

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue
January 7, 2019

Mayor Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:44 p.m.

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

Absent: Kristi Davis (excused)

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Administrative Services Director, Allison Scheck; other staff and interested citizens.

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

1. Sam Mamet – CML Executive Director

Colorado Municipal League (CML) Executive Director **Sam Mamet** introduced himself. CML, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with 13 employees and an executive board, provides services and resources to assist municipal officials in managing their governments. Sam has been with CML for almost 40 years, and has been Executive Director since 2005. He will be retiring at the end of March.

- He reminisced about his close relationship with Mayor Hank Stites. In his early years with the League the offices were located at 48th & Wadsworth, and he and Hank had many good talks. He also saluted the many accomplishments the City has made over the years.
- He expounded on the three main duties of CML: train, inform and lobby.
- He listed some issues that will be addressed by the legislature this session: TABOR; funding for infrastructure; local regulation of oil and gas; water issues related to the compact with Arizona, Nevada and California; and sports betting.

Comments and questions followed.

Clerk Shaver wanted Council to know that our Deputy Clerk, Robin Eaton, had recently done a webinar for CML about liquor licensing for City Clerks. He was told it had the highest participation ever for any CML webinars. Mr. Mamet confirmed that participation was “off the charts”, and thanked Robin for his work on that.

2. City Council Candidate District I Presentation

Sam Mamet drew the names of the candidates to determine their order of speaking. The candidates each made a presentation which was followed by a few questions from the Council.

Anne Brinkman highlighted the many ways she has been involved in Wheat Ridge for the past 25 years – not only as a member of the Planning Commission and several special committees but also as a citizen participant in numerous projects and events. She works as a project manager. Three issues she cares about are smart growth, ensuring we receive adequate funding for maintenance of infrastructure, and improving opportunities for tax revenue.

Jahi Simbari is an aerospace engineer and the dean of graduate studies at CO School of Mines. He lived in Edgewater for 13 years before he and his wife moved here 5 years ago. He appreciates what is happening to housing prices in the area. He discussed And vs Or; he is a problem solver and likes to find alternative solutions. His goals are to listen – to citizens and other councilors, learn about the issues, and lead.

David Kueter has lived here 13 years. He believes in balance and thinks problems don't stop at the city border. Three areas that interest him are transit (public transit and pedestrian issues), land use issues, and resource allocation. He's been an attorney for 20 years - primarily in water law. He is concerned about land conservation in the face of increasing development. He feels he can hit the ground running as he has experience working with governments. He thinks it's important to balance perspectives.

3. TRAX Finance Agreement/Ward TOD Update - Ken Johnstone

The 2E bond money, approved by the voters in November, 2016, provides \$12,000,000 in funding for a number of public infrastructure projects that are intended to facilitate and catalyze private sector investment in the area surrounding the G Line station area.

Mr. Johnstone highlighted the history of the planning and vision for the TOD area and went through the list of projects that were proposed in June 2018.

- Local streets: up to \$8M
- Pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks: \$1.5M to \$4M
- Linear Park: up to \$5M
- Regional Park: up to \$5M
- Ward Road (state highway): up to \$2M

Some things have changed since June that staff believes are appropriate for use of 2E funds.

- Partnerships with owners of the pond properties have not yet emerged – on hold
- The TRAX housing project has evolved and funding gaps have been identified (parking structure)
- The Hance Townhome project has identified additional drainage and utility costs.
- The pedestrian bridge and linear park designs appear feasible.
- Ward Road grade separation is not a regional priority.

Staff's current recommendations for funding priorities are:

- Professional services (design, development review, ROW consultant, construction management, etc.) - \$2.5M
- ROW acquisition - \$725,000
- Construction projects - \$8M
- Total – \$11M

Construction project include

- Hance Ranch utility/drainage - \$243K
- 52nd (City portion) - \$1.2M
- Tabor \$800K
- Ridge \$1M
- Linear park \$512K
- Pedestrian Bridge \$3M
- TRAX housing project - \$1.2M

TRAX is a 2.2 acre site with proposed 220 market rate multifamily units. It will have a rooftop pool and other amenities. Structured parking will allow the developers to achieve higher density. The project will not make financial sense without public participation. It is proposed by staff to spend \$1.2M of 2E funds for this \$54M project. Urban Renewal is also working on a \$6.7M+ property tax TIF for the developers as their funding gap is \$9.5 M.

Staff requests two things from Council

- approval of the list of proposed 2E funded projects
- direction in financial assistance for the TRAX multifamily project

Questions and discussion followed.

Councilmember Pond questioned if \$500K is enough for the linear park. Mr. Johnstone said the park will be 30 feet wide and have a crusher fine trail, a paved bicycle path and periodic gathering places. Mr. Johnstone gave reasons why staff believes the land owners will donate the land for the park.

Councilmember Mathews expressed concern that we might be overbuilding with residential for the roads that are/will be available. Mr. Johnstone doesn't think so.

Parking spaces for the TRAX project are proposed at 1.5 spaces per unit; it will likely *not* be underground parking.

There was lengthy discussion about whether funding a parking structure for a private housing project (TRAX) is contrary to what the voters were told the 2E money would be spent on.

Councilmember Hoppe received unanimous consent to get a legal opinion on whether the ballot wording allows 2E monies to be spent on private projects.

Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to support using \$1.2M of 2E money for the TRAX project. The vote was 4-2.

Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to approve the rest of the project list. The vote was 4-2.

4. Staff Report(s)

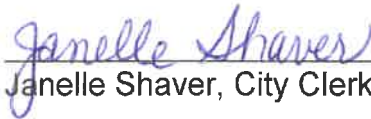
Mr. Goff had two items.

- 1) He introduced Allie Scheck, the new Director of Administrative Services.
- 2) Jerry DiTullio asked that he remind Council his resignation is effective at midnight. He has offered to provide guidance for the new treasurer if asked.

5. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Janeece Hoppe announced that the January 28 Council meeting will be followed by a special study session.

ADJOURNMENT: The Study Session adjourned at 9:12 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON January 28, 2019



Janeece Hoppe, Mayor pro tem