

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Virtual Session
July 6, 2020

Mayor Bud Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:31 p.m.

This meeting was conducted as a VIRTUAL MEETING.

No members of the Council or City staff were physically present at the Municipal building for this meeting. The public could attend in person appearing in Council Chambers (with arrangements made in advance), or participate in the meeting virtually (via the Zoom platform), or by calling in on the telephone.

Note about attending:

Those persons may contact Danitza Sosa, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor and Council, at 303-235-2977 or via email (dsosa@ci.wheatridge.co.us) by noon on the day of the meeting. Where arrangements can be made to access City Hall during the meeting, either to view the meeting, to provide public comment, citizens will be admitted to Council Chambers. Those individuals accessing City Hall must practice social distancing, wear a mask or other facial covering and be free of COVID-19 symptoms.

Mayor Starker welcomed the Council, other elected officials, staff and interested citizens.

The Mayor also explained the virtual meeting format, how citizens will have the opportunity to be heard, and the procedures and policies to be followed.

Council members were all present: Amanda Weaver, Judy Hutchinson, Zach Urban, Janeece Hoppe, Rachel Hultin, Korey Stites, Valerie Nosler Beck, and Leah Dozeman.

Also present: City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Treasurer, Chris Miller; City Manager Patrick Goff; City Attorney Jerry Dahl; Director of Parks and Recreation, Karen O'Donnell; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Director of Public Works, Greg Knudson; Director of Administration Allison Scheck; Assistant to the City Manager, Marianne Schilling, Police Department Chief, Chris Murtha and Division Chief, Jim Lorenz; Cheryl Brungardt and Christine Disney with the Wheat Ridge Outside Agency Program; guests and interested citizens.

Citizens' Right to Speak

No one came forward to speak.

Note about Wheat Ridge Speaks:

Citizens may visit the Wheat Ridge Speaks website and enter written comments of up to 1,000 words on any Council agenda item. The deadline for citizens to

submit comments is 12:00 Noon Mountain Time on the day of a Council session so that Council members, other elected officials and City Staff have time to review the comments before the meeting on Monday evening.

The City Clerk's Office transcribes those Wheat Ridge Speaks comments into these minutes, placing each comment along with the record for that agenda item, including items that include a public hearing (verbatim, if the comments do not contain lascivious language or unlawful hate speech).

No comments appeared in Wheat Ridge Speaks for this meeting.

1. Outside Agency Committee recommendations

Discussion began at 6:33 pm, approximately 0:03 minutes into the recording of the session

Item: City Council created the Outside Agency Program Review Committee in June 2016 to review outside agency applications and present recommendations to City Council on the funding amounts each organization should receive. The purpose of creating this committee was to provide an additional opportunity for residents to participate in the budget process, and to give the committee members the opportunity to weigh community needs against available resources and provide recommendations to City Council.

Staff (Marianne Schilling, Assistant to the City Manager) introduced two member of the Outside Agencies Program Committee for their report to Council.

Committee members Cheryl Brungardt (District I) and Kristine Disney (District II) recapped the process, described the key patterns of funding gaps for outside agencies and presented the committee's recommendations.

These included:

- The committee reviewed applications and listened to presentations from 25 different community organizations, totaling \$171,000 in requests. The original request was \$186,000; however the Seniors Resource Center reduced their request from \$30,000 to \$15,000 during the Committee review process. This resulted in an overall reduction in funding requests of \$12,800 compared to last year.
- Four new applications were received for the 2021 Outside Agency Program. Two have applied and been awarded funding in previous years (Friends of Paha and Farmers 5000) and two are new applicants to the program (Wheat Ridge Grange and Applewood Community Foundation).
- The review committee is recommending granting \$133,800 to outside agencies in the 2021 budget. This is the same amount recommended as last year. The recommended budget will be distributed between 25 agencies, with the highest year over year increase for an existing applicant at \$2,800 for Family Tree.

Councilmembers had questions and comments for the Committee member and staff: Who set the overall budget allocation figure for this Program? City staff did during the normal budgeting process.

Several Councilmembers profusely thanked the members of the Committee for their work.

Did the application process include asking how much of their overall budget the applicant's request represents? Ms. Disney responded that in some instances the grants support operating budgets and in many cases the application is to fund a specific project. Those requests for specific purposes are then earmarked for a specific project.

Are these applicants looking at multiple sources of funding, or are they entirely or mostly dependent on the OAP for operating funds? The answer was that it varies, and this year the variability is greater than usual because CoVid-19 has increased demands for their services; in some cases vastly increased demand.

Is this budget eligible for CARES Act funding? No, because the Act funds expenses for 2020 only and this report addresses recommendations for the 2021 fiscal and calendar year budget.

Do we know what our budget for 2021 will look like at this point? Mr. Goff emphasized that it is too soon, that we have too little data to be sure, and that to date the picture looks much better than some of the early, dire predictions.

2. Strategic Plan Update

Discussion began at 6:52 pm, approximately 0:22 minutes into the recording of the session.

Item: The Mayor, City Council and staff work together periodically to develop and update a strategic plan that includes a vision, goals and strategic priorities. The following vision statement was last updated in 2017:

Wheat Ridge is an attractive and inviting city and community for families. Wheat Ridge has great neighborhoods, is a hub of commerce with a choice of economically viable commercial areas, and has diverse transportation. Wheat Ridge is committed to environmental stewardship and its residents enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle and are proud of their hometown.

The vision statement includes the following eight vision topics from which goals and strategic priorities are developed and updated on a regular basis.

Vision Topics Include:

1. Wheat Ridge is an attractive and inviting City
2. Wheat Ridge is a community for families
3. Wheat Ridge has great neighborhoods
4. Wheat Ridge has a choice of economically viable commercial areas

5. Wheat Ridge has diverse transportation
6. Wheat Ridge is committed to environmental stewardship
7. Wheat Ridge residents enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle
8. Wheat Ridge residents are proud of their hometown

Mr. Goff provided a presentation updating City Council on the status of the current strategic plan as well as the department accomplishments from 2018 and 2019 and department work plans for 2020 and 2021. He and department directors provided Council with a review of progress and plans for all 8 vision topic statements, which encompass 47 strategy statements in the Plan.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

Councilmembers asked a number of detailed questions about specific strategic initiatives and progress toward implementing them.

Council noted that all strategic initiatives for Vision Topic 6, Environmental Stewardship, have been completed in a short timeframe. Does Council need to revisit this topic and determine next steps? Further discussion will follow.

Councilmembers thanked the staff, specifically department heads, for their excellent accomplishments per the Plan. Council is very pleased with the progress reported tonight.

February 19-20, 2021 the Council is scheduled to hold the postponed Strategic Planning Retreat, public health orders allowing.

3. Staff Report(s)

Discussion began at 8:22 pm, approximately 1:52 hours into the recording of the session

Mr. Goff had no further items.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Discussion of this item began at approximately 8:23 PM.

Councilmember Nosler Beck explained why she had to step away from tonight's virtual meeting, to assist a neighbor who had fallen and injured themselves near her home. She was grateful to the first responders who came so quickly and handled the situation so expertly; made her proud to live in Wheat Ridge.

Councilmember Hutchinson thanked the Wang developer for cleaning up an overgrown lot on 38th Ave.

Councilmember Urban reported on the Federal Payroll Protection Program applications and receipts in Wheat Ridge.

Councilmember Hultin lauded the Parks and Recreation staff for their excellent work and interactions with residents during her recent participation in events offered by Parks and Rec.

Councilmember Hutchinson asked where people have been buying the amazing number of fireworks we heard and saw on July 4th. (Illegally in Colorado and out of state, was the answer.) Chief Murtha and Mr. Goff noted the dramatic increase in both calls to police to complain about fireworks and the spike in the numbers of fireworks compared to previous years.


Coffee with the Mayor will convene this Saturday at 9 AM, virtually, for an hour.

The Mayor also thanked the residents for their hard work and continuing efforts to combat coronavirus. He once again predicted we will come through the current pandemic stronger than ever.


ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 8:30 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON July 13, 2020.



Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



Janeece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem