

CITY OF GREEN RIVER
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS
March 9, 2010

The Governing Body of the City of Green River met in workshop session at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Castillon called the meeting to order. The following Council Members were present: Pete Rust, Carl Morck, Tom McCullough, Jim Boan, and Lisa Maes. The following were present representing the City: City Administrator Barry Cook, Director of Community Development Laura Hansen, Chief of Police John Love, Parks and Recreation Director Walt Bratton, and Public Information Coordinator Stephen Pyles. Sweetwater County Representatives Joe Barbuto and Stan Blake were also present.

Discussion on Reducing Underage and Binge Drinking

Council Member Rust stated he is a member of the Prevention Advisory Council and would like to start opening discussions on how to address Sweetwater County's major problem with drug use, underage alcohol use, and binge drinking.

He introduced other members of the advisory group, Sweetwater County Representative Joe Barbuto, Erin Barbuto with Southwest Counseling, and Teresa Wire with Public Health Nursing.

Ms. Barbuto stated her focus is on prevention and harm reduction. She provided information on the concerns for underage drinking and what has worked in other Wyoming communities to reduce it.

She presented five research based recommendations that could be used to reduce the incidents of underage drinking and alcohol related crime.

- A point system for license holders wherein a specific number of infractions would call the renewal of their license into question.
- Require beverage server training for liquor license holder employees, and as a condition for the issuance of malt beverage permits. There is a four-hour training class for full-time and a two-hour training class for part-time employees or special event volunteers.
- Require security and outline how to prevent problems with underage drinking with the issuance of malt beverage permits.
- Enact social host laws: Specific laws with penalties for hosting parties where alcohol is served to someone under 21. And also have party patrols.
- Do compliance checks and shoulder tap compliance checks.

Ms. Barbuto stated there are measures that can be taken at "events" to try and reduce underage drinking.

- Limit the beer sales to a specific location where it is also served and consumed, where underage people are not allowed. This makes it easier for security to patrol and creates a different feeling to the event.
- Limit the number of drinks a person can purchase. The more the drinks are limited, the less likely drinks will go to someone who hasn't been carded.

Chief Love was asked to offer his opinion on the five recommendations. His response:

- The city has been doing compliance checks for five years through the Wyoming Chiefs and Sheriffs Association. The average has been about 94.5% compliance.

They haven't done the shoulder taps yet. (Going outside of a bar and having a young person contact an older person about buying them a case of beer.) He doesn't believe it happens that much.

The biggest problem is someone who is twenty-one buying alcohol or having parties for their buddies who are under twenty-one. It's difficult to cite. The kids won't tell who is supplying them with alcohol. Even when they are intoxicated, they are enough together not to tell you who got the beer for them.

- The point system: Chief Love wants the bars to feel free to call the police when there is a problem without being afraid of points being taken away or losing their liquor license. If crimes are going on within an establishment, he wants the police to be called.
- He is in favor of requiring the beverage server training as part of the liquor license issuance process. The State TIPS training is free, so he doesn't see a problem with requiring it.

The Chief spoke in favor of the training for special event permit volunteers because 25% of last year's total underage violations occurred during Flaming Gorge Days.

Basically, the people who sell alcohol for a living know what they are doing. It's the people who only sell beer for three hours once a year that really need the training. The volunteers are working hard and fast. They aren't really paying attention to who they are selling the beer to. If the person has a band on they sell them beer. But kids make their own bands. He believes the volunteers should be required to go through the training, since someone is making a whole bunch of money off the beer sales. It's up to the council to make the decision.

- Social Host Laws: Chief Love stated they had a situation the other night, where the host got the citation for supplying, but he needs to review the law regarding entry and citing everyone inside. He believes everyone should be cited. One good thing is, if someone is having a party, the neighbors usually let the police department know about it. They watch the place, and once an underage person comes out, they talk to them, and then have probable cause to go up to the door.

In regards to allowing bars to be open for twenty-four hours, Chief Love stated they have really cracked down on the establishments. They are required to surround their areas *to keep people in or out*, provide bouncers, check I.D.'s, and the officers drop in to make sure the I.D.'s are being checked. He doesn't feel the twenty-four hour openings are a huge factor for underage drinking.

The major contributor to the underage drinking is the concerts. It's hard to enforce when its dark, even though the organization has twenty-five security people, and there are twenty-five police officers, there is no way to catch them all. He also questioned why alcohol needs to be served at 10 a.m. even on a family day. He thinks that is ridiculous.

Over the years the city has tried just about everything to curtail underage drinking during Flaming Gorge Days. The police department is doing the best they can under the circumstances. He doesn't know what else to do but eliminate the event. When you have that much beer being sold, and 8,000 people wondering around in the dark, once people leave that circle of light, it's very difficult to see what they are up to. The event is out of control.

The group briefly discussed prevention programs offered in the schools.

Ms. Barbuto stated she was qualified and could be available to do the TIPS training. The training is good for three years.

In summary, the retailers aren't the problem. It's the special events that have beer sales using inexperienced servers that are the major contributors to the underage drinking problem, i.e. Flaming Gorge Days.

Council Member McCullough suggested they have a special workshop with the people on the Flaming Gorge Days Committee to discuss measures to be taken to reduce the problems with underage drinking, and to present the TIPS training idea to them.

Council Member Boan agreed, and asked Chief Love to come up with some recommendations, from the policeman's point of view, for the Flaming Gorge Days Committee to reduce problems during Flaming Gorge Days.

Strategic Plan and Executive Management Team Goals

Mr. Cook stated the purpose of the discussion was to make sure the strategic plan adopted by the governing body, was in line with the goals the department heads are operating under. In order for a strategic plan to be successful it must be a living document, a document that has an impact on the decisions made the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

Over the years there has been a “knowing doing gap” between the strategic plan, and actually following it. It is his objective to bridge the gap to make sure the current plan is a living document.

He presented the governing body with a report on the goals the departments are working on to meet the strategic plan, and the carryover of projects to make sure city staff is on the same page the governing body wants them on.

As they move forward through the budget process, it will be extremely critical that city staff and the governing body are on the same page, and they stay focused on the strategic plan. The dollars are simply not there to move outside of the plan.

He hopes the gap can be eliminated by:

1. Informing the governing body what is being done, by who, and when in 2010.
2. Reminding the governing body how decisions must be made in order to see progress in the elements of the plan. Staff hopes they will be thinking about their strategic plan, and how issues brought to them on the first and third Tuesdays relate to the plan. Are they moving the plan forward? Are they going to take away dollars set aside for the plan? The dollars aren't there for the strategic plan and anything else the governing body wants to add to it.

Mayor Castillon stated he has asked Mr. Cook to schedule a four hour workshop for the governing body to take a critical look at the strategic plan based on the resources they have to work with. There is a substantial shortfall they are going to have to deal with. The whole situation is not going to be pretty.

Mr. Cook stated he plans to have the draft budget to the governing body no later than April 15th. Workshops are scheduled on Thursdays through the month of May. A four hour workshop for the governing body could be scheduled for April 3rd or April 10th.

The employee relations committee is scheduled to give a presentation at the April 13th workshop to offer their suggestions on reducing the budget.

City Administrator's Report

Mr. Cook noted the Sweetwater delegation, both in the Senate and the House, to the state legislature really stepped up to try and help the cities and towns. They tried to get through several amendments and the percentages back statutorily.

Sweetwater County Representative Stan Blake explained his efforts to try and get the state budget amended to earmark money for the service road between Rock Springs and Green River. He will continue to investigate options to get money for the road, and to find ways he can hold “WYDOT's feet to the fire.” He will attend every meeting he can on the service road, and try and get Delbert McOmie (Chief Engineer), and John Eddins (District Engineer) to attend also. He applauds Green River for taking the lead on the issue.

Mr. Cook stated he had received an email from JPWB, Brian Seppie, on February 22nd regarding water supply issues to the southeast that still need to be resolved. Mr. Cook noted there is a water transmission line underneath Scott's Bottom Road, and another one will be located underneath the alternate road through the Jackman property, to the corporate limits, to accommodate the developers on the southeast side of town. The city is also moving forward this summer with water improvements to move water from the treatment plant over to the southeast side with a transmission line down Uinta Drive and Upland Way to the intersection of Hitching Post and Upland. A new pump station will be installed at the corner of Upland and Uinta. So, the fire flow issues, transmission issues, and volume issues are being addressed.

Mr. Cook noted another issue Mr. Seppie brought up in his email was the need for some form of flushing program for the stagnant water that will be sitting in the lines until the development in the southeast section is completed. The lines will need to be flushed out because there won't be the demand to keep up with the supply created. They will need to schedule a workshop with the JPWB to discuss how the city plans to take care of the stagnant water.

Mr. Cook explained the \$32,000 remaining from the 2007 SLIB consensus grant for the Animal Control Center needed to be returned to SLIB. In order to spend the \$32,000 the city has to budget \$92,000 it does not have, nor will they have it next year.

The bid opening for the Crossbow Street improvements is scheduled for March 16th with a bid award scheduled at the special council meeting on March 30th. The project is funded with sixth penny funding and consensus money for waterline improvements.

Mr. Cook contacted WYDOT regarding the replacement of the temporary traffic light at Uinta and Second South. They told him the replacement had been contracted out. There are two months remaining on the contract, so the light should be replaced within the next two months.

He is preparing the Sweetwater Television Franchise Agreement Renewal Ordinance for a public hearing and first reading on March 16th.

Staff is working on insurance issues for the Visitor Center land lease and also for the use of the Monroe School swimming pool for swimming lessons while the GRRC pool is closed. Staff believes the insurance being required by Rocky Mountain Power and School District No. 2 is excessive.

Mayor and Council Reports

Council Member Morck had nothing to report.

Council Member McCullough had nothing to report.

Council Member Boan thanked Representative Stan Blake for his support on trying to get funding for the alternate road to Rock Springs.

Council Member Maes thanked Representative Stan Blake, and the other Sweetwater county representatives for their efforts to get more money for the local governments. She expressed her frustration with the lack of concern by the majority of the state legislators regarding the revenue needs of the cities or towns.

Council Member Rust also thanked Representative Stan Blake. He noted the efforts of the Prevention Advisory Council isn't focused just on legislation, they have a strategic plan that gets everyone involved with trying to get underage and binge drinking under control.

Mayor Castillon noted he and Council Member McCullough had attended the Cat and the Hat reading contest at Washington School.

He has also talked with the Ashley Forest Service regarding the closing of their office in Green River because of budget cuts.

He will be attending two meetings with the county tomorrow. He hasn't heard from either the county or Rock Springs regarding the cooperative agreement for the initial phase of the alternate road.

The Mayor stated a meeting has been scheduled for March 22, 2010 on the Million Water Diversion Project. The purpose of the meeting is to educate the public. The coalition and a representative from the state engineer's office will be giving presentations.

Mayor Castillon announced the meeting scheduled for March 23, 2010 on the proposed 6th penny projects had been cancelled by the county commissioners.

The Mayor asked Mr. Cook to check into when Rocky Mountain Power would be removing the old transmission poles on Montana Way. The residents want them removed.

He mentioned Liberty Day on March 27th, and also the 2010 Census March Madness at the Pavilion on March 25, 2010.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk