

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue

February 26, 2018

Upon adjournment of the Regular City Council Meeting

Mayor Bud Starker called the Special Study Session to order at 8:38 p.m.

Council members present: George Pond, Janeece Hoppe, Kristi Davis, Tim Fitzgerald, Zachary Urban, Larry Mathews, Leah Dozeman, Monica Duran

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone (in for City Manager, Patrick Goff); Administrative Services Director, Heather Geyer; other staff, guests and interested citizens.

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Bee Holmgren (Golden) listed reasons why she believes it is important for Wheat Ridge to take part in opposing conversion therapy. She referenced an article by the president of the Colorado Psychological Association. Ms. Holmgren thinks it is cruel, fraudulent, abusive, and endangers and damages the quality of lives. If Council wants a community where members feel a part of the community, she recommends a strong resolution opposing this practice.

Apryl Alexander (Denver), professor of clinical and forensic psychology at DU, testified conversion therapy is an abusive practice used to alter someone's sexual orientation or gender identity. It is not a therapeutic technique. It is ineffective and promotes suicidal ideation and depression. No clinical psychology programs teach it. It is not practiced or recognized in the field, but is still occurring. She advocates for abandoning this practice. She provided copies of an article she had published last year in the *Psychotherapy Bulletin*.

Briana Titone (Arvada), an advocate for the prohibition of conversion therapy, spoke about efforts to communicate with legislators. A bill banning it has been killed three times in committee; it will come to the floor a fourth time. Communities need to be open and inclusive. Edgewater and Westminster have signed proclamations against this. It is a clandestine practice that is harmful to children.

Janet Gund (WR) said her passion is to alleviate trauma for children. She can't imagine anything more traumatic than this.

Elysia Hasselbroek (WR) identified herself as the author of the 8-page handout Council was provided. She wants to represent children who cannot be heard. She told of an attempted suicide last night in Denver that was a result of conversion therapy. This is something people don't know about, so she quickly prepared the handout so

Council could be informed. She said Ohio and Florida banned the practice because kids died. She said this is real, and this is a chance to make a difference – by doing something as simple as passing a proclamation. These parents love their children and want to help them, but they don't know how harmful it is. ~ If Councilmembers have questions, her contact information is provided.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Duran asked that Item 3 be addressed first. The Mayor had no objection.

3. Conversion Therapy Discussion

Councilmember Duran had remarks about the topic and asked Council to pass a resolution banning conversion therapy.

Questions and comments included:

- Staff would be asked to write the resolution.
- Having no knowledge of this issue, would like to hear from the other side before voting on a resolution.
- We should let “throw away” youth know we want them to be safe. This used to be called “straight camp”.
- Edgewater’s proclamation was by their Mayor. A resolution would express the will of the entire Council.
- Does this happens in WR?
- This is a religious practice.
- Dr. Alexander was asked to speak and shared the following:
 - The current bill in the legislature focuses on licensed mental health practitioners. It would not target religious counseling.
 - LGBT reports indicate it is practiced in Colorado in a clandestine manner.
 - Currently, licensed therapists who practice this would be reported and lose their license.
- Can individuals seek this therapy? Dr. Alexander reported this is not an evidence based practice (EBP). It is not a treatment approach that would be referred by a licensed therapist.
- Ms. Hasselbroek clarified the ban would only apply to individuals under 18.

Councilmember Duran received consensus to have staff prepare a resolution banning conversion therapy in Wheat Ridge. The vote was 5-3

Mr. Johnstone asked for clarification on content points for the resolution. Discussion followed.

There was consensus that the resolution reference minors only, and that it include support of a state law banning the practice.

1. Draft 2018 Citizen Survey

Staff presentation

Carley Lorentz gave the staff presentation about the upcoming biannual citizen survey.

- 3,000 randomly selected residents will receive surveys.
- New this year is the option of mailing in the survey or submitting it on-line.
- There will also be an optional on-line survey that anyone can take. The results will be kept separate and aren't scientific, but it allows all residents to participate.
- A copy of the draft survey is in the packet.
- Also new are policy questions on homelessness, Airbnb, ADUs, residential building heights/bulk plane, and environmental sustainability committee topics.
- "Best practice" is for a 5-7 page survey. We are at 7 pages now.
- Lori Urban from the National research Center was present and available for questions.

Discussion followed.

- Those who take the optional on-line survey will not have to give their address.
- Several question on the Airbnb verbiage.
- Will we do public outreach regarding ADU's in 2018? The Mayor announced this will happen with the review of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, and no, no policy change will happen until 2019.
- Discussion about whether or not to include a question about a 25 foot limit on residential building heights.

There was consensus to do the following:

- Move Questions 25 ahead of Questions 24. (Fitzgerald)
- Omit the word "east" before Wheat Ridge in the question about building heights in R1-C and R-3. (Hoppe)
- Change "other areas" to "other zones". (Hoppe)

Discussion continued.

- Councilmembers Hoppe, Fitzgerald, Duran and Davis expressed not wanting to have the non-scientific, on-line survey.
- Councilmember Dozeman asked if they could increase the number of surveys sent out – since the response rate is only 33%? Lori Urban explained why 3,000 is an appropriate number of surveys. The number could be increased, but she said it wasn't necessary.
 - Councilmember Pond saw value in spending money to send out more surveys – to make more people feel like they were being included, but wanted it clear that this would not increase the statistical validity of the survey.
 - Per Lori Urban, 1,500 more surveys would cost \$3,500 - \$4,000. To lower the margin of error by one point would require doubling the number (to 6K).

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- Councilmember Pond asked her to explain the survey design as it relates to benchmarking nationally. Ms. Urban explained:
 - The company uses data from our and other surveys they do to add to the national mix. Wording is shaped so that data is universal (apples to apples).
 - 700 communities are involved nationally. She itemized several specific questions that are benchmarking questions – noting that 70-80 items on our survey can be used for comparison on the national level.
 - There is a custom set of questions they use for communities in the Front Range. 30 Front Range cities are in their database and are used for comparisons. No questions are allowed that compare with fewer than five communities. This allows for comparison to the benchmark ratings.
 - The margin of error compares your city as similar, higher or lower than the benchmark. Analyzing data trends can help the City prioritize its issues.
- Councilmember Urban asked if there was a reason why the terms “Wheat Ridge” and the “City” are interchanged sporadically? He suggested continuity in describing the city itself versus city government.
- Councilmember Urban received an explanation about the order of questions 10 and 11 and 12.
- Councilmember Fitzgerald would like ranking on importance of services. Ms. Urban explained how the overall results will reveal that.
- Councilmember Mathews asked if there is a way to ask about the importance of the rural atmosphere we market? Yes. Councilmember Pond objected to the word “rural”. Ms. Urban suggested they often use the term “small town feel”.
- Councilmember Urban asked how the information from Question 3 will be used to give direction to Council. No answer was offered.

Councilmember Duran received consensus to add “small town feel” to Question 3.

There was discussion about the cost of living and housing and rental rates.

- Councilmember Mathews suggested, in Question 29, asking about citizens’ appetite for funding new things they want. Ms. Lorentz noted that aspect was eliminated due to space; adding it would require removing something else. Ms. Urban advised that is hard without putting a dollar amount on something, but suggested adding the caveat that there may or may not be a direct cost or fee.
- Councilmember Mathews asked to add ADU’s to the list of housing choices at the end under Demographics – because we already have them. Councilmember Hoppe suggested “apartments” adequately covers that.

Councilmember Duran received unanimous consent to add wording in Question 29 about the possibility of direct cost.

- Councilmember Fitzgerald asked why there are questions about water conservation -- when the City does not provide water, and what does “energy efficiency for the community” mean? Ms. Lorentz explained that those questions were adapted from questions provided by the WRESC.

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Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to move forward with the citizen survey as amended. The vote was 7-1.

Mr. Johnstone asked if Council wanted to increase the number of surveys.

Following discussion there was consensus to increase the number of surveys from 3,000 to 4,500 at a cost of approximately \$3,500.

Ms. Lorentz asked for direction about the inclusion of the use of light rail.

Councilmember Urban received consensus to include the choice of commuting to a light rail station in Question 5 – to develop a baseline for future reference.

2. Glass Recycling in Wheat Ridge - Carly Lorentz

Currently, the city has one glass recycling container located behind the Parks maintenance office at 44th & Field. Wheat Ridge residents and businesses can drop off glass bottles and jars for free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Brittany Evans of the company Clear Intentions gave a Power Point presentation. Clear Intentions diverts glass from landfills and processes it into a high-quality crushed glass, which is used in the manufacturing of new glass bottles used by Rocky Mountain Bottling in Wheat Ridge. She passed around samples of crushed glass and glass dust. A new proposal is included in the Council packet.

She gave some facts about glass recycling.

- Glass can be recycled infinitely without adding new material or losing quality.
- It takes less energy to recycle glass than to mine for new materials.
- The glass recycling rate in Colorado is only 1 out of every 100 bottles.
- The main use for recycled glass in Colorado is land fill cover.
- Single stream recycling (using multiple recyclable products) is not good with glass; it ruins the single stream capability and damages equipment.
 - Glass needs to be source separated. This provides less contamination, higher quality and less cost to recycle.
 - Colored glass doesn't matter. Can include bottles, drinkware and food jars. Kitchenware, light bulbs, window glass and ceramics are not acceptable; it is a different kind of glass.
- She went through the Products and End Markets for recycled glass

Clear Intentions is working with businesses for "glass only" recycling. Ms. Evans continued with information specific to Wheat Ridge.

- Glass Stations: Wheat Ridge has the one station. It's a small footprint.
- Cost: 1 time \$100 placement fee per station. \$125/month for weekly service.
- They recommend 6 locations, with 4 stations at each location in the City, placed equally around the City
- Placement: Most successful if bins are in high traffic areas like grocery stores or gas stations.

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- She showed graphs illustrating the importance of outreach and publicity.
- Currently it's on the website and social media.
- Our current location is not a place that people regularly go.

Council discussion focused primarily on the need to do more publicity, having stations in high traffic areas, and having a second station on the east side of town.

There was consensus to move forward with two additional stations.

ADJOURNMENT The Special Study Session adjourned at 10:32 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON March 12, 2018



Tim Fitzgerald, Mayor pro tem