

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.
City Hall - Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Council Meeting Follow-up
2. 10-Year Destination Plan
3. Complete Street Plan Overview (Zoom)
4. Gambling Establishment Licensing/Enforcement
5. Audit Services Professional Services Agreement
6. Investment
7. Agenda Review
8. Legislative Review
9. Council Around the Table

Mayor Pacheco called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Cathey, Sutherland, Knell, Engebretsen, Pollock, Vice Mayor Freel, and Mayor Pacheco. Councilmember Gamroth attended the meeting virtually via GoToMeeting. Councilmember Johnson was absent.

There were no Council follow-up items.

City Manager Napier introduced Brook Kauffman, CEO of Visit Casper, and Amanda Scherlin, Marketing Manager of Visit Casper, to discuss the 10-Year Destination Plan. Ms. Kauffman stated that Visit Casper is hoping to have the plan ultimately adopted by the City of Casper. She stated that Visit Casper realized last year that ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds may be available for tourism recovery. This resulted in contracting with a consultant to come up with a plan of how to move forward with the possible use of these funds, which resulted in the 10-Year Destination Plan. Ms. Scherlin then discussed the five common themes in strategic priorities that were identified during this process, including partnerships; attractions and amenities; transportation and connectivity; Casper Mountain development; and North Platte River development. She then discussed some upcoming events for Casper including Outdoor Writers Association of America Convention, Magpul Governor's Shooting Match, Oregon California Trail Association Convention, Beard and Mustache National Championships, College Nationals Finals Rodeo, 40th anniversary of Ford Wyoming Center, 150th anniversary of Yellowstone National Park, and the 20th anniversary of the National Historic Trails Center. She then discussed the impact of the cost of gas on travel and the lodging tax renewal that will be up for a vote on this year's ballot. Mayor Pacheco asked about the benefits of wayfinding signage, and Ms. Kauffman described the reasons that the signs are important.

City Manager Napier then discussed the Complete Streets Plan and stated that the plan is necessary in order to receive some types of federal funding. He introduced Jeremy Yates, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Supervisor, to discuss the plan further. Mr. Yates stated that both the Generation Casper Plan and the Long Range Transportation Plan recommended that the City of Casper draft and adopt a complete streets plan. The plan encompasses all forms of transportation

as well as a policy, plan, and ordinance package. He then introduced Jolene Holland and Drusilla Vanhengel, consultants from Nelson-Nygaard, to discuss the plan further. Ms. Vanhengel discussed the process by which the plan was developed and discussed the elements of the plan including: overview of the project, the impacts/benefits of the project, community precedent in previous projects, community outreach/feedback, complete streets policy, design guidelines, typologies, and street types.

Councilmember Knell asked about community feedback and if business feedback was included in that outreach. Mr. Yates responded that it was a community-wide outreach effort and therefore specific businesses were not reached out to. He also stated that the plan is not prescriptive to all different street types. Mr. Yates stated that there is currently a public comment period open and those comments will be incorporated into changes in the plan. He discussed the process for adopting and implementing the plan and described how having the plan impacts grant funding.

Next, City Manager Napier introduced City Attorney Henley to discuss licensing of gambling establishments. City Attorney Henley described the current types of gambling establishments in the City and the revenue that the City receives from each type. The pari-mutuel games provided the largest revenue to the City in 2021, totaling \$690K, the lottery provided almost \$400K in revenue in 2021, and skills games provided \$66K in revenue in 2021. He discussed the way the revenue is split between Natrona County and the Casper for the different types of games. He stated that the City does not license or permit these gambling establishments but does have control over the liquor licenses at the establishments as well as zoning that allows gambling. Councilmember Knell asked if the establishments that have gambling have had an increase in their calls for service from the Police Department. Chief McPheeters responded that currently he does not think there has been a high concentration of crime at the gambling establishments because more establishments have come to town and the gambling is more spread out. He did say that there are DUI arrests originating at these establishments, but he does not have any prepared data on that statistic. Councilmember Knell stated that he would like information about if the tax revenue offsets the police response cost to the City. City Manager Napier then discussed the division of revenue with the County, explaining that he would like Council to consider whether it is fair for the City to have to split that revenue when most of the burden is on the City and not the County with respect to the gambling establishments. He stated that if Council would like, the City could lobby to change the revenue split during future legislative sessions.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the audit service professional services agreement. He stated that the Finance Department put out an RFP (request for proposals) for audit services. The City is required to have an audit annually and has been paying the current auditor \$200K to \$300K per year. The current firm also was late in getting the audit back to the City. The City received two proposals, both from companies outside of the Casper. He then introduced Jill Johnson, Finance Director, to review the proposals and recommendation. Ms. Johnson stated that the Finance Department reviewed the proposals and recommended Ketel Thorstensen to contract with the City for auditing services. She stated that the firm had positive peer reviews and is large enough to handle the City's audit and their bid will provide \$110K of savings to the City. The Finance Committee agreed with the recommendation.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed an RFP for investment advisory services and custodian for investments. He then introduced Ms. Johnson to elaborate on the RFP. She stated that a new finance investment policy allows the City to combine these services and have one company provide both, which provides savings to the City. She stated that there were 15 respondents and that the Investment Advisory Committee reviewed the proposals and recommended First Interstate Wealth Management as the investment advisor/custodian for the City for a 5-year term. She then described the reasons why First Interstate was selected, which included the City's standing relationship with First Interstate Bank, their experience managing investments, non-pooled investments, customizable investment approach, performance reporting, and positive synopsis of their investment performance.

Next, City Manager Napier discussed the personnel budget. He stated that staff would like some broad direction from Council to aid in creating the FY23 personnel budget, specifically regarding COLAs (cost of living adjustments), salary step increases, and retirement contributions. He explained the history of step increases and COLAs for employees, stating that COLAs have been infrequent over the past few years. He stated that step increases, which allow for employees to progress through their wage ranges, were implemented for some employees in January. He explained the difference between a COLA, which is an adjustment in response to inflation and economic factors, and a market adjustment, which is a salary adjustment in response to market wages, such as the Graves Study.

City Manager Napier then reviewed a spreadsheet that allowed for Council to view different combinations of personnel budget variables. A 3% COLA adjustment and 5% step increase for general government and Police Department employees results in an almost \$2.5M cost to the City's general fund. The enterprise funds and employees would be calculated separately. He explained that this would be an annual increased cost to the City. Ms. Johnson explained that the fire union variable is the FY23 obligation, and the City is currently in negotiations for the next fiscal year. City Manager Napier explained that some employees may be topped out with regard to their salary and would not receive a step increase, but these employees would receive a COLA. He also discussed the one-time payment option, which could utilize other funding outside of operations. Council asked what the City Manager's recommendation is, and he responded that he recommends some type of a step increase and a COLA. Council discussed these different options and asked that different combinations of the variables be entered into the spreadsheet to see what the total cost would be to the City. Councilmember Gamroth asked where the funding for these adjustments would come from. City Manager Napier responded that sales and use tax revenue would need to make up the majority of the funding for the adjustments, along with direct distribution. Council gave their thumbs up for the general budget direction of implementing a COLA and a step increase to employees for FY23.

Next, Council reviewed upcoming agendas for work sessions and regular Council meetings. Councilmember Cathey suggested that land acquisition be added to the April 5th executive session. He also discussed that if the City chooses to use the standard form panels for the I-25 beautification project, there may be no extra charge to the City.

Next, Council discussed current state legislative items. Councilmember Cathey asked staff to look into the gambling revenue for cities and asking Wyoming Association of Municipalities to take that issue up.

Next, Council went around the table to discuss their respective board and committee meetings as well as matters of public interest. Councilmembers discussed Yellowstone Garage closing and thanked the owner for his contributions to Casper’s downtown development. Councilmembers also discussed Metro Animal and encouraged people to adopt animals or volunteer. Councilmember Cathey asked if the City could write a letter to WYDOT to request a lower speed limit on Casper Mountain Road by the Back Nine Subdivision.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Ray Pacheco
Mayor