

COUNCIL PRE-MEETING
Tuesday, August 17, 2021 5:00 p.m.
Casper City Hall - Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. Tennis Courts – Natrona County School District Proposal
2. FY 2022 Budget Amendment #1
3. Fleet Vehicle Purchases
4. Procedure for Filling a Councilmember Vacancy
5. Agenda Review

Mayor Freel began the pre-meeting session at 5:00 p.m. with Councilmembers Cathey, Engebretsen, Knell, Pacheco, and Mayor Freel in attendance. Absent: Pollock. Councilmembers Johnson and Lutz joined the meeting once in session. Councilmember Gamroth and City Manager Napier attended via GoToMeeting.

City Manager Napier provided an overview of a proposal from the Natrona County School District (NCSD) for the construction of new tennis courts, the reconstruction of old courts and maintenance of the courts at Highland Park.

Ray Catellier, NCSD Board Chair, indicated that the District would like to have a centrally located tennis facility that could host tournaments and meet the needs of the schools. He shared that when not in use by the school district, the tennis courts would be open for public use.

Mayor Freel asked about the number of courts involved. Mr. Catellier confirmed that the goal is to reconstruct four courts and build an additional six courts.

Councilmember Knell asked if City Manager Napier had any concerns with this project. City Manager Napier shared that there are many advantages to this partnership which include the shift of the maintenance responsibilities as well as the public use of the courts.

Councilmember Engebretsen asked if the NCSD was just requesting the land for this project. Mr. Catellier indicated that is correct.

Councilmember Cathey asked about drainage for the new courts. Mr. Catallier shared that the drainage has been considered.

Councilmember Gamroth asked if the additional tennis courts may make it possible for the community to host high school tennis tournaments and what the economic impact would be. City Manager Napier shared that many City-owned tennis courts are in need of repairs and that some time and money would need to be spent for Casper to host a state tennis tournament. He asked that Council keep needed improvements in mind and that while regional tournaments would be easier to attract, that the state tournaments could be something to aim for. Councilmember Johnson joined the meeting at 5:10.

Councilmember Knell asked about the timeline for the project. Mr. Catallier shared that the goal is to have the improvements completed by fall 2022.

Mayor Freel asked if direction is needed at this time. City Manager Napier requested direction so staff can work on the details. Council unanimously provided a thumbs up.

City Manager Napier then shared that a budget amendment is needed at this time and has been prepared for consideration this evening. He stated that the key items in the amendment include carrying forward projects and purchase from last fiscal year that haven't been completed and budget directives. Some of the budget directives include the final sales tax payment to the State of Wyoming and ratifying the one-time payment to employees.

Jill Johnson, Financial Services Director, explained that the budget neutral items in the amendment include re-appropriating funds for incomplete purchase orders and projects to allow the budgeted money to be spent as the projects are finished. She also shared that additional needs have been budgeted which include the one-time payment to employees, funds for the revolving loan fund to meet reserve requirements, the sales tax repayment, and some Metropolitan Planning Organization projects that are grant funded.

Councilmember Knell asked why the sales tax that is due to the State of Wyoming is being paid off in full at this time since it is interest free and the timing of the payment had previously been discussed by Council. City Manager Napier felt the direction he received from Council was to pay off the full amount regardless of the interest rate. Councilmember Engebretsen shared that she recalled the discussion, but that it was unclear what the final decision was. Mayor Freel asked if the discussion could be reviewed. Councilmember Lutz arrived at 5:20. City Manager Napier shared that the meeting video could be reviewed. Mayor Freel asked if the item is time sensitive. City Manager Napier suggested withholding this item from the amendment by amending the resolution going before Council tonight so it can be carried out separately without holding up the other items in the budget amendment. Councilmember Knell suggested discussing and deciding on the matter tonight. Mayor Freel asked if Council should review the previous discussion or make a decision tonight. City Manager Napier said Council has the authority to move forward either way. Councilmember Johnson stated that the cost will be the same regardless. Evan Condelario, Budget/Accounting Supervisor, read the minutes from the work session when the matter was discussed which stated that Council agreed to pay the amount all at once. Council had no further questions.

City Manager Napier then introduced the topics of the fleet vehicle purchases and offered to answer questions on the purchases. Councilmember Cathey asked why some vehicle purchases didn't mention a trade-in value. Dan Coryell, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor, shared the specifics on the purchases which included some trade-ins, some new additions to the fleet (rather than replacements), and one item that was being sold as surplus. Council had no further questions.

Next, City Manager Napier shared that Councilmember Lutz would be moving out of Casper and therefore no longer be serving on the Council. He asked that staff share the proposal for the process and added that the process can be adjusted based on direction from the Council.

Pete Meyers, Management Analyst, outlined the process which includes receiving applications and resumes for the vacancy through September 3rd, then interviewing candidates on perhaps September 15th, and swearing in the new member on September 21st. He asked Council to consider this process, the receipt of the application materials, and the interview questions. He further explained the interview process stating that applicants would receive the questions in advance and have ten minutes to respond. He shared that previously the questions included: tell us about yourself; explain your interest to serve on Council; describe your qualifications; talk about your willingness to run for re-election; and your ability to serve regarding time commitments. He asked Council for any direction or questions. Mayor Freel asked if the process being described was the same as was used to fill the last vacancy. Mr. Meyers said that it was. Vice Mayor Pacheco spoke in support of the process. Councilmember Cathey, who was appointed using this process, also supported the process. Councilmember Johnson added that the interviews are held in public. Councilmember Knell asked what the length of the term being filled is. Councilmember Lutz said the term left is 16 months. Mayor Freel also reminded everyone that this vacancy is for Ward I. Councilmember Cathey asked if applicants had to live in the Ward one year prior to running for Council. Mr. Meyers said he would confirm what requirements are involved with residency. He also shared that while the interviews are public, Council does hold an executive session to discuss the matter. Mr. Meyers asked if every eligible applicant is to be interviewed or if Council would like to decide who will be interviewed. Mayor Freel would like all eligible applicants interviewed. Mayor Freel asked for any other comments or questions. City Manager Napier restated that the application period would begin tomorrow. Councilmember Knell asked how someone can apply for the vacancy. Mr. Meyers shared that information for interested applicants will be posted on the City website tomorrow.

Mayor Freel moved on to agenda review and there were no questions or concerns.

Mayor Freel adjourned the pre-meeting at 5:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Christa K. Wiggs
Assistant City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor