

**STUDY SESSION NOTES**  
**CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**October 19, 2020**

Mayor Bud Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:30 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 did not attend in person.

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 present: Amanda Weaver, Judy Hutchinson, Zach Urban, Rachel Hultin, Korey Stites, Valerie Nosler Beck, and Leah Dozeman. Councilmember Hoppe was ill.

Also present: City Attorneys Jerry Dahl and Jeff Wilson; City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Manager Patrick Goff; Director of Administration Allison Scheck; Chief of Police Chris Murtha; Commander Patrol Operations Division, Shellie Salzer; Municipal Judge Christopher Randall, Stephen Geisler, guests and interested citizens.

Citizen Comment on Agenda Items –

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 session of Council.

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## **1. Staff Report(s)**

Discussion began at 6:32 pm, approximately 0:02 minutes into the recording of the session.

### **(a.) Cordico Wellness Grant application**

Mr. Goff brought this item forward and introduced Commander of Patrol Operations Division, Shellie Salser who relayed the issue:

Employee wellness is a crucial focus as law enforcement is under ever increasing amounts of stress and pressure. Wheat Ridge Police Department (WRPD) has made employee wellness a top priority and has the opportunity to pursue a grant to support employee wellness through the State of Colorado under the DOLA - Peace Officers Mental Health Grant. This grant will allow WRPD to provide a wellness app (smartphone app) that can provide in-hand, on-demand, easy to access wellness tools and resources.

As part of the grant application process, DOLA requires the application to “provide the date the city/town/county board, council or trustees authorized the submittal of the grant application.”

A lengthy and detailed presentation followed, during which Mr. Goff and Commander Salser presented the details and purposes, some of which included:

- On-scene response services to support peace officers' handling of persons with mental health disorders
- Counseling services to peace officers
- Assistance for development and implementation of policies to support peace officers who are involved in shootings or a fatal use of force
- Training and education programs that teach the symptoms of job-related mental trauma and how to prevent and treat such trauma
- Peer support programs

Other, similar apps have been researched and none offer the same benefits as this app. WRPD Chaplain Scott Moore has gone to great lengths in this process and his research has shown this app is the best fit for WRPD.

### **Councilmembers had questions and comments:**

Council asked about confidentiality of the interactions with the app or with mental health professionals the app helps staff to access. Strict confidentiality is maintained, under law and mental health professional ethics.

Councilmember asked for a consensus to move forward with this grant application. Consensus attained. (Commander Salzer and Mr. Goff explained that no formal vote of Council is necessary.)

Councilmember Nosler Beck asked for a consensus to instruct staff to support the application for the Peace Officers Mental Health Grant to acquire the Cordico Shield Wellness smartphone app.

Consensus attained.

## **2. Ordinances addressing the unlawful removal of notices, no trespassing on private and public land and pedestrian safety along roadways**

Discussion began at 6:43 pm, approximately 0:13 minutes into the recording of the session.

Mr. Goff brought this item forward and introduced City Attorney Gerald Dahl who stated that staff had researched ordinances from other communities and concluded that they would bring 3 proposed ordinances for City Council's consideration:

1. Ordinance concerning trespassing
2. Ordinance concerning unlawful removal of notices
3. Ordinance concerning pedestrians hindering the flow of traffic and pedestrian use of roadway center medians

Mr. Goff gave a detailed explanation of the three proposed ordinances and how the three interact, compliment and supplement each other.

### **Councilmembers had questions and comments:**

Councilmembers asked a number of questions about the impact of the proposed ordinances on pedestrians, those experiencing homelessness, business owners and homeowners.

Councilmember asked for a consensus for council to direct staff to bring to Council ordinances with respect to all three of these proposed actions and addressing the concerns presented tonight by Councilmembers.

Councilmember Hultin recommended removing section 1 of the proposed trespassing ordinance and consider it as a separate issue later. Consensus amended thusly.

Consensus attained.

## **3. Ordinance establishing local system for reviewing campaign finance complaints**

Discussion began at 7:50 pm, approximately 1:20 hours into the recording of the session.

City Attorney Gerald Dahl brought this item forward where the draft ordinance substantially revises and updates the City's process for reviewing and conducting hearings on complaints alleging violation of the campaign finance laws in City elections.

Prior to 2019, complaints alleging violations of Art XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution or the State Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA) in municipal elections were filed with the Secretary of State. During its 2019 regular session, the Colorado General Assembly enacted SB19-232, which changed this process, providing instead that "any complaint arising out of a municipal campaign finance matter must be exclusively filed with the clerk of the ...municipality."

The passage of SB19-232 has resulted in municipalities across Colorado adopting local complaint procedures, in order to address campaign finance complaints that may arise in their local elections. Many of these ordinances adopt a procedure similar to that set forth by the General Assembly in SB19-232 for processing such complaints in State elections.

**Councilmembers had questions and comments:**

Councilmember Urban asked for a consensus to direct staff to bring to Council this ordinance concerning campaign finance violations for consideration at a future Council Meeting.

Consensus attained.

**4. Elected Officials' Report(s)**

Discussion began at 805 pm, approximately 1:53 hours into the recording of the session.

Councilmember Weaver reported that Code Enforcement and the Foothills Animal Shelter returned to its owner the escaped pig that she reported about during a recent meeting.

Councilmember Nosler Beck thanks staff for their super responsiveness to citizens' concerns and complaints.

A student in a master's program at Metro State approached Councilmember Hutchinson about an internship at Stevens Elementary. The internship provides needed assistance to students in all Wheat Ridge schools.

Councilmember Hultin commented that when she attended the recent retirement celebration for Division Chief Dave Picket she was reminded anew of the excellence we enjoy in the protection and service provided by our Police Department. She thanked them again, profusely, for their service to the community.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Study Session adjourned at 8:17 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON November 9, 2020.



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Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



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Janeece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem