

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue
February 14, 2022

Upon adjournment of the Regular City Council Meeting, the Mayor called this Special Study Session to order after a brief recess at 8:23 p.m.

This meeting was conducted as a VIRTUAL MEETING.

No members of the Council 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, Scott Ohm, Janeece Hoppe, Rachel Hultin, Korey Stites, Valerie Nosler Beck, and Leah Dozeman.

Also present: City Attorney Gerald Dahl; City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Treasurer Chris Miller, City Manager Patrick Goff; Director of Administration, Allison Scheck; City Attorney, Jerry Dahl guests and interested citizens.

Public Comment on Agenda Items –

No one came forward to comment.

Note about Wheat Ridge Speaks:

The public 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).

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

1. Satisfying public notice and publication requirements

Issue

State statutes require that each municipality annually establish the location for posting public notices, as well as the newspaper in which the notices will be published. Local government entities are also allowed to publish notices on-line for public meetings. These include meetings at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action occurs or at which a majority or quorum of body is in attendance.

Staff Report

Mr. Dahl stated that the City currently publishes notices of public meetings and hearings on the City's website and in the *Jeffco Transcript*. You have asked me to research the possibility of publishing such notices in the *Wheat Ridge Gazette*, where newspaper publication is permitted or required. Our office has reviewed this and concludes that, because the *Gazette* is only published monthly, it does not qualify as a legal publication for notices under the Colorado statute and the City's Charter and Code. Publication in the *Gazette* is permitted as a supplement to other required means, but not in satisfaction of "publication in a newspaper of general circulation" requirements.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

Councilmembers discussed a variety of options and places where official notices might be placed or published.

Councilmembers expressed support for notices in as many places and often as necessary to ensure resident access to notices.

CM Hoppe and Hultin endorsed publishing an ad in each month's *Gazette* outlining where the official notices are posted/published so residents can find them. They also favor making the City's website an additional official public notice publication.

CM Nosler Beck asked how we will use What's Up Wheat Ridge to support public information efforts. This is a great opportunity to improve our civic engagement through the *Gazette*, even if the ad in the *Gazette* is primarily to direct interested residents to the official notices.

Councilmembers opined that the more information we provide to the residents, and the more places we place/publish it, the better. A discussion of meeting the Council's strategic goals of community engagement ensued, and ideas to fulfill that goal followed. CM asked whether we could track the numbers of visits to various online resources.

CM Hultin asked about the size of the monthly ad we intend to publish in the *Gazette*. She then suggested that quarterly we publish a much larger ad, in both English and Spanish. Staff agreed to find the rates for these *Gazette* ad options.

CM Hultin asked for a consensus to direct staff to bring to a future Council Meeting an action item to fulfill our legal obligations for giving public notice consistent with the outcomes discussed by Council this evening.

Consensus achieved.

Staff Report(s)

Elected Officials' Report(s)

Nothing further, as this session immediately followed a Regular Council Meeting.


ADJOURNMENT

The Special Study Session adjourned at 8:47 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON February 28, 2022.



Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



Rachel Hultin, Mayor Pro Tem