

**COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.  
City Hall - Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Second Sheet of Ice Feasibility Study
3. Ford Wyoming Events Center Update
4. Community Promotions Funding (Part 2)
5. Capital Budget Review
6. Agenda Review
7. Legislative Review
8. Council Around the Table

The work session was called to order at 4:30 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Cathey, Knell, Engebretsen, Johnson, Lutz, Pollock, Vice Mayor Lutz, and Mayor Freel. Councilmember Pollock called into the meeting via GoToMeeting.

City Manager Napier introduced Parks & Recreation Director, Tim Cortez, to discuss the feasibility study for a second sheet of ice at the Casper Ice Arena. Mr. Cortez explained that the study was funded by the Casper Amateur Hockey Club to analyze the costs, needs, and efficiencies of a second sheet of ice. He then introduced Jeff King and Tom Betti, consultants from 292 Design Group, to discuss the results of the study. They began by discussing the market analysis process which included stakeholder meetings, gathering demographic information, analyzing age/income distribution, and participation levels. The conclusion of the market analysis was that hockey has not reached its market potential and there is adequate disposable income in the community. The current program is using 90% of the prime-time ice time and 35% of a second sheet of ice would currently be filled due to the high need. They also discussed what a second sheet of ice would offer, including opportunities for hosting more ice events and supporting the Casper Events Center which would have an impact on tourism for the City and draw people to the community in the winter months. They then discussed the concept plan and the different amenities that were considered. The final concept included locker rooms for four teams, a coach's room, restrooms, a secondary entrance and bleachers. The cost estimate including these amenities was \$9.35M, which includes the \$400K cost to modify the current ice plant to support the second sheet of ice. They then discussed what the cost recovery would be for the facility. They estimated a 106% cost recovery for the operations of the second sheet of ice.

Councilmembers then discussed the need for the second sheet and concerns about how the City could pay for the high cost. They discussed the maintenance and upgrade needs of many other City facilities. The consultants explained how the second sheet could increase revenue for the ice arena by 100% while increasing the operating costs by only 40%. They also suggested creating a replacement fund out of the ice arena budget to help with maintenance costs. They also explained that the 35% of ice time that would be met with a second sheet of ice only represented the current

needs and represents no growth. They explained that the cost of building ice arenas doubles in cost every ten years due to increased costs in refrigeration and building code changes.

Mayor Freel discussed the other uses that the ice arena could accommodate including indoor soccer, bumper cars, etc. City Manager Napier asked how much capital the user groups could contribute. Members of the Casper Amateur Hockey Club then spoke about the need for the second sheet and how it could help to contribute to the diversification of Casper's economy. They stated that they could probably contribute a significant amount to the total cost of the second sheet, but would need to look into that aspect of the project further. City Manager Napier and the City Council asked the Casper Amateur Hockey Club to find out how much they could raise in private donations and come back to the City Council with a proposal with that amount included. They directed them to work off of the \$9.3M that was estimated by the consultants. They also asked them to consider what other types of user groups and activities could utilize the second sheet and to estimate the ice time for those activities.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Mr. Cortez to update Council on the Ford Wyoming Events Center. Mr. Cortez gave a brief overview of how COVID affected the revenue at the Events Center, stating that before COVID, the subsidy would have been lower than previous years, but because of COVID most of the events did not take place last year. He stated that they expect to make the benchmark this fiscal year, and that there is a full calendar of events booked. They are expecting the subsidy requirement to be \$994K.

Next, City Manager Napier reviewed the \$29M capital budget for FY22. He explained that all of the proposed capital budget items already have cash on hand to fund. He discussed that the one cent projects in this agenda are in line with the resolution passed to support this funding source. He explained that the projects in the proposed capital budget are the top priorities for each of the department. He then reviewed the major projects in the capital budget in the project listing by funding source document in the work session packet. These included one cent projects such as the police station, street improvements, Center Street underpass, public safety projects/equipment purchases, vehicle replacement, fire department projects, irrigation, water/sewer projects, subsidized swimming, swimming pool/aquatic center improvements, and the Events Center fire suppression system. He then went over projects funded by the Opportunity Fund, including the Goodstein lot improvements, Senior Center parking lot improvements, Center/First Street parking lot improvements. He went over projects funded by the Perpetual Care Fund, including offsetting subsidy requirements. He then discussed other major projects including the Robertson Road bridge project, replacement garbage trucks, reuse building improvements, and landfill remediation. Councilmember Cathey asked some questions about specific solid waste projects including trash container maintenance and recycling depositories. City Manager Napier and Cindy Langston, Solid Waste Supervisor, answered questions on these items. Councilmember Knell asked about a remote dispatch project, and City Manager Napier explained why this project is necessary. Councilmember Gamroth asked about less maintenance or closing of parks because of the high cost. City Manager Napier stated that this community is park heavy and that staff tries to find ways to reduce those maintenance costs. He stated that closing parks would have community pushback, but staff could look into this if Council wishes.

Carter explained how the budget process works and the points at which Council can approve or not approve each of the projects. Councilmember Pollock asked if there are budget items that were taken out because of the bare bones approach. She expressed concern over the cost of deferred maintenance. City Manager Napier stated that there are things that may have been left out, such as some streets projects and maintenance of the LifeSteps building. He stated that the City does not have the funds necessary to deal with the crumbling infrastructure ideally. He stated that he told department heads that if there are some other high priority projects they would like included in the budget, they can present those during the larger budget discussion. Mayor Freel asked if Council could be provided more information on the reuse facility, and City Manager Napier stated that staff will provide that to Council.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Fleur Tremel, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk, to discuss the results for community promotions allocations. Councilmember Knell stated that he did not submit a voting sheet for the allocations, because he was involved with many of the organizations requesting funding, so he decided to abstain from the voting and discussion for this item. Ms. Tremel then explained that two of the organizations that were allocated money by some Councilmembers were deemed inappropriate to receive this type of money, and staff would suggest not allocating community promotions money to those organizations. Council directed staff to remove the allocations for the two organization who were deemed inappropriate and allocate the rest of the money according to the average from the Councilmembers' votes.

Next, Council reviewed the agendas for upcoming Council meetings and work sessions.

City Manager Napier stated that the legislature is back in session for a week, but many of the revenue issues have not been debated yet.

Next, Council went around the table to discuss their respective boards and commissions and other matters of public interest.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING  
A Municipal Corporation

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Fleur Tremel  
City Clerk

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Steven K. Freel  
Mayor