

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

City Hall – Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. Ice Arena Expansion
3. ARPA Fund Grant Applications
4. North Platte River Park #2 Subdivision
5. Cemetery Rules & Regulations
6. Agenda Review
7. Legislative Review
8. Council Around the Table

Mayor Pacheco called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Knell, Cathey, Pollock, Engebretsen, Gamroth, Sutherland, Vice Mayor Freel, and Mayor Pacheco. Councilmember Johnson was absent.

1. Council Follow-up

There were no items for follow-up.

2. Ice Arena Expansion

City Manager Napier began by discussing the ice arena expansion study. He stated that a finding of the study was that the expansion would actually provide some subsidy relief to the City's subsidization of the ice arena. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$11-\$12M. He then introduced a Jeff King, a consultant from 292 Design Group, to discuss the ice arena expansion study. The consultant explained that the study was done in 2019 and that they were asked to return in 2021 to make revisions based on the current climate. He then reviewed the executive summary portion of the study. Highlights of the summary included a high interest in a second sheet of ice from user groups, positive economic impact from increased number of events, a decreased subsidy of \$20K, and a total construction cost of \$11.5M. He also discussed the increase in youth hockey nationally and the work that the Casper Amateur Hockey Club is doing to increase the sport in Casper. He explained that the 50% usership of the second sheet of ice outlined in the study would be on Day 1, with a 50% growth opportunity. The economic impact of the increase in tournaments and activities is estimated to be \$2M-\$3M per year. Councilmember Pollock asked about maintenance and perpetual care costs, and the consultant recommended building that into the budget. Zulima Lopez, Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities Director, stated that the current ice arena would need \$3.5M to replace all of the systems and it is about 36 years old.

Travis St. John, Vice President of the Casper Amateur Hockey Club, then reviewed the highlights of the report. He explained that the current sheet of ice is at its maximum usage with no room for growth of any of the programs. He then explained how the second sheet of ice could be used, including allowing for increased number of tournaments, including Team Wyoming practices, games, tournaments, as well as other ice activities and events, including figure skating, curling, etc. He stated that Casper is in a geographically advantageous location to attract tournaments,

which in turn will bring tourism money to the City. He also explained that due to limited ice time, youth hockey players sometimes do not get off of the ice until 11 p.m. at night. He stated that the Hockey Association is prepared to help with the cost of the ice expansion, but they need to know what the target fundraising amount will be before they go try to obtain donor money. Councilmembers discussed their support for sports activities in Casper, particularly youth sports. Vice Mayor Freel pointed out that the City helps to maintain other sports fields, such as soccer and football, and those user groups do not help fund that, while in this case, the hockey club is willing to help with the cost.

City Manager Napier suggested that Council consider the total capital amount required for the expansion split, the subsidy savings, and recommended that Council have a plan in place for how to get rid of the subsidy. He suggested Council direct staff and the user groups to get together to come up with a proposal that would include a build scope, timeline, maintenance costs, as well as the subsidy reduction plan. Councilmember Pollock asked that historical data for the ice arena subsidy be included in the follow-up information. Council gave their thumbs up to move forward with the proposal suggested by City Manager Napier.

3. ARPA Fund Grant Applications

Next, Andrew Beamer, Public Services Director, discussed six resolutions that will be proposed to Council at next week's Council meeting regarding ARPA Grant Applications to the State Loan and Investment Board for public services projects. The projects already have money set aside, so meeting the 15% match of funds will not be difficult. The grant application requests total \$14.4M and have to be expended by 2026. The decisions about grant funding will be made this autumn.

4. North Platte River Park No. 2 Subdivision

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the future vision for land surrounding the Ford Wyoming Center (FWC). He discussed that part of the development of the land has been set aside for the sports complex and staff would like direction from Council on zoning the land across from the Events Center in the North Platte River Park No. 2 Subdivision, as this will impact future development projects in that area. He stated that this subdivision zoning has been discussed before, but the zone changes were never formally considered by Council.

He then introduced Liz Becher, Community Development Director, to review the history of the zoning and the recommendations for future zoning of the subdivision. She explained that staff had recommended vacating the park land, platting it, and zoning a portion of the subdivision M-1 and the other portion as M-2. She explained that this zoning would allow for commercial properties and the M-1 designation could be utilized for lighter industrial applications such as retail and hotel businesses, which would complement the FWC and sports complex. The M-2 designation is for heavier industrial applications and allows for explosives and ammunitions manufacturing. She also asked if Council was interested in developing a master plan in conjunction with the recent Ford Wyoming Study to plan for the future of the land around the FWC.

Vice Mayor Freel stated that the land was originally split up into large parcels of land to attract large manufacturers. He stated that Casper does not have many large parcels of land for

commercial development which limits it in attracting new manufacturing businesses. Ms. Becher stated that there were no objections to the rezoning in the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing. Council also discussed adding covenants for that area that would help the design resemble other nearby businesses. Council then discussed changing the M-1 parcel to M-2. City Manager Napier explained that once the zoning is approved through Council, the City is limited in restricting what types of businesses can build there as long as they meet the zoning regulations. Council gave their thumbs up to hire a consultant to develop a master plan for the future development of the land surrounding the FWC. Council asked that staff bring back a cost for this consultant. Council also decided to leave the zoning as M-1 and M-2, as they can rezone it if necessary in the future, and gave their thumbs up to move the item forward for formal consideration in a future Council meeting.

5. Cemetery Rules & Regulations

City Manager Napier introduced Ms. Lopez to review the proposed cemetery rules and regulations. She explained that State statute requires that only City Council approve cemetery rules and regulations, so they will need to be approved as part of the cemetery resolution. She then explained the minor changes to the resolution, including flexibility in operating hours and definitions. Council gave their thumbs up to move the resolution forward for formal consideration at a future Council meeting.

6. Agenda Review

There was no discussion on agenda review.

7. Legislative Review

There was no discussion for legislative review.

8. Council Around the Table

Next, Council went around the table to discuss their respective board and committee meetings as well as matters of public interest. Councilmember Knell discussed immigration and transgender issues. Councilmember Cathey asked about fiber optic installation easements, and City Manager Napier stated that if landowners have questions or concerns they should be addressed by the subcontractor. If they are unable to get their questions answered by the subcontractor, there are project managers in the Public Services Department that should be able to help them.

The work session was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Ray Pacheco
Mayor