

**APPROVED MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING
CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA
JUNE 9, 2021
6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Lisa Iverson called the Work Session Meeting of the Wyoming City Council for June 9, 2021 to order at 6:00 PM

CALL OF ROLL:

On a Call of the Roll the following members of the Wyoming City Council were present: Councilmembers Lisa Iverson, Linda Nanko Yeager, Dennis Schilling, Brett Ohnstad and Claire Luger

ABSENT: Dennis Schilling

Also Present: Robb Linwood, City Administrator; Kelly Dumais, Assistant City Administrator; Paul Hoppe, Public Safety Director, and Fred Weck, Building Official/Zoning Administrator

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

1. 2022 Budget Considerations - Mission Statement, Department Review of Priority budget items, 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan Review and other budget considerations

City Administrator Linwood did an overview of the 2022 budget process and outlined some of the items that would be discussed tonight.

Assistant City Administrator Dumais gave a PowerPoint presentation about the previous work they had done on a Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Budget Goals. After considerable discussion the council came up with the following drafts for the three items as follows:

Draft Vision Statement: The City of Wyoming will be a regional **leader** in providing **innovative** and long term **economically sustainable** government that is **transparent** to all.

Draft Mission Statement: The mission of the City of Wyoming is to **efficiently** provide public services, **connect** to our heritage, ensure community **resilience** and be a City that is **accessible** and welcoming to all

Draft Budget Goals:

Maintain Physical Assets and Infrastructure: Protecting what we have so that it is available for people in the future is a central value within the City budget. Prior to new investments, the City budget prioritizes protecting the infrastructure and assets that the City currently has.

Plan for connected and sustainable infrastructure: The projects and services that we budget for are investments in the future of the Wyoming Community.

Responsive to Community Needs: Resident needs are the backbone of decision making for the City, driving both what is included and what is not included in the budget. The programs and services that the City offers must manage within an affordable budget for community residents.

Build for Inclusivity: The City of Wyoming is a place where all people are welcome and where people can grow and age in a trusted community. City operations, community projects, and

infrastructure combine to create not only accessibility for all, but also a sense of welcome.

City Department heads then went through their Capital Improvement Plan items for 2022 and any significant budget challenges or changes. Chief Hoppe identified the replacement of two squads in 2022 as part of their vehicle rotation plan. City Administrator Linwood discussed the Public Works budget including the replacement of a 1998 plow truck, replacement of a 1995 hot mix patching trailer and that the council needed to continue discussion regarding the street maintenance budget potentially increasing from \$100,000 to \$177,000. City Administrator Linwood then discussed the administrative budget and explained to the council that we could see some significant increases in our workers comp policy this year and other increases in our property, liability and auto. Assistant City Administrator Dumais presented the council with information regarding a resilient communities program the University of Minnesota and that it could be utilized in correlation with the AARP project or something different. The council suggested they would like more information on the program and examples.

A member of the city council had asked to have staff review the current compensation level of our city council members in relation to our comparable cities. Staff utilized the same cities that we use for our employee compensation analysis. City Administrator Linwood stated that even if the council elected to make it change it would not become effective until after the next general election on November 7, 2022. The Wyoming City Council currently receives \$5,000 for Mayor Pay and \$4,000 for council pay. The analysis completed suggested the average mayor pay in other cities was \$5,833 for the Mayor and \$4,643 for council members. The council members determined they were not interested in raising council pay at this time.

Staff brought up the item of Food Trucks and the current licensing requirements and costs. Currently the cost for licensing a food truck falls under the transient merchant and the cost is approximately \$150 annually. The reason we license the food trucks is to ensure that they have the proper liability insurance, that they have proper food licensing from the Minnesota Department of Health to ensure the safety of our residents and businesses members. We have had some inquiries regarding reduced rates for temporary operations including weekends or a shorter duration of time (5 to 6 months). In some instances the city council has pro-rated other licenses in the city if it was towards the end of the year. The pro-ration of the licenses would most likely be the easiest solution, but another option would be to update the ordinance or fee schedule to reflect other durations of time other than annual. Staff provided the council a spreadsheet of other communities and charges for these types of operations for council's review. After considerable discussion the council determined they would like staff to come up with an application and change the ordinance if necessary that would allow for daily permits, monthly permits, 6 month and annual. The daily and monthly could be approved administratively and the council would still review the 6 month and annual. Staff will prepare a proposal for council along with costs and have it at a future council meeting.

Staff then asked the city council about the community center/council chamber use. With the installation of monitors and audio equipment we have had some concern in the continuing use of rental of the community center to the public. Secondly, there has been a group of musicians using the community room every Friday for the last 4 years, but not being charged rent as it was identified as a community event and open to the public to enjoy. With the COVID-19 pandemic we now have 2 offices in the council chambers. Our new building inspector currently utilizes extra space for plan review and our assistant city administrator has a space in the room due to the need for space of our copier and an envelope folder machine for utility billing. There are concerns having our employees share a space with the public. The employees in the room have technology and personal items could be damaged, stolen or tampered with. I would like feedback from the council how they would like to proceed with the operations of the community center since the COVID-19 restrictions have now changed it can potentially be utilized again. Over a three year span from 2017-2019 (community center was closed almost all of 2020) the total revenues from the rental of the community room have been \$806.00 or approximately \$268.00 annually.

Council discussed the current situation and wanted to have staff try to relocate a spot for the Friday night music group. The consensus of the council was to close the community center for use at this time.

2. City of Wyoming Street Improvement Program funding discussion

The City of Wyoming improves and maintains a select number of local streets each year. The selected streets are identified annually in the five-year Capital Improvement Plan. Improvements are prioritized based on factors such as age, street condition, utilities condition and the type of street. The City of Wyoming has taken an extremely proactive approach since 2014 in reconstructing streets. In total the City of Wyoming has reconstructed approximately 17.5 miles of its 68 miles of City Streets. The City has been proactive on the maintenance of new and existing streets utilizing overlays, sealants, and crack filling. The Updated Long Term Plan showed an option and implementation of franchise fees in 2021. In 2021, 3 months of revenue are included. The fees are projected to provide approximately \$290,337 funding annually for street improvement projects. For comparative purposes, Franchise fees were compared to the property tax levy for impacts. If a property tax levy is used rather than Franchise fees, the impact to the median valued home is a 2022 property tax increase of \$73. The impact to a residential customer using franchise fees is \$63 on an annual basis.

Franchise fees on utilities (gas and electric) would help fund the unfunded costs relating to city streets. A franchise fee is collected by 357 cities out of 853 cities in Minnesota. There are 101 cities in the seven-county metropolitan area that currently have franchise fees. Implementing franchise fees has become a common way for a city to raise revenue. Franchise fees allow the city to diversify its revenue sources. By implementing a franchise fee all utility users pay a fee, not just taxpayers. All who utilize the streets will help pay for them. Franchise fees will apply to all accounts within the city, including tax exempt parcels owned by non-profits and governmental entities.

Council has asked questions at the following work session as follows and these items were discussed in the work session.

- Examples of Types of buildings that would be charged for the franchise fees other than residents.
- What current and future city buildings would be charged for franchise fees? In speaking with the Xcel energy representative current and future buildings would be identified as a small C&L: Non-Demand for City offices and the public safety center and public works building could be identified as Small C&L: Demand. The potential franchise fees for these facilities would be a pass through towards a franchise fee account since the city would have the fees enter a potential road fund. Similar to what the city does for its storm water and water and sewer utilities at its buildings and properties.
- The annual amount of Right of Way Fees the city receives from Xcel energy and Conexus Energy From 2016 to 2020 the average annual revenue in Right of Way Fees the city receives was \$5,048.00
- What is the duration of a franchise fee agreement with Xcel and Conexus? The duration of the agreement is for 20 years.
- How often can the franchise fees be changed The annual fees can be adjusted higher or lower on an annual basis

The City council discussed what types of assistance are available for gas and electric bills and staff stated that Lakes and Pines is a nonprofit in Chisago County that can offer assistance to residents. After considerable discussion the majority of council stated that they would like staff to move forward with public engagement activities regarding the franchise fees that would include information on the web site, social media, and open houses and going out to the public to share information.

3. American Rescue Plan Discussion

City Administrator Linwood updated the council on the current status of the funds. Currently the funds can be used for the following:

- Responding to the Public Health Emergency
- Responding to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic
- Loans or Grants
- Essential worker pay
- Critical infrastructure
- Revenue Replacement
- Investments in Drinking water/sewer systems
- Broadband Improvement
- Staff time on COVID-19 economic impacts

What we know so far is the law also spells out a few other details about the aid to local governments, including that:

- Funds will be released in two payments to local governments, with half following enactment and half paid 12 months following receipt of first payment.
- There will be no minimum population threshold for payments, but non-entitlement distributions will be capped at 75% of the pre-pandemic city budget.
- Funds can be used to replace lost revenue.
- Funds can be transferred between jurisdictions or to nonprofit partners.
- There is an expenditure deadline of Dec. 31, 2024.

Minnesota Management and Budget will have further information on how cities can request the funding soon and the League of Minnesota Cities will have a webinar on Friday regarding this.

Staff worked to identify projects that may work with funding and others that are questionable if they would be eligible under the following criteria:

- Revenue Replacement
 - 2020 Revenue Loss- Building Department
 - 2020 Revenue Loss- Police Department
 - 2020 Revenue Loss- Administration
- Infrastructure Improvement
 - Water Meter Replacement
 - Broadband Improvements at Police Department
 - Water Main Under Highway 35 near new water tower
 - Proceeds used towards new facilities
 - 800 MHZ Radio purchases
 - Broadband in areas of city underserved
 - Water treatment Plant (Used towards matching funds for PFA Loans or Grants)
- Quality of Life Improvements/Environmental Improvements
 - Look for Partnerships Chisago County HHS- residential support
 - Micro grants –Septic
 - Master Park Plan
 - Citywide Master Trail Plan
 - Resilient Communities Project
 - Swenson DNR Grants/Utilization as matching funds
- Economic Vitality and Stability
 - Collaboration with other Chisago County Cities/Chisago County
 - Business Grants/Loans
 -
- Employee Retention and Operations

- Payroll Expenses for work done in relation to COVID-19
 - Officer Replacement during the pandemic
 - Training for new city wide software
- Communication Tools
 - Electronic Sign

Council discussed some of these items and talked about the potential use for extending water under the freeway, using the ARPA funds to replace or use funds for differing park projects and for broadband. Staff will wait for further guidance and have updates for the council on the timeline to receive the dollars and work to prioritize the uses.

4. To discuss dates for diversity, equity, and Inclusion training program

Assistant City Administrator Dumais stated has directed staff to identify a potential training schedule for a council diversity, equity and inclusion training dates with Esperza Consulting LLC. The program that has been proposed is a two part training designed to improve the ability of participants to lead inclusively through their work. These conversations are meant to develop a shared foundation and language for diversity, equity and inclusion for the City Council. The trainer recommends 3-4 weeks between trainings. Available dates for the training are June 16th and 23rd, July 14th, 21st and 28th and August 18th and 25th. Staff request guidance from the Council regarding which dates they would like to schedule the training for.

After discussion the council felt that the summer was already too busy for additional trainings. Council directed staff to ask the trainer if additional dates for the training could be provided in the fall of this year.

MAYOR IVERSON ADJOURNED THE JUNE 9, 2021 “WORK SESSION MEETING” OF THE WYOMING, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AT 8:22PM