

**STUDY SESSION NOTES**  
**CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**  
**City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
**September 16, 2019**

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

Council members present: Amanda Weaver, George Pond, Janeece Hoppe, David Kueter, Zachary Urban, Kristi Davis (arrived late), Larry Mathews, and Leah Dozeman

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Karen O'Donnell, Parks Director; Acting Police Chief, Dave Pickett; Allison Scheck, Administrative Services Director; Steve Nguyen and Greg Knudson, Acting Public Works Directors; City Treasurer, Chris Miller; other staff and interested citizens.

Citizen Comment on Agenda Items

**Vivian Vos** (WR) said she read the budget and encouraged citizens to read it. She has a concern about development of The Green. It's a want, not a need. \$900,000+ dollars and we don't even own the property. She thinks a letter of agreement with the school district should be posted on the website. She doesn't think it's right to spend citizens' money on this; we have greater needs.

**Jan Rose** (WR) volunteers for several organizations. She is working on the County's climate action plan, and others. She disagrees with the previous speaker. She wants staff to address sustainability. People with solar panels didn't have to have their roofs replaced; she would like to see solar panels on City Hall. The Environmental Sustainability plan is excellent. People can get solar panels installed for free and get state income credit. She thinks there should be a charging station in front of City Hall.

**Janelle Shaver** (WR) talked about the citywide problem of rats and encouraged the Council to budget some money for mitigation. They're in every district and it's a bad problem that's getting worse. People are not happy.

1. Presentation of 2020 Proposed Budget – Patrick Goff

Note: The complete 2020 Proposed Budget is available at

<https://co-wheatridge3.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/30828/2020-Proposed-Budget>

Mr. Goff introduced the budget team: Marianne Schilling (Admin), Susan Anderson (Parks), Zach Lovato (Parks), Steve Nguyen (Public Works), Greg Knudson (Public works), Kristen Armstrong (Court), Allison Scheck (Admin), Dave Pickett (PD), Karen O'Donnell (Parks).

Mr. Goff and the department heads went through the budget power point presentation.

### Structure

- General Fund is the day to day operating budget. (51%)
- Special Funds – Public Art, Police Investigations, Open Space, Municipal Court, Conservation Trust Fund, Equipment Replacement, and Crime Prevention
- CIP is the Capital Improvement Fund (24%)
- 2E bond fund (20%)
- Rec Center Fund – proposed to be eliminated. Combined with general fund

### Revenue

- Projected General Fund revenues are just under \$40M.
- Beginning Fund balance is \$13.2M.
- This \$53M available funds for 2020 is about a 10% increase in year-end estimated revenues. (4% w/o the Rec Center revenue)
- Unrestricted Fund Balance at the end of 2019 is projected to be 30.6%
- Revenue will be 55% from sales tax, 14% use tax, 10% services, 7% other taxes, 5% licenses, 4% intergovernmental, 2% property tax, 1% each 'other', interest, fines
- Property tax provides \$1M out of the \$40M in revenue.
- Revenues have increased every year since 2013.
- 2020 expenditures expected to increase 7.5% increase
  - Proposed to have an ending fund balance of \$10M
  - Unrestricted fund balance of \$7.5M (19.2%)

### Expenditures

Will be proportioned a little differently this year. Police is more.

- Police 30%
- Parks 20%
- Public Works 13%
- Admin Services 11%
- Central Charges 8%
- General Government 10%
- Community Development 5%,
- Court 3%

Financial Health – expenditures will be up from 2019.

- 2019 - \$733K for TIF, \$1.6M for hailstorm repairs
- 2020 - \$1.1M for TIF
- Expenditures increased every year since 2015. But.....

- We usually spend about \$1.0M less than budgeted.
- We have increased 18.11 FTE during that time.
- There have been increased economic development activities.

## 2E Funds

- Reimbursements from Arvada on 52nd avenue.
- Only 2 projects left – Gold Line Station 54% and Wads 23%, plus 23% debt payment of \$3.4M
- \$10M earmarked for ramps for Clear Creek Crossing. Going slow. No expenditures budgeted for 2020; may go into 2021. May advance hook ramp balance (\$6M +/-) to Longs Peak Metro District until they float the bonds

### Wadsworth Project -- Steve Nguyen

\$3.5 for Wadsworth widening

### Ward G Line Station -- Ken Johnstone

\$8M for Ped bridge, trail, 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Ridge Road, plaza area, and other minor road improvements

### **CIP Budget** – Steve Nguyen

We are spending more on Capital Improvements in 2020

- \$14.1M for Wadsworth widening (largest expense; 77% of the CIP)
- \$1.8M for preventative street maintenance
- \$830,000 street improvements - 38<sup>th</sup> and Kipling
- \$410K bridge maintenance – Youngfield
- \$280 drainage improvement - 26<sup>th</sup> & Fenton
- \$150K gateway signage (on Sheridan and two locations on west side of town)
- \$107K City Hall Improvements
- \$110K sidewalk improvements (Marshall St to Clear Creek Trail)
- \$100K street striping maintenance.

Allison Scheck went through the security improvements for City Hall

- \$100K traffic signal master plan
- \$85K aerial photography/GIS updates
- \$75K Clear Creek Crossing
- \$50K ADA improvements
- \$35K Neighborhood Traffic Management Program
- \$25K Clear Creek Master Plan update
- \$25K Neighborhood street light program
- \$20K City Hall parking lot maintenance
- \$15K Anderson Building Workstation

Karen O'Donnell highlighted design elements of the project. The wasn't budgeted wasn't budgeted in the remodeling done with 2E funds.

2021 and beyond

- Projected \$3M transfer from the General Fund every year.
- \$2-3M annual street maintenance
- \$19M for Wadsworth reconstruction project through 2022
- Other annual projects to fund:
  - Drainage
  - Bike/Ped improvements
  - ADA improvements
  - Street lights
  - Bridge maintenance
  - NTMP
  - Preventative street maintenance

**Major Special Funds - Karen O'Donnell****Open Space Fund (\$3.1M available)**

- \$900K for development of "The Green"
- \$500K trail maintenance and repair
- \$100K Open Space master plan
- \$25K Open Space improvements (ditch)
- \$25K small parks maintenance projects

**Conservation Trust Fund (\$864K available)**

- \$500K for Prospect Park Phase II
- \$175 Rec Center maintenance projects
- \$100 New playground at Bonnie's Park
- \$36K Resurfacing tennis courts

The Rec Center Fund was established when the Rec Center was built. All funds have been spent. At the end of 2019 this fund will be in the red. Recommend eliminating this fund and just using the General Fund.

**Strategic Priorities****Economic Development**

- \$300,000 - Urban renewal funding
- \$1.1 M - Tax Increment Financing (TIFs)
- \$180,000 - Public Events (Localworks)
- \$41,500 - Live Local events (Localworks)
- \$50,000 - Building up Business Loan Program - (Localworks)
- \$90,000 - Wheat Ridge Business District grant program

**City Functions**

- \$70K Security initiatives (security guard and armored bank services)
- \$58K New and upgraded security cameras
- \$40K Citizen survey
- \$19.2 Online public hearing software (10/7 SS)
- \$83.8K Historic building management and maintenance
- \$15,000 - Police Department wellness and resiliency

- \$5,000 - Large-item pickup program

#### External Agency Contributions

- \$33K TLC Program (Localworks)
- \$100K Carnation Festival
- \$27K Staff overtime and barricades for Carnation Festival
- \$134K Outside Agency Program

#### **2020 Fleet Replacement** - Greg Knudson/Dave Pickett

- Complies with council guidelines based on age and mileage/hours of the unit
- \$815K includes new snow plow, backhoe, SWAT transfer van, and 8 replacement vehicles
- Integrating sustainable practices = 1 electric vehicle and 4 hybrid vehicles
- \$1.9M in vehicle replacement identified for 2021-2023
- Grant received for electric charging station at Rec Center

#### Staffing and benefits – Allison Scheck, Ken Johnstone, Marianne Schilling

##### Adding 2.75 new FTEs

- 1.0 FTE Neighborhood Engagement Specialist (Comm Dev)
- 0.75 FTE Landscape Inspection Program Manager (Comm Dev)
- 0.5 FTE Payroll Technician (Admin Services)
- 0.5 FTE Homeless Navigator (comes from the Crime Prevention Fund)

#### Employee benefit highlights – Allison Scheck

- Year 8 of Pay-for-Performance Plan
  - \$830K budgeted for performance and market adjustment
- 0.5% pension increase for sworn employees
- Medical Benefits – 4.6% premium increase expected in 2020 (no increase last year)
- Worker's Comp moving to Pinnacol Assurance (from CIRSA). Will save money and improve service to injured workers.

#### Council Questions

- Mr. Goff explained why the decision was made to not increase employee premiums for health coverage.
- There was discussion about finding more options than Kaiser.

#### Short-term fiscal opportunities - Patrick Goff

- The Corners, Clear Creek Crossing, Ward Station, Kipling Ridge, West End 38, Applewood Shopping Center, Multi-family/townhome development

#### Short-term fiscal challenges - Patrick Goff

- Sales Tax – recession predicted for second half of 2020
- Projecting only modest growth of 1.5% increase in sales tax revenue in 2020

Long term fiscal challenges - Patrick Goff

- Will there be a recession? How much of an impact and how long?
- The peak time for development in Wheat Ridge may have already passed.
- CIP funding gap – lack of sustainable long-term funding source for capital projects.
- Continued dependence on transfers from the Gen Fund -- \$2.5M to \$3.5M each year
- Rec Center long term maintenance will be dependent on the General Fund
- Inadequacies of municipal facilities – age, safety, and size

Adoption of the budget is scheduled for October 14.

Discussion followed.

- Will County budget problems have an effect on services for WR?  
Yes: Jail services, probation services
- \$40K for Homeless Navigator. Will work in collaboration with County services and agencies. This is still a work in progress with County, cities, and non-profits. Lutheran Foundation is setting aside funding for related services.
- Discussion about adding a 0.5 FTE sustainability coordinator for 2020. Mr. Goff suggested waiting.
- Should encourage developments to include charging stations. We don't know how much the charging station at Fruitdale is being used.
- The school district is well aware of The Green project, and is pleased with it. They're doing a similar arrangement with a school in Arvada.
- The improvements at 38<sup>th</sup> & Kipling are to accommodate additional traffic from 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. Data about I-70 & Kipling is still not available.

Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to add an additional 0.5 FTE for a Sustainability Coordinator. The vote was 5-3.

There was consensus to move the budget forward to the next step.

2. Staff Report(s) none

3. Elected Officials' Report(s)

**Leah Dozeman** thanked the City and community for the Farmer 5000.

**Janeece Hoppe** thanked staff for all their hard work and thanked the Council for suffering through the extra study sessions recently.

**Zachary Urban** announced the Candidate Forum will be on Sept 24 from 6-9pm in Council Chambers.

**David Kueter** announced the TLC dumpster will be at the Congregational Church on 29<sup>th</sup> this Saturday. Access from the west.

**Amanda Weaver** thanked the City. She noted her goats are back up.


**Mr. Goff** mentioned the Police Chief recruitment process. The community is invited to a forum at the Rec Center this Wednesday at 6:30 to come and offer input about what they would like to see in a Police Chief.

**Mayor Starker** thanked all the staff for their work on the budget.

### ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 8:40 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON October 28, 2019

  
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Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

  
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Janece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem