

CITY OF GREEN RIVER
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS
April 13, 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, Ted York, Tom McCullough, Jim Boan, and Lisa Maes. The following were present representing the City: City Administrator Barry Cook, Director of Human Resources Debbie Klein Robertson, Director of Community Development Laura Hansen, Parks and Recreation Director Walt Bratton, Acting Parks and Recreation Supervisor Erek Roosa, and Public Information Coordinator Stephen Pyles.

Joint Powers *Advisory* Board Agreement for Sweetwater County Community Juvenile Services

Rock Spring Council Member Joyce Corcoran, coordinator for the Juvenile Justice Steering Committee, and Deputy County Attorney Bob Nugent, spoke on behalf of the committee formed approximately two years ago. Jill Johnson with Family Dynamics Counseling, and Mike Wilder with Juvenile Probation, and Don Borchardt School District No. 2 Executive Administrative Assistant were also present.

The whole thing was driven by Governor Freudenthal who is very concerned about juvenile justice issues throughout the state. The steering committee has worked with Judge Gary Hartman, the governor's staff person, and they will be taking him with them when they talk to the county commissioners. She also noted the Department of Family Services has also been involved from the very beginning. Legislation was passed to require all county attorneys' offices to provide single points of entry for youth getting in trouble.

The committee has representatives from the two city police departments, the sheriff's office, Family Dynamics Counseling, Southwest Counseling, the Youth Home, both School Districts, the county attorney's office, Judge Tom Glause, and many others.

Ms. Corcoran stated their request is not to form another Joint Powers Board. It is simply to get the county and the two cities to approve a Joint Powers Agreement to allow the formation of the Sweetwater County Community Juvenile Services *Advisory* Board so the county can receive the \$134,000 allocated to them. The new board will oversee and provide recommendations for the disbursement of the funding.

Juvenile justice is a serious problem in Wyoming. Ms. Corcoran is frustrated with the lack of understanding on what the group is trying to attain to help juveniles obtain the services they need locally so they don't have to be sent somewhere else.

The Wyoming legislature has allocated \$134,000 to every county to be used at the discretion of the local entities (board). The two main issues as established by a group that was hired by the Department of Family Services to do a comprehensive assessment on the services need in Sweetwater County are diversion and re-entry programs to keep the kids home and working with the families. A strategic plan has been written based on the assessment. The money will be forwarded to the county, and the grants officer will distribute the checks to the designated entities for the services.

Mr. Nugent explained the committee's efforts are focused on trying to meet the requirements of the Community Juvenile Services Act with a joint powers agreement. It does not set up a joint powers board. The board that is created by the agreement is advisory only. In essence, it's a pass through for state money. The board has to be in place in order to access the grant money allocated to the county. This is all the committee is trying to accomplish, without it the county will not receive the \$134,000 or any future allocations from the state legislature.

The committee is asking the Green River governing body to approve the agreement which the City of Rock Springs has already done. They are working with the county commissioners to get them to approve the agreement. Any one of the entities is free to withdraw from the agreement at any time.

The governing body expressed their concerns about the possibility of funding being taken away from the Department of Family Services, or for the cities and the county being required to allocate funding if the state funding was stopped. Mr. Nugent assured the governing body it is a state funded program. A diversion program was started in 2007 and the Department of Family Services helped the county get a pilot program started. The program has been extremely successful. They hope to keep it going with the state funding.

Jill Johnson handed out brochures on the current pre-court diversion program. She stated the legislature has allocated additional funding for the next biennium (2 more years). The new board will follow the strategic plan which has been approved by the attorney general's office as well as the agreement. The decision on how the money will be spent will be up to the new board as they follow the strategic plan. The focus will be on pre-court diversion streamlined by the family solutions program and re-entry programs. The age group they are working with is 10 to 17. Younger siblings over the age of six will attend the family group sessions.

Don Borchardt reported on the success of the current pre-court diversion program to help keep kids in school instead of being expelled. All the groups are working together.

Mr. Wilder stated kids are placed on probation from 90 days to 6 months. Kids are selected for participation in the pre-court diversion program by the county attorney's office and by the municipal court in Rock Springs. He explained the counseling portion of the program and the other requirements the kids have to meet. He noted the model for the program came from Mr. Nugent and Teton County.

He also explained the Juvenile Probation's truancy program, and their efforts to be pro-active with the kids. He strongly emphasized the mental health component noting in order to try and address what is going wrong with the children they have to address what is wrong with the family. He noted the current program is being funded by Volunteers of America, until 2011, and they will be seeking another round of grants.

Ms. Johnson noted the various agencies collaborate on a regular basis, and will continue to do so.

The board will be comprised of one representative from each of the following agencies:

- Sweetwater County Attorney's Office
- The Green River Police Department
- The Rock Springs Police Department
- Sweetwater County Sheriff's Office
- Department of Family Services
- Sweetwater County School District #1
- Sweetwater County School District #2
- Wyoming Public Defender's Office
- Sweetwater Board of County Commissioners
- Family Dynamics Counseling Center
- Sweetwater County Public Health

The council consensus was to place the agreement on the next council agenda for approval consideration.

Riverside Memorial Park Pathway Repairs

Mr. Bratton presented three options for the repair of the park area and pathway that was washed out last spring.

- Option One: \$40,000 — to replace 600 ft. of the pathway with new asphalt (6" road base and 12' wide with 3.5" thick asphalt), the sprinkler system, and re-seed and manicure the area.
- Option Two: \$20,000 — to replace 600 ft. of the pathway with concrete (75 yards of cement and concrete materials 3.5" thick), the sprinkler system, and re-seed and manicure the area.
- Option Three: \$7,000 — starting at the middle of the park at the red benches and rock memorial point—to install a concrete sidewalk north bound to the pathway location at the

north-central part of the park, re-seed and replace sprinkler system. Place sand along the north central portion of the park (east to west).

Staff recommendation is for option three to be completed by the end of June 2010.

Council consensus was for Option 3.

Employee Relations Committee Presentation

Committee members are Jason Brown, Ailene Elkin, Jeff Frink, Lori Jarvie, Alyssa Krumholz, Michael Liberty, Kathy Mount, Rick Owens, Stacey Nutt, and Lee Scritchfield.

Ms. Robertson noted the employees are concerned about how a tight city budget will affect their jobs, benefits and personal budgets.

Rick Owens spoke on behalf of the committee. He stated the employees are willing to do more with less. He presented the committees suggestions for cutting the operations budget by approximately 12.5% by doing the following:

- Reevaluate how economic development is done and streamline/cut costs as is prudent. (Cut budget funding for SWEDA, Futures, Chamber of Commerce and Main Street by at least 12.5% and consider the city's return on investment.)
- Reduce money/special services/waived fees provided to individuals/groups within the community, i.e.: Flaming Gorge Days, rodeo parking lot, rodeo arena maintenance, waived building permits and landfill fees. (If people are willing to come before the council and ask for money, they should be willing to volunteer their time to do tasks done by seasonal or other city employees, i.e. Flaming Gorge Days Committee clean up the park areas after their own events instead of city employees having to do it.)
- Reduce part time/seasonal hours; supplement seasonal tasks with volunteers. Their recommendation is to reduce the seasonal hires rather than cutting part-time employees, who provide a lot of services the city depends on.
- Suspend the purchase of art work.
- Reduce overtime; collaborate between departments; plan time better.

Responding to the above Mr. Cook stated:

- He has already reduced the budget amount requested by the special interests groups, they are less than what was funded last year.
- Staff is also looking at in kind services. He will have actual figures on the amount of waivers the city has authorized at the retreat.
- The part-time and seasonal employees have been reviewed along with the entry level salary rates, and over-time has been reduced.
- The budget for art work has been reduced from \$50,000 to \$10,000 at the recommendation of the Art Committee.

The overall average operations and asset acquisitions budget has been reduced by about 10.5 %. He will have an executive summary at the retreat on Saturday. He has not cut any positions, or implemented any furloughs, but salaries have been frozen. So, the personnel costs will remain flat.

Responding to a question from Council Member Boan, Mr. Owens felt the pay for the seasonal employees should remain the same at \$11 per hour. Not all of them are just cutting weeds; they have to do other things that require a degree of skill. They are doing more than someone who can work at minimum wage. It encourages the return of employees who have worked for the city previously, and reduces training time. They are basically ready to go from the day they are hired.

Council Member York noted a few years ago the city had increased the base wage for the seasonals to \$11 an hour because the city was having a hard time getting applications when the pay was less.

Mr. Owens stated their bottom line for the recommendations is to be pro-active in order to protect jobs and benefits. They feel the focus should be on maintaining and providing core services for the city.

Mayor Castillon stated jobs will be the last thing the governing body will cut.

The council consensus was in support of looking at the recommendations, and thanking the employees for showing their interest in working on reducing costs.

Proposed Changes to Chapter 7 – Overlay District and Zoning Map

Ms. Hansen noted at the January 29, 2010 URA and Main Street workshop, a decision was made to keep the URA and Main Street boards separate, and that the design review was outside of the realm of what the URA should be doing. The recommendation was to move the design review to overlay districting. Since the workshop, Mr. Dahlgren has been working diligently with the planning and zoning commission and URA to establish design criteria for overlay districts within the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Dahlgren gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed overlay districts and changes to the URA code.

The overlay district establishes additional standards and criteria in addition to the zoning district. They aid in the promotion and protection of specific development.

Green River currently has two overlay districts: the Green Belt District and the Bronze Belt District, both protect the natural features and beauty of the city.

Staff is proposing the addition of a Design Review District that will cover the former URA sub-districts (Traditional Commercial, Transitional Commercial, and Contemporary Commercial). This overlay district is designed to protect the “built” environment.

The Traditional Commercial District is the historic core of the downtown area including the National Register Historic District. It has the highest restrictions and guidelines in order to protect the “fabric” of the area.

The Transitional Commercial District includes both historic and modern architecture. This is mainly the entrance corridors to the city as well as West Second South.

The Contemporary Commercial District runs along Uinta Drive from the overpass up South Hill. It has more modern architecture. The overlay will allow control of future development.

The changes are being recommended to simplify the process, to offer a measure of protection for the special features and unique areas in Green River, and to provide a zoning map that reflects all the districts within the ordinance including the overlay districts. The changes will also clean up some of the language that was unclear.

Instead of the designs going to the URA once a month, staff will be reviewing the designs, and if they meet the guidelines, approving them, or when necessary they will be forwarded to planning and zoning which meets twice a month.

The changes are not substantial; they are making the ordinance easier to work with, protecting property values, and specific areas within the city, and upgrading the zoning map to show all districting.

There was a brief discussion on plastic back lighted signs.

Rezoning was also discussed briefly but is not part of this ordinance.

Cheryl Jensen with Castle Rock Realty explained her situation with her business sign being blocked by the trees on the right of way, and the need to have some sort of lighting for here sign. Her business is in the Traditional or Historic District.

Responding to questions from the governing body, Mr. Dahlgren stated letters were mailed out to approximately 207 business owners in the city before the planning and zoning public hearing. They had two property owners write letters, 15 requests for copies of the proposed ordinances, and two people showed up at the planning and zoning meeting.

Before this workshop, staff sent out another two hundred letters, with offers to deliver the ordinance via email, or in person (Mr. Dahlgren did hand deliver one). He had twenty email requests for the guidelines. He hasn't had any calls or letters of complaint against the ordinance. Staff has been as open as they possibly could be without hand delivering the information to each business.

Ms. Hansen asked the viewing audience to give Community Development a call and they will make sure they get a copy of the proposed ordinance.

City Administrator Comments

Mr. Cook stated he had received a copy of the resolution from the Joint Powers Water Board stating they would not be increasing water rates. Therefore, city staff is not recommending the rates be increased at this time.

He announced the city had received the \$452,000 State Loan and Investment Board Emergency Grant to replace the water line across the river.

Mr. Cook noted he had received notice that the consensus grants needed to have contracts before the end of June or the city would lose the funding. The legislature has not allocated any more consensus funding. Any money remaining after the projects are completed will have to be returned to the state.

The city has two consensus grant projects remaining. The SE Water Improvement Project is scheduled to start in June. The improvements will be going in along Uinta Drive and Upland Way to move the core capacity of water from the water treatment plant to the southeast.

The second consensus grant is for the SE Utility Improvement Project to install water and sewer lines on Scott's Bottom Road. Nelson Engineering is designing the spur road that will go through the Jackman property to the southeast corporate city limits. Bids for the road will be going out shortly.

Mr. Cook reminded the governing body their budget review retreat will be at the Hampton Inn at 9 a.m. Mr. Nieters will present the 3rd Quarter Budget Report and the governing body will review the Strategic Plan to make sure their goals are incorporated in the FYE2011 budget. He will have his Executive Budget Summary to them by Friday.

Responding to a question from the Mayor, Mr. Dahlgren stated the contractor for the pedestrian viaduct had 365 days to complete their work. However, their plan is to have it completed by the end of summer. The other structure being built is a temporary staging area to keep materials from entering the air when the steel for the railings is removed and sandblasted.

Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Rust had nothing to report.

Council Member York had nothing to report.

Council Member Maes reported the census questionnaire count is at the 77% mark which is the number returned for the 2000 Census. *The goal is to have 87% of the questionnaires returned.*

Council Member Maes commented on an editorial in the Casper Tribune regarding the need for a special legislative session to provide extra funding for cities and towns. She noted Green River is in a better situation than some of the other cities because of Jeff Nieters projection of a 30% decrease in sales tax revenues for FYE 2010, and the council's approval of a budget that reflected a 30% decrease. She wants the citizens to know the governing body had bitten the bullet last year, and so Green River is in better shape than some of the other communities.

Council Member Boan thanked the employees for taking time to give their presentation.

Council Member McCullough suggested WAM be encouraged to push for a special session to get additional funding for the cities and towns. He thinks once people realize some of their services are going to be cut, there will be more concern about additional funding for the cities.

Council Member McCullough noted there were a lot of volunteers down working on the new bike park last weekend. He commended them. It is close to being done, and he thinks it will be used a lot. He also thanked the city employees for their presentation.

Council Member Morck had nothing to report

Mayor Castillon thanked the enthusiastic volunteers who worked on the bike park. It is going to be a great thing for Green River. He also thanked the city employees for their presentation.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk