

COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.  
City Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Preseason Snow Fighting Briefing
  - Snow Routes
  - Parks Snow Operations
3. Bus Stop Safety/Shoveling – Public Awareness
4. Citywide Facility Assessment Evaluation Agreement
5. Tani Field & Mike Lansing Field Update
6. Agenda Review
7. Council Around the Table

Mayor Freel called the meeting to order at 4:39 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Cathey, Engebretsen, Gamroth, Johnson, Knell, Pacheco, and Mayor Freel. Councilmember Pollock participated by GoTo Meeting. Councilmember Quest was absent.

There were no Council follow-up items.

City Manager Napier introduced the preseason overview of snow plowing as well as parks snow operations and requested staff provide further information.

Andrew Beamer, Public Services Director, described the equipment and standard operating hours and procedures for snow removal. He said the cost for ice slicer is roughly \$350,000 each year and that staffing to run equipment comes from the streets and parks departments. He shared that arterial collector routes are plowed, whereas most residential areas are not cleared unless they are impassable. He also said that when school is in session school areas and bus routes are cleared. He stated that snow plowing routes are on the City's website.

Councilmember Gamroth asked if plow drivers have GPS or other software to help make routes efficient. Mr. Beamer said that staff does not have GPS but they well trained and very experienced. He also said that the conditions vary greatly and that wind and weather patterns require flexibility.

Councilmember Cathey asked if the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) plows a section of Outer Drive. Mr. Beamer indicated that most of Outer Drive is maintained by the City but the segment from Country Club to Casper Mountain Road is handled by WYDOT. Councilmember Cathey asked about Poplar and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets, CY Avenue, and the highway segments in town. Mr. Beamer said all of those are cleared by the City.

Zulima Lopez, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director, described the involvement of parks staff in snow operations which includes: plowing 35 paved parking lots, clearing trails, sidewalks and bus stops and assisting with snow removal around the Ford Wyoming Center depending on the weather. She explained that shifts are adjusted so areas can be cleared before the public utilize an

area and described the staff and equipment used by the department. The current process involves ten priority areas, which may be adjusted in the future based on efficiency and need. She highlighted the priorities for the areas, referencing the corresponding maps and said that most areas can be cleared, unless there is extremely heavy snowfall. Councilmember Cathey requested copies of the maps. Ms. Lopez said that once the maps are finalized they will be published on the City's website.

City Manager Napier shared that as part of this process staff was asked for ways to handle snow more efficiently and it was determined that a loader and some associated equipment would be an effective tool. He said that this was something to keep in mind as staff may put forward a budget request in the future. He also said that the Natrona County School District superintendent complimented the City's efforts to clear the heavy snow last March.

Councilmember Cathey asked if it would be more cost effective to contract out the services of a loader, as needed, rather than purchase the equipment. City Manager Napier agreed to review the costs.

Next, City Manager Napier spoke about the bus stop safety and shoveling public awareness topic. He reminded Council of the report that the Casper's Council of People with Disabilities (CCPD) had made when they shared the struggles involved in accessing transit service via bus stops and the direction from Council to find solutions. He said that Ms. Lopez, transit staff and Ms. Becher, the Community Development Director, had developed ideas to aid access and now action can be taken. He said the help of the community would be particularly useful because some of the more than 100 transit access points are not City-owned.

Ms. Lopez shared that 16 of the 106 transit access points are on City property, which the City will maintain and clear of snow. She asked Ms. Becher to share her vision for the other access points.

Ms. Becher shared three components involved in the transit site program. First, she spoke about the clearing of snow at transit stops. She said that transit staff on the fixed route would shovel and spread ice slicer as needed at shelters. She said that assist staff who provide door-to-door services would also shovel and clear for their riders, which is already a common practice for those drivers.

Second, she spoke about the program to adopt a shelter or bus stop. Service organizations, businesses and other volunteers would be recognized for their work on the program and would be given the tools needed to keep the site free from trash, graffiti, and to keep the Plexiglas clear on a monthly basis throughout the year. Volunteers would also be provided the necessary liability agreements. She said this was designed with the adopt-a-highway program in mind, as well as other successful programs in other communities.

Third, she spoke about having the CCPD help with the "I Count on You" campaign which will feature disability council members in public service announcements. These public service announcement would urge people to keep sidewalks and bus stops clear of snow and debris, and would remind people that transit users rely on the bus for access to health care, education and to travel to work.

Councilmember Engebretsen asked if additional shelters could be added? Ms. Becher said that there is a plan to add more shelters and that it can be budgeted for, that grants are available, and sponsors may also help with funding. Vice Mayor Pacheco spoke in support of the CCPD as well as the support of the transit system by the community. Mayor Freel asked if Council supported the proposed actions of staff regarding the bus stops. Council provided a thumbs up to the program.

Then City Manager Napier introduced the topic of the Council goal to carry out a Citywide facility assessment. The assessment is needed because a number of buildings are aging out and because there are 127 buildings owned by the City. The plan is to carry out the assessment in a strategic manner to provide a comprehensive analysis of the facilities. He requested that Ms. Lopez provide the details of the proposal.

Ms. Lopez stated that \$100,000 of Council goals funding has been budgeted to carry out an assessment of City infrastructure. She explained that the assessment would involve inventorying the facility systems, both interior and exterior systems. The key exterior systems would include walls and windows. Interior systems would include walls, doors, floors, and finishes as well as heating and cooling systems, electrical service, plumbing, and fire protection. She also said that elevators would be an important consideration for some facilities. The pedestrian and vehicular pavements at facilities would also be evaluated. Inventoried facilities will be evaluated and their condition will be given an index rating and some cost estimates will be provided for repairs. Once the inventory and ratings are complete staff will work to develop short term and long term plans. The 127 City facilities were initially evaluated and prioritized by staff, in the event not all facilities could be reviewed. However, the assessment will include all facilities, so the evaluation will be used to help with capital planning after the assessment. She explained that a cooperative organization called Sourcewell provided a list of 7 vetted vendors that could carry out the assessment, of which 5 provided quotes to the City. Staff is recommending that ALPHA Facilities Solutions be selected for the project. The deliverables for the project will include 35 full narratives for high priority facilities with photographs and recommendations. For the remaining facilities all systems will be evaluated and receive index ratings and cost estimates.

The contract will also include a 20 year capital renewal schedule to help with long term and short term planning. ALPHA utilizes a software called APPS which will then contain all the data and the City can continue the subscription and update the database going forward.

Councilmember Gamroth asked why more qualified bids weren't received for this project. Ms. Lopez said that there were 5 proposals received, but only one was under the budget amount and included assessments for all the facilities. Councilmember Gamroth asked why this proposal was able to meet the budget and still include the services desired. Ms. Lopez said they were able to negotiate with the vendor to give full narratives on the 35 facilities and provide more limited information on the rest of the facilities and the narrowing of the scope helped with the costs.

Mayor Freel asked what percentage of our buildings were built during the boom days of the 1980's and therefore are likely to need repairs at the same time. Ms. Lopez said she could research that and would provide the information.

Councilmember Pollock spoke in support of the plan and asked if big ticket operating equipment such as the ski lifts or ice chillers would be part of the analysis or if that could be managed internally. Ms. Lopez said those types of systems are not going to be included in the assessment, but those items are internally reviewed annually and are included in capital planning. She said that staff intends to have a comprehensive listing of all assets for the purpose of capital planning.

City Manager Napier spoke about the recent improvement to the ski lifts as well as the chillers at the ice arena and shared that staff monitors operating systems like these. Councilmember Pollock expressed the need to understand and project upcoming needs to have the best path planned. Mayor Freel also added that sometimes we repair equipment multiple times and that good information can help with the decision to replace or continue to repair something.

City Manager Napier asked Council to consider whether the Ford Wyoming Center should be further evaluated for future use and be compared to the current industry standard versus when the building was built. He asked that thought be given to how the facility can be used going forward and how it can meet the needs of the industry. He asked Council if staff could discuss these needs with Visit Casper and Spectra staff. Council provided a thumbs up to support this evaluation of the Ford Wyoming Center. Council also provided a thumbs up for staff to bring forward the ALPHA contract for approval at a future Council meeting.

Next, City Manager Napier gave a history of the leases for Tani and Mike Lansing Fields. He said that a year ago the operating agreements for these facilities expired and the decision was made to try managing the operations internally for a year to see if less subsidies would be needed to support the facilities and if more users could use the facilities. The internal management has been in place through one season and staff will be reporting on the experience as well as the feedback gathered from user groups. He asked Council to determine if they agree with the recommendation from staff to continue internal management of the facilities and if this may be a way to reduce the need for subsidies in the recreation division.

Ms. Lopez explained that the decision to set rental fees was based on the staff and equipment costs for the operation and stakeholders were asked for their input. An effort was made to help groups with the transition from the old lease costs to the new rental fees, with some discounts being offered for three or four years. She said that future estimates kept these discounts in place, but could be changed if Council wishes to modify that. She provided an overview of the management of the fields last season and there was an end of season debrief to gather feedback. Users shared that communication regarding scheduling could be improved and therefore staff will hold a group meeting when the schedule is discussed. Staff also felt that user groups could do a better job cleaning facilities after their use and that has been shared with the groups. The lighting at Tani Field needs to be improved and it will be addressed in the upcoming budget sessions. And the final issue with Mike Lansing field was a raccoon infestation that required remediation and will involve additional improvements that should be completed before the next season. She elaborated on the details of the financial considerations which were also summarized in the memorandum prepared for this work session. She described how the change in discounts going forward would impact the required subsidies for the two fields and reminded Council that the numbers are based on consistent rental use as well as maintenance costs.

Councilmember Gamroth asked if the user groups had supplied any feedback or had concerns with the proposed change in rates and the decrease in discounts. Ms. Lopez said user groups were asked at the season end debrief if the rates were fair, and the consensus was that the rates were reasonable.

Ms. Lopez said going forward it is uncertain how groups will handle the change but allowing the groups additional time to change their fund raising, and the decrease their maintenance responsibilities should help offset the difficulties. Councilmember Gamroth asked if the City might incentivize the use of these fields for special events or other occasions. Ms. Lopez said different uses of the fields could bolster revenue and are easier to accommodate later in the season so the field surface isn't damaged.

Councilmember Pollock spoke in support of the rental management and asked if there is a policy for the management of the cleanliness of the bleachers and spectator areas. Ms. Lopez indicated that if there is not a written policy there will be.

Councilmember Gamroth asked if the field of dreams by the Boys and Girls Club is on the older, lease structure rather than by rental and if those fields should be shifted to internal management/rental. Ms. Lopez added that the staggered discount system has been timed to allow evaluation and feedback of the program and that existing leases have been timed so they will end after there has been good feedback from the rental structure. City Manager Napier offered that the costs and income on other fields would be very similar to what has been observed at Tani and Mike Lansing fields.

Then Council reviewed upcoming agendas for work sessions and regular Council meetings.

Finally, Council went around the table to discuss their respective board and committee meetings as well as other matters of public interest. Councilmember Knell inquired about the use of the 311 reporting system, as someone received a response to their request months after using the system. Councilmember Cathey reminded everyone of the upcoming special election on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mayor Freel invited everyone to the ribbon cutting for the Old Yellowstone District parking lot to be held at 7 p.m. this evening.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 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