

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue
May 20, 2019

Mayor Bud Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

Council members present: George Pond, David Kueter, Kristi Davis, Larry Mathews, and Leah Dozeman

Absent: Zachary Urban (excused) and Janeece Hoppe (excused)

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Parks and Recreation Director, Joyce Manwaring; guests and interested citizens.

Citizen Comment on Agenda Items none

1. Jefferson County Financial Update - County Treasurer Jerry DiTullio & County Commissioner Casey Tighe

Mr. DiTullio and Mr. Tighe gave a power point informing what the County services are.

- They are reaching out to the various jurisdiction and citizens to provide education.
- New statewide policy: The County Treasurer is now also the Public Trustee.
- A group called Jeffco Prosperity Partners helps parents increase their income and get off of County services.
- Property taxes go to: School District 50%, County 24%, 21% Special Districts 21%, Cities 3%, Urban Renewal 2%.
- Of the County's funds 60% go to safety, 26% stewardship, 8% health and well-being.
- Money for infrastructure projects can't be moved around.
- In 2014 a decision was made to increase salaries for law enforcement, attorneys, and some others because we were losing employees. Starting in 2016 expenses started to exceed revenues. We have \$28M in savings, but don't want to dip into that anymore.
- May have a ballot measure this fall to increase mill levy.
- The County hasn't ever de-Bruced, so it can't keep revenue that is collected. (Examples: County can't keep extra revenue from permits from the hail storm. State grants and interest income all applies to the TABOR cap.)
- Jefferson County is working to trim its budget by \$16.1 million in the next year to balance the budget and maintain an appropriate reserve fund.
- All offices, departments and divisions whose budgets are impacted by the General Fund are being required to trim their budgets by 7% for 2020.

There was brief discussion about metropolitan districts.

2. Update on Artspace Proposal – Diane Robb

The Cultural Commission had been asked by the City Council to investigate the Artspace Proposal with the community to assess the moral and financial support for the project and report back to City Council at a future meeting.

Diane Robb, chair of the Cultural Commission, reported to the Council.

- She explained that Artspace is a non-profit developer that helps communities identify effective, affordable ways to incorporate the arts into their civic agendas.
- She summarized the Commission's outreach to artists, realtors, commercial and residential folks, business and property owners and the community in general, along with people who have had direct involvement with Artspace. Interest and support from the community was tremendous.
- A core committee of diverse individuals has been formed of people who support the Artspace concept – which is to create, foster and preserve affordable space for artists and art organizations.
- The first step would be a Preliminary Feasibility Study by Artspace that would provide comprehensive feedback about the feasibility of creating and sustaining a live/work, multi-use, or other arts facility development. Areas of consideration would include:
 1. Project concept
 2. Arts Market
 3. Local Leadership
 4. Funding and Finance
 5. Potential Sites
 6. Alignment with Community Goals

Guy Nahmiach (WR), a realtor by trade, spoke on the importance of art to the economics of the community.

A short Youtube video was shown in which local art teacher Melinda Stewart, who has a home studio, spoke on how art builds community.

Margaret Richards (WR), daughter of and spouse of an artist and mother of two teenagers, spoke in support of investment in the community. Serving on the NRS committee she learned that citizens want investment in the community, in the main corridors. She thinks the Feasibility Study would be a good first step.

Christa Lewis, executive director of Localworks, expressed her group's support for the Feasibility Study. It fits with the goals of Localworks.

Anthony Palumbo, commercial realtor and board member of Localworks, loves to give back to his community and is excited about the prospect of an art space in Wheat Ridge. He shared a positive experience he had with an art space development in his home town of Buffalo, New York. The board of Localworks has voted unanimously to

commit \$12,500 to the Feasibility Study – half of the cost of the study, as a way to invest in our community.

Dianne Robb asked Council to approve the remaining \$12,500 from the City to fund the Feasibility Study. Total cost for the study is \$25,000. Artspace is a known entity with a long history of success in developing, owning and operating arts facilities.

Discussion followed.

- Suggest talking to the Swiss Flower folks about their art arrangement with their TIF.
- Part of the feasibility study includes long term sustainability. When Artspace does a development they maintain ownership and sustainability.
- Councilmember Weaver had experience with Artspace in her hometown. It was a smaller town with conditions similar to Wheat Ridge and was not successful. Artspace ended up having to come back to the city for more funds. Ms. Robb reported they specifically discussed that issue of “small town” with Artspace. They do work with smaller cities and are currently doing a project with Trinidad.
- Artspace will be cognizant of regional considerations.
- If a contract with Artspace is done, they will provide a large packet of questions so information can be available for them when they arrive. The homework will be already done.
- Artspace would own the facility and rent out spaces.
- Artspace is headquartered in Minneapolis, but they have a full time employee in the Denver area.
- Other than the six areas of consideration, no line item of costs or hours was available for the \$25K.
- Ms. Robb outlined what is done in the three days that Artspace would be here. They would produce a report with recommendations.
- Councilmember Pond noted there are risks with the study, but there will be value in whatever is learned from it – even if nothing viable is produced.
- Councilmember Weaver had concerns about the feasibility study being done by the same entity that would be the investor, and wondered if the conclusion is ever negative. Ms. Robb said she knows sometimes that happens, but the information gained will still be valuable. Lakewood is an example of that.
- **Miller Nadler** from the Cultural Committee said Artspace isn't the sole developer; they try to partner with local developers.

Councilmember Pond received consensus to commit \$12,500 to proceed with a contract with Artspace for a Preliminary Feasibility Study – with additional information and studies from Artspace.

3. City Facility Rental Fee for Nonprofits – Joyce Manwaring

Ms. Manwaring referenced the memo in the packet addressing the practice of NOT offering discounts for non-profits. The City does offer a variety of rental spaces with a

range of fees. For example, the Rec Center is the most expensive facility to rent; the Active Adult Center is much less. Four options for action were provided.

Discussion followed.

There was unanimous consent to continue to implement best management practices and maintain the ability to rent and implement fee policy consistently to all groups.

4. Staff Reports

Ms, Manwaring announced that the Anderson Pool would be opening this Saturday.


5. Elected Officials Reports

The Mayor reminded everyone there would be no meeting next week due to Memorial Day.

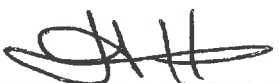
ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 8:00pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON JULY 22, 2019



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk



Janece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem