

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

August 16, 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; Administrative Services Director, Allison Scheck; Chief of Police, Chris Murtha; Director of Parks and Recreation, Karen O'Donnell; Assistant to the City Manager, Marianne Schilling; Director of Community Development, Ken Johnstone; Planning Manager, Lauren Mikulak; Jay Renkins with MIG, Inc.; approximately 15 interested citizens and guests.

Citizen's Right to Speak

John Cullman, 6700 W. Dorado Drive, who is not a Wheat Ridge resident. He came to discuss the process of planning the future of the Lutheran Legacy Campus. He is interested in preserving historic sites and in making sure that the plan addresses concerns for all citizens.

Sandy Nance, 4097 Field Place. She is sad that we have cut the WR Historical Society budget which will reduce their opening hours from 3 days to 1 day per week. We need the historical society for many purposes, especially the keeping and safeguarding of historic records. She advocates for increasing the Historical Society's budget to fulfill its important mission. She wants to be sure we save the Blue House and the Chapel at Lutheran. Those buildings are part of the history of the city and so, please, save it.

Linda Grantham, 4460 Moore Ct.; has lived in Wheat Ridge for more than 40 years. She wants the historical society's previous schedule for opening hours restored. She thinks it is important to keep it open for a variety of security reasons as well as resident access to its holdings. She also critiqued the City's webpage in terms of how it does not highlight our City's historic attractions and our parks.

Marta Hedde, 7385 W 28th Ave; came to speak on behalf of the Wheat Ridge Historical Society Board and the effort to save the Blue House and the Lutheran Chapel. She and the Society believe that these properties are vital to our City's heritage. It was the center of the treatment for the tuberculosis outbreaks in the first decades of the Twentieth Century. She also supports keeping the Tee-Pee tent located on the property as an important historical structure. Please, preserve all of the structures in that small area of the campus.

Jamie Gallagher, 4065 4065 Cody St., Wheat Ridge. Came to support the preservation of the Chapel and the Blue House at Lutheran. None of the three plans currently circulated includes a clear indication of what will happen to these historic structures. She is also concerned that the published plans to do adequately address the need for peace and quiet in the neighborhood north of the campus; the published plans include provision for a lot of traffic going north that does not exist at present.

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.

[Lutheran Legacy Campus Plan] This project will have a profound effect on adjacent neighborhoods. I ask the council to pay special attention to how the concepts have been designed and the potential impacts on existing homes. A transition from low-density residential at the project's edges to higher-density development at the center of the campus--as proposed--may not in itself be sufficient to protect neighboring houses. Consider Allison Court, which borders the SCL parking lot to the east. The grade differential between the homes on the west side of Allison Court and the parking lot is significant. Single-family homes built on that part of the campus--assuming they are constructed to their allowable height of 35 feet--would loom over neighbors' backyards on Allison Court. In this case, a transition zone must also include a substantial buffer area. The same holds true for homes on Zephyr Court--assuming West Pines abandons its complex and homes are constructed on that parcel. I commend the city for being proactive with this redevelopment. We all would like the site to become a well-designed and thriving development. I realize the final design will likely differ from the concepts presented by the consultant. Regardless of what actually may be built, however, established neighborhoods must be protected.

August 15, 2021, 3:12 PM

Chuck Moozakis
3540 ALLISON CT
WHEAT RIDGE, 80033-6146

1. 2022 Budget requests - Wheat Ridge Business District, Localworks and Carnation Festival

Discussion began at 6:48 pm, approximately 0:18 minutes into the recording of the session

Issue

Mr. Joe DeMott from Wheat Ridge Business District and Carnation Festival, and Kate Cook, Executive Director of Local Works presented each organization's 2022 budget request to City Council for consideration,

Staff Reports

Administrative Services Director, Allison Scheck, along with representatives from those organizations delivered to Council a detailed presentation about this item, its purpose and the financial impacts for bringing it to Council.

The 2022 budget request per organization is as follows:

Wheat Ridge Business District - \$90,000

Localworks - \$390,000

Carnation Festival - \$125,000

Mr. Joe DeMott came to speak on behalf of the WR Business District and the Carnation Festival budget requests for 2022.

Councilmembers had questions and comments about the Business District's request:

- Councilmembers asked detailed questions about each agency's services and plans for the 2022 budget year
- Councilmembers commented on the Business District's accomplishments since it was organized in 2010. Several commented on the murals program and how it has encouraged artistic beautification of the city.
- How often has the Business District had to come back and ask for supplemental budget funding?

The Mayor proposed a consensus for staff to review and bring to Council a \$90,000 budget for the Business District in 2022.

Consensus attained.

- Councilmembers congratulated Mr. DeMott and the Carnation Festival Committee on another successful Festival. They also thanked the community for attending and acknowledged the work of our many volunteers for the Festival.
- Councilmembers asked detailed questions about sources and uses of funds for the Carnation Festival. Mr. DeMott gave detailed responses.

- Councilmembers also recalled the history of the Festival and its significant impact on the City by bringing our residents and neighbors together to continue a tradition began 52 years ago.
- Councilmember Dozeman commented that she has been on the Festival Committee for 6 years and it is the best weekend of her year. The Festival volunteers make it possible and do their work with comradery and enthusiasm.

Councilmember Urban proposed a consensus to find the Carnation Festival budget request of \$125,000 for 2022.

Consensus attained.

Kate Cooke, Executive Director came to present the Local Works 2022 budget request. She gave a presentation supported by a PowerPoint deck, which provided detail about Local Works accomplishments this year and plans for 2022.

Ms. Cooke emphasized that this request aligns with Local Works strategic plan for growing other sources of revenue over time to support its programs and in tandem reduce the impact on the City Budget.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

- Councilmembers expressed their gratitude for Local Works efforts to promote Wheat Ridge as a great place to live, work and play.
- How much money is in the Local Work investment fund? Ms. Cooke reported a balance of approximately \$1.2 million.
- Thanks to Local Works for its spending reductions during last year's public health crisis.
- Local businesses have a golden opportunity to reach out to the community through Local Works programs.
- A year ago, it was unclear what Local Works' strategic initiatives looked like. Now it seems clear and well-designed.

Councilmember Hoppe proposed a consensus to approve the Local Works budget request for 2022 in the amount of \$390,000.

Consensus attained.

2. Lutheran Legacy Campus Master Plan Update

Discussion began at 7:46 pm, approximately 1:17 hours into the recording of the session.

Issue

City Council was provided with the background on the Lutheran Legacy Campus Master Plan at a study session on November 2, 2020. On January 25, 2021, Council awarded a contract to MIG, Inc. (MIG), a professional planning firm, to lead the community through the master planning process. Study sessions were held in May 2021 with City

Council and Planning Commission to introduce the consultant team, share the existing conditions scan, and preview the public process.

The purpose of the August 16 study session is to provide an update on the project, specifically to share public input to date and to seek direction related to development of a preferred concept.

Staff Reports

Planning Manager, Lauren Mikulak gave Council a detailed project status update from the City, SCL Health and with the help of Mr. Renkins with MIG recounted the opportunities for community input that have included and will continue to include a range of stakeholders, events, and activities. He supported his report with a detailed slide presentation.

Completed activities include the following:

- April 16 – Stakeholder steering committee meeting
- May 1 – Public meeting #1 (on-site walking tour)
- May 6 – Planning Commission study session
- May 10 – City Council study session
- May 20 – Community focus group A meeting
- May 24 – Community focus group B meeting
- May 27 – Business/development focus group meeting
- June 10 – Public meeting #2 (virtual visioning session)
- June 10 to July 10 – Online visioning survey
- July 5 – Stakeholder steering committee meeting
- July 21 – Community focus group A meeting
- July 23 – Community focus group B meeting
- August 3 – Public meeting #3 (in-person review of conceptual plans)
- August 3 to 10 – Online survey for conceptual plans

Councilmembers had questions and comments, to which staff and Mr. Renkins gave detailed responses:

- Several Councilmembers thanked staff, especially Ms. Mikulak, for their hard work and good progress. They also thanked the community members who contributed their thoughts and opinions to the planning process.

- What will happen to West Pines mental health facility?
- The plans to provide a relatively limited commercial sector on the campus makes sense.
- The extension of 35th Ave would add value for both residents and cyclists.
- What will attainable housing look like? How will we ensure that it is indeed affordable?
- This is an extraordinarily unique opportunity to look at a variety of residential development and ensure that we can include attainable housing.
- Do these plans include retaining the key historical sites, especially the Chapel and the Blue House? (Mr. Johnstone replied that going forward the proposed plans will incorporate detailed graphics to show the intention to retain these structures based on their historic value and their importance to the community.)
- Future planning documents should include written plans to preserve these key historic structures.
- Let's strive to re-purpose and re-use as many of the existing modern structures as possible.
- There were several questions about the ingress and egress plans for the site, to ensure smooth access with minimal impact to, especially, the adjacent neighborhoods.
- *To our residents: please, participate in the planning process. Make your needs and opinions heard. We will listen to your voices if you will come forward and participate.*
- What is the medical office market saying about the need for more medical office space at Clear Creek Crossing? Should we keep the existing Lutheran medical office space for that use or will the CCC space be appropriate to the market conditions?
- Please, describe how this process moves forward, especially the creation of parks and possible urban architecture uses? Mr. Johnstone provided an informative overview. He indicated that at some point zoning changes will be necessary in all likelihood.
- Does the City have an interest in the plan for civic space? Mayor Starker commented that this is an opportunity to build a new, more adequate City Hall and perhaps an entertainment venue.
- What happens after tonight; what are the next steps? Staff and Mr. Renkins gave a detailed timeline through the end of 2021.
- Mayor Starker emphasized that we want and need a robust participation in this planning process from our residents and others interested in the future of the City.

3. Mayor and Council pay

Discussion began at 9:12 pm, approximately 2:42 hours into the recording of the session.

Issue

As part of the 2022 budget process, staff conducted a survey of other Colorado municipalities concerning the compensation for Mayors and Councilmembers. Survey results indicated Wheat Ridge compensation is relatively low compared to neighboring communities (Attachment 1). The annual compensation for Mayor in Wheat Ridge is currently \$10,080, which was last increased in 1997 (Attachment 2). The annual compensation for Councilmembers in Wheat Ridge is currently \$7,200, which was last increased in 2001 (Attachment 3).

Staff Reports

City Manager Patrick Goff gave Council the background based on Section 3.12 of the Wheat Ridge City Charter states that "Elected officials shall receive such compensation as the council shall prescribe by ordinance; provided they shall neither increase nor decrease the compensation of any elected official during his/her term of office."

He also reported that the compensation for Councilmembers was last increased in 1997 and for the mayor in 2001. Mr. Goff requests further direction from City Council on Mayor and City Council compensation.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

- While none of us serve for the paycheck, it has been so long since the compensation was adjusted that we need to increase the public servants' pay.
- Mr. Urban proposed an increase in Councilmember compensation to \$14,400 and for the mayor to \$21,600.
- For many of our residents, the compensation is so low that many interested and qualified people refuse to consider running for office. We want the best and brightest of our residents to serve, so we need to remove this impediment.

Councilmember Urban proposed a consensus to ask staff to bring a proposed compensation increase for Councilmembers to \$14,400 per annum and for the Mayor increased to \$21,800 and to pay the Mayor Pro-Tem an additional stipend of \$200 per month, in time for the final planning of the 2022 budget.

Consensus attained.

4. Staff Report(s)

Discussion began at 9:30 pm, approximately 3:00 hours into the recording of the session

Mr. Goff reported that Jeffco Public Health has issued a public health order requiring masks for all students, staff and visitors in all public schools effective immediately.

5. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Discussion of this item began at approximately 9:33 PM.

The Mayor and all Councilmembers congratulated all those who made possible a highly successful Carnation Festival over the past weekend.

Councilmember Hoppe reminded us all to be careful when driving and cycling as schools open next week.

Councilmember Dozeman thanked Mr. Joe DeMott for his amazing and tireless work on the Carnation Festival. She similarly recognized Mr. Pettit for his long and excellent service.

Councilmember Hutchinson thanked Mother Nature for the excellent weather this past weekend.

Councilmember Hultin specifically thanked the clean-up crew who made Anderson Park pristinely clean by Sunday.

Councilmember Weaver thanks Councilmember Dozeman for her excellent service and tireless commitment to the Carnation Festival.

City Clerk Kirkpatrick reminded those interested in running for office in the City, that they can still obtain the form required to collect petition signatures for nominations from the Office of City Clerk. The deadline for submitting nominating petitions is August 23, 2021 at 5:00:00 PM.

Mayor Starker thanked those who worked so hard on the Festival and reminded us to take care of one another and drive carefully as our children are enjoying the last days of their summer vacation and starting to school again next week.

ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 9:39 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON August 23, 2021.



Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



Janeece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem