Each table of attendees will design a plan.
 - There will be interactive voting.
- Each meeting will be different; interested parties should attend all three.
- There is a Facebook page dedicated to this process.

Questions, comments and discussion followed.

- Information on traffic counts will be available, but the purpose of a road is not solely to move traffic. The relationship between economic success and such things as number of lanes, traffic volume, and width of sidewalk will be presented.
- Both options will be available for design – with or without the road diet.
- Options that are not safe will not be permitted.
- There is a banner at the Active Adult Center.
- Transparency is important, but data should be presented to bust the myths about traffic accidents and law suits.
- A debate about "Main Street" is not part of this project. The goal is to reach consensus on how this Main Street should look, feel, and function.
- The scope is from Harlan to Wadsworth (Phase 1). Phase 2 will move down the street. It is appropriate to look at the entire corridor. There may not be a uniform application all the way, but that will be covered in the March meeting.
- Bus service will be provided from the Active Adult Center. Details are pending.
- The three meetings and exit interviews will be filmed.
- Everyone can present ideas, but reality is that not every idea will make the cut.
- The high school should be contacted to see if any youth want to participate.
- The process and films will be passed on to the City website.
- Kristin's contact information and details about the process are on the City website.

3. Police Staffing Study ~ Chief Brennan

Chief Brennan gave opening remarks about the staffing analysis that was done last year by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).

- The Patrol and Investigations departments were examined.
- Some service delivery decisions have already been made based on this report.
- In 2016 staff will contract with IACP to consult further regarding scheduling recommendations made in the report for Patrol and Investigations.
- Working groups will be formed to explore scheduling options, alternative means of service delivery and other policy recommendations the report provides.

Staff would like direction and approval to begin a multi-year planned approach to authorize the seven positions recommended by the study.

Mitchell Weinzetl (IACP) went through the methodology and recommendations of the analysis.

Throughout the presentation Dr. Weinzetl addressed the importance of community policing and the amount of time personnel must spend with technology – which reduces the amount of time available for patrol or working a case.

Recommendations for Patrol:

- Hire four more patrol staff
- Redirect primary activities of the CATT team (crime and traffic)
- Assign a watch command to all shifts (requires one more position)
- Explore other work schedules to enhance officer availability
- Increase the use of non-sworn personnel to supplement patrol
- Increase the types of incidents handled by the telephone reporting unit
- Consider revising WRPD policy regarding response to property damage collisions
- Institute an ongoing recruitment process to aid continuity of staffing numbers

Recommendations for Investigations:

- Add a Domestic Violence team
- Maintain current staffing levels for the persons team and the property team
- Reduce administrative responsibilities in the case management system
- Create a supervisory position for personnel assigned to WMDTF (drug task force), MATT (auto theft task force), and Vice
- Revise the current work schedule for detectives to coincide with demand and need

Projected outcomes (goals) are:

- Patrol Division – community based policing and positive service delivery
- Investigations Bureau – improved accountability and capacity
- Schedule (for more efficient service delivery)
- Emphasize problem solving practices

Discussion and questions followed.

- 12-hour shifts are not desirable for several reasons (fatigue factor, absenteeism)
- Crime rates can be up or down from year to year, but components continue to be added (Ex: legislative mandates for training of various kinds, mandatory reporting for many more types of offenses, more technological components that take time, longer hiring times). All these elements reduce the amount of time officers have to provide direct service to the community.

- The Chief isn't requesting all the recommendations be approved at this time – just to be able to discuss and study them over the next three years as part of a strategic plan. Law enforcement is expensive; 92% of the police budget is "people", but not all the recommendations are about hiring more people.
- Mr. Goff suggested that if Council wants to continue with community policing, they really need to look at these recommendations.
- Maintaining community policing will depend on revenue and taxes.

There was consensus to have the police department proceed with exploring ways to implement the recommendations of the analysis and come back with more details on timing and costs.

Kristi Davis left the meeting.

4. West Metro and Wheat Ridge Fire Merger/EMS Services ~ Chief Brennan

The Wheat Ridge and West Metro Fire Protection District boards have jointly discussed consolidation of the two districts in 2016. No final decision has been reached. One of the issues is that the consolidated district must provide emergency medical services (EMS) within the boundaries of the district. West Metro provides their own EMS; Wheat Ridge contracts with Rural/Metro for ambulance service. As a result, policy direction from the City is needed.

Present for the discussion were Chief Bob Olme, WRFPD; Chief Don Lombardi, West Metro Fire Rescue; Chief Alan Fletcher, Fairmount Fire; the Arvada Deputy Fire Chief; Jerry Cassel, president of the WRFPD board; and representatives from Rural/Metro and Apex paramedic services.

Chief Bob Olme gave some history of ambulance and fire services in Wheat Ridge and provided positive reasons for the consolidation.

- Without consolidation it would take \$2M to bring fire based EMS to Wheat Ridge.
- Consolidation would provide paramedic engines and station based ambulances imbedded in the community for 911 calls.
- Efficiencies would be created -- immediate better service without huge training costs.
- A joint station would save \$1.6 to \$2M and create better long term financial stability.
- The recommendation for merger calls for the ability to transport for 911 services.

Chief Don Lombardi talked about West Metro Fire Rescue – a merger of the Lakewood and Bancroft districts that happened about 25 years ago.

- They provide fire based EMS, which they believe brings better value for the money and a better level of care.
- Over 2/3 of their uniformed personnel are cross trained for fire and medical services. They provide a depth and continuity of service.
- All their rigs have at least one paramedic on them, often two.
- They don't have to have ambulances at every station; they come as needed.
- If the consolidation is to occur, Wheat Ridge will need to add 2 ambulances to cover Wheat Ridge.
- Advanced life support transports are not covered by property taxes. A charge is made for EMS services and that's how the cost is made up.
- West Metro is very community oriented.

Deputy Chief Mike Piper from Arvada stated they provide EMS and advanced life support services for Wheat Ridge north of Clear Creek. Dave Mitchell, EMS Chief from Arvada, reported they recently added another ambulance to their system. They have determined that for apparatus and personnel the area is immediately coverable by Arvada.

Chief Alan Fletcher said Fairmount currently contracts with Pridemark and does not anticipate any changes. They have an ambulance assigned at the fire station at 47th and Isabel.

Dan Paddock from Rural/Metro reported they are currently in the process of merging with AMR.

Discussion points:

- West Metro's mill levy is a little lower than that of Wheat Ridge. Consolidation would mean the mill levy in Wheat Ridge would go down a little; no additional funding is necessary for the merger.
- Ambulance service doesn't cost anything to the City budget.
- The current contract runs through Dec 31, 2016 and includes a 120-day cancellation provision.
- Exact timing is uncertain; approval by both boards and assurance of the EMS services are necessary for the merger.
- An IGA could be ready in early April.
- Public outreach (town hall meetings) still is yet to happen.
- Lutheran Hospital will not lose business because of this merger. West Metro's destination policy obliges them to *not* bypass hospitals. That was a concern because West Metro's Physician Advisor is based at St. Anthony's Hospital. If anything, Lutheran might actually receive more transfers.

There was consensus to have the City Attorney put together appropriate contract language and ordinances indicating the City's commitment to the merger.

5. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Tim Fitzgerald reported the next meeting for the WR Business District is this Thursday.

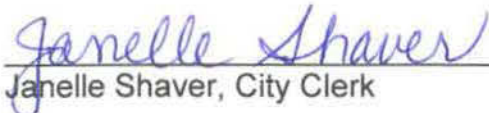
Joyce Jay reported there would be a Metro Mayors Conference this Saturday. ~ 'Coffee with the Mayor' is also this Saturday from 9 -10am at Vinnola's. ~ She noted that the DRCOG website has lots of information. ~ She will be the representative for JEDC.

Janelle Shaver Adding to the Chief's earlier comment that fire/EMS service was a topic of national interest, she shared that she recently completed a very large public information request from the New York Times for data related to our current ambulance service.

Larry Mathews noted that the 38th Avenue meeting in February conflicts with the Smart Growth conference some councilmembers had planned to attend. He announced that he will stay home to attend the 38th Avenue meeting as he feels it is more important.

ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 9:03 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON January 25, 2016



George Pond, Mayor Pro Tem