

**STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
Hybrid - Virtual Meeting**

August 2, 2021

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

This meeting was conducted both as a virtual meeting and hybrid, where some members of the Council or City staff were physically present at the Municipal building, and some members of the public attended in person as well. All eight members of Council were present in Council Chambers for this session.

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

The Mayor also explained the virtual/hybrid 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, Janeece Hoppe, Korey Stites, Leah Dozeman, Valerie Nosler Beck, and Rachel Hultin.

Also present: City Manager, Patrick Goff; City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Attorney, Gerald Dahl; Assistant to the City Manager, Marianne Schilling; Race and Equity Task Force Co-Chairs, Terry Gale, Jenny Snell, and Jeff Richards; Homeless Navigator, Rebekah Raudabaugh, interested citizens and guests.

Citizen's 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.

There were no comments entered into Wheat Ridge Speaks relating to this session.

1. Race and Equity Task Force Quarterly Update

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

Issue

The Race and Equity Task Force co-chairs presented to City Council an update on the progress that has been made to date and the plan moving forward.

Staff Reports

Assistant to the City Manager Marianne Schilling, along with Task Force co-chairs Terry Gale, Jenny Snell, and Jeff Richards delivered to Council a detailed presentation about this item, its purpose and the background of the reasons for bringing it to Council.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

- Several Councilmembers thanked the task force members and the staff for their hard work.
- Councilmembers asked detailed questions about a timeline, next milestones and how Council and staff can support the Task Force.
- Councilmembers lauded the Task Force for taking the considered, deliberate approach to their expected outputs, especially the time and effort to understand the daily workings of the City staff and the history of the City's founding, growth and progress to today.

2. Homeless Navigation Update

Discussion began at 6:49 pm, approximately 0:18 minutes into the recording of the session.

Issue

The purpose of this study session item is for the City's Homeless Navigator to provide a general update to City Council regarding the Navigation Program.

Staff Reports

Homeless Navigator Rebekah Raudabaugh gave Council, among other items, a detailed update on the programs that have been her most intense focus. These include:

- I-70 Kipling Corridor
- Severe Weather Shelter Network
- Client Updates

She also gave an update on the population experiencing homelessness:

- Demographic Report

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

- Can we do a pre-registration event for those likely to need shelter during the colder, wetter months? Do those experiencing homelessness have to have

access to an online environment to register? Ms. Raudabaugh gave a detailed answer.

- Council also asked how we can get more housing vouchers, especially for the periods of extremely bad weather? Ms. Raudabaugh provided a detailed description of past and current efforts to accommodate those needing shelter.
- How have our community centers and houses of worship been engaged to help this population? Another detailed answer from Ms. Raudabaugh and Mr. Goff followed. The City is working with several religious groups and houses of worship regarding their role in sheltering those who need it most during severe weather, especially Arctic cold.
- How many people do we believe are experiencing homelessness in Jefferson County? The most recent comprehensive assessment of that number was gathered in August 2019; additional progress on gathering data to update those statistics has been blocked by the pandemic.
- Where can people experiencing homelessness access toilet and shower facilities? Another detailed answer followed.
- Does the City own any properties where we have an opportunity to help this population? Mr. Goff provided his view on how we can do that and what would be involved in terms of planning, management, staffing and volunteers. For example, he discussed an effort to provide a safe, legal place for those living in their vehicles to park overnight.
- Does the homelessness initiative in the City need more resources? Is Ms. Raudabaugh reaching the practical limit of the number of clients she can serve? Ms. Raudabaugh commented that yes, she is nearing her capacity in terms of time to serve more clients. Mr. Goff reported on discussions with Golden and Edgewater, that share our Homeless Navigator, about budgeting for more resources for this effort in 2022.
- Does Ms. Raudabaugh feel that her work is successful, and does she feel safe when working with her clients? She reported on her methods for working with clients while supported by others immediately present or in very public places that allow her to do her work safely.

Several Councilmembers thanked staff, especially Ms. Raudabaugh, for their hard work and good progress.

3. Staff Report(s)

Discussion began at 7:42 pm, approximately 1:14 hours into the recording of the session

Mr. Goff reported on the ongoing monitoring at the state and county levels of the CoVid pandemic spreading because of the new variants. There are many people monitoring the situation and planning for the worst. He asked if Council will feel comfortable meeting next Monday on the dais? Several Councilmembers made comments in

response to his question, and Council agreed to wear masks during Council sessions for the foreseeable future. Further discussions will follow as events necessitate.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Discussion of this item began at approximately 7:46 PM.

Councilmember Dozeman invited the public to National Night Out tomorrow evening at the park adjacent to City Hall. The WR Police Department and West Metro SWAT will welcome families and interested others in our ongoing efforts to build relationships between the PD and our residents. .

Councilmember Weaver echoed the enthusiasm for tomorrow's event. The Carnation Festival will include a pie judging contest this year.

Councilmember Hultin attend a discussion at a coffee shop last week with community members and police officers and was glad to report that the discussion was both cordial and productive.

City Clerk Kirkpatrick reminded those interested in running for office in the City that they may obtain the form required to collect petition signatures for nominations beginning tomorrow, August 3 at 9 AM. The deadline for submitting nominating petitions is August 23, 2021 at 5:00:00 PM.

Mayor Starker reminded us to take care of one another and drive carefully as our children are enjoying their summer vacation.

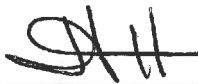
ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 7:54 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON August 9, 2021.



Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



Janeece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem