

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, May 12, 4:30 p.m.

Casper City Hall

Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. New Employee Welcome Video
2. Utility Service Fees
3. Balefill Hours & Personnel
4. Future Agenda Review
5. Council Around the Table

COUNCIL WORK SESSION – May 12, 2015

Mayor Powell called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Councilmen Cathey, Hopkins, Johnson, Mundell, Pacheco, and Sandoval. Councilman Schlager joined the meeting at later time. Councilman Hedquist was absent.

Cyndi Magee, Human Resources Supervisor, shared the new employee video which is part of the onboarding process and new employee orientation. Recently, Human Resources have purchased a module allowing an electronic process to include a welcome video and coming soon, a virtual tour of the City. City Manager Patterson commended the Human Resources Department on the outcome of the video.

Assistant City Manager McDonald shared with Council an increase in City Utility Service Fees has not been implemented since 1992. Inflation and increases in operational costs driven by required changes in operations have resulted in a need to evaluate the adequacy of current service fees to cover costs. Therefore, fees are recommended to be increased.

Councilmember Sandoval said if the services are turned off you are disorganized or poor. He inquired about the fee increase potentially being too much to ask of someone who was in a poor financial position in which their water was shut off. Mr. McDonald indicated the first item is the majority. Customers who can't pay come in and work with staff extensively to avoid shutting off their service. The people who do not take that responsibility are usually the individuals having their service turned off. Typically the poor, or people that end up with medical or job issues, will come in and talk to us.

Councilman Johnson asked for clarification on the connection fee. Mr. McDonald stated when customers move and request water to be turned back on at new location, a connection fee is established. The delinquent fee is implemented when the account payment becomes past due. The reconnect fee is not an additional charge (for being delinquent). Councilman Cathey asked if there is a delinquent disconnect fee of \$30 and then the customer gets that all squared away, another \$20 for reconnect fee would be assessed. Mr. McDonald clarified the cost would only be \$30 (for the delinquent disconnect fee); no additional charge would be assessed to turn the services back on in this scenario.

Councilman Hopkins pointed out that if you break down the increase amount over the last 23 years to the per year percentage, the increase is not an unfair request. Councilman Cathey said it looked as if the only charges being assessed on the hydrants are for parts. He questioned whether there should be manpower repair costs considered as well. Mr. McDonald indicated the difference is made up in the water usage and the mark up on the cost of parts, covering the costs. This is an inflation number and an overall analysis is being conducted.

Councilman Mundell pointed out 23 years is a long time to reassess fees and inquired as to why. Mr. McDonald said the process was with another department and once moved the fees were reviewed and reconsidered. Overall, the break-down of the increases per year: 3% connection increase, 1.8% for delinquent, and after hours 2.4%. Councilman Mundell said her concern is customers seeing the overall increase (not consideration of the time frame without an increase).

Mayor Powell asked how long before an account is considered delinquent. Mr. McDonald said at 31-days an account is delinquent, a shut-off notice sent 15-days later, and a phone call to notify customer of delinquency needing addressed. There are approximately 300 delinquencies each route, each month. Councilman Johnson asked for clarification as he understands this is not a rate increase, rather fee increase. Mr. McDonald clarified the increase is for direct meter service fees to cover the cost of the operation. Mayor Powell wanted to be sure customers feel invited to come in and discuss their bill. Mr. McDonald said we do a lot of working with customers. There is a payment plan matrix utilized. The majority of Councilmembers present gave thumbs up to move forward.

Cynthia Langston, Solid Waste Manager presented a budget memorandum to Council to provide historical information regarding available resources. Collection amounts and commercial collection customers have increased about 50% in both areas. The approximate cost to extend the Casper Regional Solid Waste Facility customer hours is \$50,000. The full time additional Operator position is essential to keep up with the increased collections. Councilman Mundell asked how much waste comes from outside the City of Casper. Ms. Langston indicated about 15-20% of the landfill waste is coming from Baggs, Rawlins, Douglas, Glenrock, Kaycee, Midwest, Fremont County Tribes and some from Campbell County. Councilman Mundell suggested extensive overview as to the specific number and types of positions necessary.

Ms. Langston also provided a brief update on the status of the balers and addressed questions from Council. Council indicated support for moving forward with the recommendations presented.

City Manager Patterson presented Council with review of the future agenda. Mr. Patterson indicated he will take extra time reading through the items and encouraged Council to interject with any items of concern and/or to address removing any items from consent. Councilman Cathey discussed concerns with curb cuts along the section of road for the item pertaining to the public hearing for the Harmony Hills Addition. Andrew Beamer, Public

Services Director said the developer is working with WYDOT looking at the concerns for access, turning lanes, traffic and signals.

Council briefly discussed the Country Club Road Improvements Project with Ramshorn Construction. Hedquist Construction was the lowest bidder. Councilman Mundell requested clarification on the policies. City Manager Patterson stated the policies are binding by State Law. Judy Studer's associate, Rick Koehmstedt, will represent the City on this item. Councilman Sandoval suggested discussion as to thinking about awarding the contract to the lowest bidder. Councilman Hopkins encouraged discussion as part of the upcoming regular Council meeting. Councilman Cathey stated this situation creates an issue of conflict of interest. Mayor Powell pointed out that staff needs direction on how to prepare the agenda and decision needs to be made as to adding this item to the agenda with award to Ramshorn Construction. Councilman Powell said he felt this should be placed on the agenda for the discussion in the regular meeting. Present Councilmembers are in favor of preparing the agenda title for awarding Ramshorn Construction the Agreement.

The next agenda item discussed was regarding the Casper Fire Station No. 6 Replacement Project. Councilman Cathey asked why Station No. 2 couldn't be adjusted to meet needs and will ask this question at the Regular Council Meeting. Councilman Mundell inquired about the unique environment factors for Station No. 6. Mr. Beamer clarified the item in front of Council is for design and construction administration (not all design). The bay configurations are different to meet the needs of the apparatuses.

Next, Council discussed the Hogadon Skip Patrol and Maintenance Shop Project agenda item. Councilman Mundell asked how this building will be in relation to the lodge. City Manager Patterson said these buildings will need to be built first as maintenance building is currently positioned where the lodge will be built.

Councilman Mundell asked about salary figures in the budget books presented during the meeting. City Manager Patterson clarified those are current salary figures. Councilmembers will need to read the books in preparation for the budget presentation meetings next week.

Mayor Powell brought forward two pending items for Council to revisit, discussions for chickens within City limits and Caspar Collins Metal of Honor Proclamation. The majority of present Councilmembers agreed to discuss on a future work session agenda.

Councilmembers reported updates for each of their respective board meetings and news.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

V. H. McDonald
City Clerk

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Charlie Powell
Mayor