

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.
City Hall - Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Advance Casper
3. Fort Casper Seasonal Hours/Closure
4. Amendment to the New Delta Addition Subdivision Agreement
5. Parking Fees
6. Agenda Review
7. Legislative Review
8. Council Around the Table

Mayor Freel called the work session to order at 4:39 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Pollock, Lutz, Cathey, Knell, Engebretsen, Johnson, Gamroth, Vice Mayor Pacheco, and Mayor Freel.

Mayor Freel asked if there was any follow up from last week's Council meeting, and Councilmember Knell responded that the motorcycle group who spoke at last week's meeting had still not applied for a permit.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced Justin Farley, CEO/President of Advance Casper, to update Council on Advance Casper. Mr. Farley began by discussing the structure of Advance Casper, explaining that they are a public/private partnership contracted by the Economic Development Joint Powers Board to serve as an economic development organization for Casper. He then discussed some of EDJPB's projects from 2020 and discussed some of Advance Casper's projects which included: selling the spec building; finalizing property from crude to rail; purchasing the Create Wyoming platform and transforming it into Invest 307; deploying Breakthrough307's FundOne into 11 companies; assisting RIDEfor8's \$100M venture capital fund in Casper's qualified opportunity zone; collaborating on choosecpr.com recruitment website; recruiting and helping to raise capital for EVI to relocate to Casper; assisting in bringing FCR Communication to Casper; assisting with outreach via the Consider Casper campaign; targeting front range; publishing a full page ad in Site Selectors Magazine; hiring new staff; moving offices; cutting the budget; winning the Economic Development Administrative Office of Innovation \$176K Build to Suit grant; and hiring an equity analyst. He then discussed Advance Casper's projects for 2021 including: continued recruitment of businesses; collaborating with Cheyenne LEADS and other community economic developments to identify more effective recruitment tactics and strengths and weaknesses of communities across Wyoming; and developing a comprehensive marketing plan including a recruitment website and the Consider Casper campaign. He discussed some events planned for 2021 including an entrepreneur boot camp, a succession planning course, an aerospace & defense conference, and an investor's conference. He then discussed Advance Casper's recruitment accomplishments. Council asked questions regarding Advance Casper's budget for marketing and personnel. Councilmember Pollock reminded Council that the budget that they see

is only for the operational side of Advance Casper and that the entire budget includes private funding as well.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed possible seasonal closure of Fort Casper. He briefly summarized the discussion that took place with a previous Council about closing Fort Casper in the winter off-season in order to save an estimated \$160K per year. The proposal at that time included moving the staff members at Fort Casper to other positions throughout the City that would be able to utilize their unique skill set in the winter months. He then introduced Tim Cortez, Parks & Recreation Director, to discuss the estimated cost savings of currently implementing a seasonal closure. Mr. Cortez explained how the summer months are the busiest time for Fort Casper with November through April being the slowest months. He stated that the estimated savings of closing Fort Casper during the winter months would be \$12.5K, without including personnel costs. Laying off the three masters level staff members during those months would save the City an additional \$140K. He stated that currently there is not a place to utilize these three staff members elsewhere during those months. He explained that the Fort currently has a goal of 20% recovery in costs and they are currently recovering about 19% of their costs. Council discussed that the museum is not a business but is a leisure service and therefore is not expected to have a substantially high cost recovery. Council also discussed that there may be ways to increase revenue for the Fort in the off-season. Some Councilmembers discussed that while this may have been a more feasible plan a few years ago when the employees could have been utilized in other skill-specific positions, it may not be as feasible to do this now at the risk of losing these masters level employees. City Manager Napier agreed that while he did support doing this previously, he does not think the City is in a dire enough situation to close the Fort seasonally at this point. He stated that the budget will be balanced, and will be presented to Council next month. He explained that Council will also be receiving an analysis of the City's subsidizations which will include a blueprint of what it would take for each of these funds to zero percent subsidization. This will help provide Council a blueprint for what the City could do to decrease costs in the event that direct distribution is removed by the State.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the addition to the New Delta Subdivision Agreement. He explained that the addition would make zoning allowances to the original agreement that would make Lot 1 of that subdivision consistent with a C-2 zoning designation. He then introduced Liz Becher, Community Development Director, to discuss the history of this subdivision agreement. She explained that there were land use restrictions put into effect in 1999. In 2018, a restriction was lifted to allow drive-throughs. Now there is a new owner/developer who would like to put an upscale boutique wine store in Lot 1, which is currently prohibited under the restrictions. The Planning & Zoning Commission had a hearing for this item and heard complaints from many of the neighbors of the subdivision who were concerned about allowing a liquor store at this location. Councilmember Knell explained that the restrictions will remain in place for Lot 2, and after hearing this information, most of the neighbors who were opposed were not as concerned about the change to Lot 1. Therefore, the Planning & Zoning Commission approved the addition to the subdivision agreement. Ms. Becher stated that this item will be a resolution item at next week's Council meeting and will be a non-consent item to allow for neighbors to speak for or against the change.

Next, City Manager Napier asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the parking fees in preparation for next week's parking manual discussion. Councilmember Cathey stated that he was concerned about the annual \$250 parkway parking fee, and suggested that the fee be lowered to \$50 after the first year for renewals. Council gave their thumbs up for this change and did not ask for any other changes to the parking fees. City Attorney Henley stated that this change will be reflected in the ordinance before the first reading. Council also asked who will be enforcing the parkway parking, and Chief McPheeters responded that there will be a combination of enforcement from community service officers and code enforcement officers.

Next, Council reviewed the agendas for upcoming Council meetings and work sessions. Ms. Becher told Council that options for a new name for CATC will be sent out to Councilmembers tomorrow in order to gather their input.

City Manager Napier then discussed legislative items. He stated that he received the Wyoming Association of Municipalities final report today that explains what happened in the legislature regarding legislation that affects municipalities. He stated that he will send this information out to Council and will go over any questions during the legislative review at the next work session.

Next, Council went around the table to discuss their respective boards and commissions and other matters of public interest. Councilmember Johnson asked that an item be added to a future work session regarding a Drug Enforcement Agency grant. Council gave their thumbs up to add this item to the future work session items on the Council grid.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor