

**CITY OF GREEN RIVER  
COUNCIL RETREAT WORKSHOP  
January 15, 2011**

The Governing Body of Green River, Wyoming met at the Western Wyoming Community College, Green River Center at 8:00 am. The Mayor and the following Council Members were present: Tom McCullough, Jim Boan, Lisa Maes, Adam Coppolo, Gene Smith, and Gary Killpack.

City Staff present: City Administrator Barry Cook, Finance Director Jeff Nieters, Chief of Police John Love, Community Development Director Laura Hansen, Fire Chief Mike Kennedy, Public Works Director Mike Nelson, Human Resource Director Debbie Robertson, Parks and Recreation Director Walt Bratton.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Council**

George Parks, WAM Executive Director, spoke to council about the roles and responsibilities of council members. He said the minute you take office it changes people's perceptions of you. As a council member they need to remember they represent others and not just themselves. All members of the governing body, including the mayor and president of council, have equal votes and voice. With the exception of the mayor's veto power, no council member has more power than any other council member, and all should be treated with equal respect.

The process of government is a long process. Following the extra steps keeps you out of trouble. The process maintains the trust in government.

Mr. Cook said when people want things they want it now, but when they want something to stop they want it done by the book. Some council members don't feel like things are done quickly enough.

Council Member Coppolo said the city government should be run like a business. Government is not the exact same as a business but they are similar.

Mr. Parks said it is as important to look at what not to do as it is to look at what you should do. You need to have high expectations for the city but you also need to be realistic.

Council Member Boan said he believes the city should be run financially sound. Their spending should be justified to the public.

### **Wyoming Open Meetings Law**

Mr. Parks said the whole concept is that government should be as open as it can be and public records should be accessible. It is important to follow the procedures and policies.

Mr. Cook said he feels the majority of the governments follow the law, but laws are being changed for the 2% who are not.

Council Member Boan feels if you do not have someone watching government, it could make the honest people within government become dishonest because they do not think anyone is watching. It is a good thing to have people watching.

Mr. Cook said this is not providing a better government. They should have stiffer punishments for the 2% that do not follow law instead of punishing everyone.

Mr. Parks said any item that you use such as email is public knowledge if it has governmental issues. You can never please everyone all the time.

The Mayor asked if it was appropriate to go into an executive session after a meeting.

Mr. Parks said yes, to his understanding they could not do it unless they were in a meeting.

Mr. Cook said that today's meeting is considered a special meeting and was published so they can go into executive session if they choose to.

### **Mayor Comments**

The Mayor said he has learned a considerable amount from staff and the public in his time serving in government. He knows they are elected to do the best they can for the community. The council members need to treat each other with respect and remember that meetings are televised.

### **Budget Process Overview**

The Mayor asked Mr. Cook to give the council a monthly update on the budget and to give a midyear review of the budget, noting the budget has to balance every year.

Mr. Cook said the largest fund is the General Fund. The largest single source of revenue to the General Fund is Sales and Use Tax, which is comprised of 4% state rate and 1% local option rate. The city sets aside 25% of the operating expenses into an operating reserve. There are three major expenses in the General Fund and those are Personnel Services, Operations and Maintenance, and Asset Acquisitions.

Department budgets were cut on average of 11% this year. There are three more funds within the city:

- Capital Projects Fund – provides for the construction and major repairs of streets, parks, utility lines, and facilities.
- Enterprise Fund – this fund includes Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste. These are designed to function solely on the revenue from fees, without a transfer or subsidy from the General Fund for their operations.
- Risk Management Fund – a reserve fund, using the interest from that amount to operate the fund.

Also keep in mind what City government is all about. We provide services 24/7 to citizens of Green River. This also takes dollars to support your employees and the operational costs that many times are looked at as a given, but don't show up on the goals listed in Council Chambers. Service levels and costs to provide that service need to be looked at together with new projects.

The services provided to the citizens are expected now but we need to keep in mind that budgets are cut so some services might not be available.

### **Strategic Plan**

The Mission of the City of Green River is to provide the highest quality municipal services and highest quality city infrastructure and facilities in a customer friendly and financially responsible manner.

The Vision: Green River 2025 is an attractive, well planned city with an active downtown and riverfront and preferred residential neighborhoods in the region. Our city is a family community with great choices for recreation.

There will be a Citizen Summit for the Community Strategic Planning Session on Thursday, June 30, 2011, at 6:00 pm, at the Golden Hour Senior Center.

### **Department Reports**

**Community Development** - provide more customer service by the city website, review and modify department procedures, complete the viaduct project, market branding study, rewrite subdivision ordinance, rewrite maintenance codes, request upgrade of part-time employee to full-time to compensate for work that is required.

**Finance Department** - Finance is responsible for the retention and maintenance of 3,000 records within the city vault. They installed fiber optics on Mansface Tower, a new point to point connection to the city, replaced and installed 42 computers throughout the city, state-wide

wireless project, prepared and held 17 bid openings, 150 purchase orders, processed 26 bi-weekly payrolls for 275 employees each pay period, logged approximately 2,100 miles reading meters, processed 57,000 utility bills, 47,000 payments, and processed \$1,209,000 in grant reimbursements.

**Fire Department** - personnel consists of 31 volunteers and 3 full-time employees. In 2010 there was a decrease in total incidents of 14%: 229 incidents were reported and included structure fires, vehicle fires, rescue/emergency medical calls, gas spills/leaks, false alarms, smoke scares, police assists, and carbon monoxide calls. They have a total of 6,521 hours of documented training.

**Human Resources** - aligning the organizations functions with core beliefs and strategic plan, make employee's recognition and appreciation more effective, enhancing employee performance, enhancing employee safety efforts, facilitating programs, reestablishing trust and teamwork, develop strategies regarding organization succession and organized planning.

**Parks** - top accomplishment for 2010 receiving the Wyoming Association of Municipalities Community Hero Award, Playful City USA Award, completion of capital projects and asset acquisition projects, obtainment of grant funds of around \$300,000.

**Police** - to facilitate our primary goal, the safety of the citizen's of Green River. All officers including full and part-time Public Safety Dispatchers and Animal Control Officers will continue to receive advanced training in aspects of law enforcement that will allow them diversification and enhance the combined resources of the Police Department.

**Public Works** - continue to work with outside consultants on projects, maintain staffing and service levels, secure funding on an annual basis for capital improvements and street improvements, work with staff on change order issues, continue the slurry seal program, continue recycling program, transfer station, household hazardous waste program, continue to monitor the wastewater treatment plant with DEQ, continue with the collection system, follow the sewer master plan, continue with training for the Fleet Division, and continue with the Southeast Water Expansion Project.

### **Legislative Issues**

The Mayor noted the last few years there has been a combined effort by the City of Green River, City of Rock Springs, and the County. They all pooled their resources and came up with a list of important topics that they presented to the Legislative Session. On December 27, 2010 at the Legislative Forum the Mayor and Mr. Cook presented the following to the Legislators:

- Additional money for local governments, continue the Consensus Block Grants
- Sales and Severance Taxes being raised
- Raising gasoline and diesel tax by 10% over three years
- Modernization and remediation process for landfills, and provide additional funding for transfer stations or lined landfills
- Oppose any mandates for excessive information
- Service Road between the City of Green River and Rock Springs

George Parks, WAM Executive Director, said Governor Mead has been supportive and has been asking if the cities and towns received a fair shake. The 10% cut in State agencies money did not seem the same but came from projects, not personnel like governmental agencies. What seems to be important to cities and towns does not seem to be important to legislators.

The Mayor said that the governing body needs to make their presence known to the legislature on February 16, 2011.

### **Mayor and Council Round Table Discussion**

The Mayor asked if the governing body would like to continue having retreats like this, and if so, how often. He said he appointed members to inter-agency boards since he did not have any volunteers.

Council Member Coppolo said there are a couple of reasons he thinks the service road between Green River and Rock Springs is a good thing. He said there is more land that can be developed on the south side of the Interstate, and the city could possibly annex the city all the way to Highway 191.

Mr. Cook said the owner of the Winter building wants to know if the city has any interest in the building. She does have other parties that have showed interest in the building but she would put the others on hold to see if the city is interested.

Council Member Boan said they would need to know what the cost would be, if it would be practical for the Police Department, and how much would it cost to buy it.

John Love said it is a better location than what they have seen before. It would be practical.

Council Member Coppolo asked if the businesses interested are commercial and would they be better suited for that site.

Mr. Cook said they are commercial businesses.

Council Member Boan said at the workshop he asked for \$200,000 to be set aside for the tourism committee. This money could be used for the Union Pacific Depot/Tourism plan. He would like to know if the council would vote to put the money aside and put this on an agenda. If any money is set aside and it is needed for something else it can be moved so the money isn't committed to anything for sure, but is put aside for the possibility of using it for tourism.

He also said he would like to see money set aside for the growth of the city by the river. They could buy homes when people leave the area and it could ultimately be used for commercial sites to build a business by the river.

Mrs. Hansen said on January 25, 2011 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm there will be a tour of the Union Pacific Depot.

Council Member Coppolo said one of the issues that came up with moving the Public Information Coordinator to full-time was that there are a lot of part-time people that have worked for the city for a long time and would like to have a chance to receive benefits from the city. He would like to see the city offer them a reduced benefit. He also has a problem with the city giving full-time employees comp-time on top of vacation time.

Council Member Killpack said the problem would be if you give to one part-time person you would need to give to all of them.

Mrs. Robertson said they would have to come up with the stipulations and requirements that would qualify a part-time person to receive the benefits.

Council Member Boan does not know any companies that give part-time employees benefits and he would not be in favor of this. They know when they take the job they are part-time and they will not receive the benefits.

Council Member Maes said there are companies that do give the part-time people benefits. The city wanted to retain employees and having benefits is a way to do so.

Council Member Smith said if money is going to be set aside for tourism then he would feel better if it was listed for the Depot. If the city is going to start acquiring riverfront property, it needs to be listed with its own strategic plan.

Mrs. Hansen said if council is looking to move forward with the riverfront property then they have to have a plan, it is a state statute.

The Mayor said the city needs to adopt it and fund it.

Mrs. Hansen said right now the city has a comprehensive plan. She would like to have a new plan in place by 2015. She suggested the governing body set money aside every year for the

comprehensive plan. This would include a plan for every department within the city, in one place.

Council Member Smith suggested that staff put it on the agenda as a budget resolution to put money toward the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Members agreed.

### **New Vehicles for Police, Fire, and Parks Departments**

Council Member Coppolo said he feels the city has jumped the gun on the purchase of new vehicles. The money allocated was a lot higher than the original amount that was asked. He feels there needs to be more information given on this.

Council Member McCullough said the money was set aside, and if the total amount is not used then they can return it back. Staff is waiting to move forward and has done the research on this.

Council Member Killpack said if the vehicles are needed and have been approved, he agrees with moving forward.

Council Member Smith said he is for the new vehicles, but he does not like leasing the vehicles. Leasing the vehicles commits money for multiple years.

Mr. Cook said once the motion passed, and it was not reconsidered that night, then they lost the right to reconsider. Motion to rescind is an option but you have to have four votes.

Council Member McCullough asked if Council Member Coppolo had the four votes that are needed.

Council Member Coppolo did not have the four votes.

Council Member Killpack said he does not think the new council members have the right to change what the other council discussed and passed.

Mr. Cook said the Fire Department would like to purchase one truck and lease another. The Police Department would purchase five vehicles with no lease. Parks would purchase five vehicles with no lease.

Council Member Coppolo asked why there was maintenance done on a vehicle that was going to be traded off.

Council Member Boan said those departments did not know new vehicles would be funded. The city had no extra money so they fixed what they needed to in order to use the vehicle.

Council Member Maes would like to see an ice skating/hockey rink put down by the Depot. She would like to see money set aside for it.

Council Member Boan said he would like to see a dollar amount before he would commit to it.

Council Member Smith asked don't we have something like that already.

Mr. Bratton said yes but it is not maintained for ice skating because of the weather.

Council Member Coppolo said the city needs to put money back into the Risk Management Fund. They have taken money from it to pay for other items and now it's time to put money back.

Mr. Cook said there is \$1.7 million in the Risk Management Fund.

Council Member Boan asked how much 6<sup>th</sup> Penny money is left.

Mr. Cook said the council has not allocated any of the \$550,000.

Mr. Nieters said the \$550,000 6th Penny money needs to go for infrastructure. He said council has not allocated \$1 million of the 5<sup>th</sup> Penny money.

Council Member Coppolo said if they use \$400,000 for the comprehensive study and other items they have talked about then it would leave \$600,000.

Mr. Cook said whatever council puts aside, it needs to be used for infrastructure.

Council Member Boan said they cannot keep putting money in the Risk Management Fund just as short term thing it needs to go there and stay there.

Council Member Maes asked what the total of the first 6<sup>th</sup> Penny payment was.  
Mr. Nieters said \$2 million.

Council Member McCullough asked if the \$550,000 they received was going to go towards the FMC Project.

Mr. Nieters said no, this money will go into an 6<sup>th</sup> Penny reserve account to be used for future infrastructure.

Council Member McCullough said there is still a million dollars that council can decide to use for what they want.

Council Member Smith said they need to remember the money they have should be used for streets that were not funded in the budget this year.

Mr. Cook said the staff needs direction on what council would like to do with contracts for public improvements. The biggest item to discuss is change orders. He said through discussions he understands that council is going towards a force account being added to a contract for any unforeseen issues that may come up. The council needs to know that even the force account money needing to be spent will still need to be approved by the governing body. The council needs to decide what they want in the contract.

He said he is concerned that engineering firms are leaving things out so this makes change orders more common. The city needs to have a better design review to start with that way they cannot leave out items on the specs.

Council Member Coppolo said if the contractor does not read the information that is available then the city should not pay for their neglect.

Council Member Boan said if a force account is asked for in the request, it needs to include the dollar amount. They need to be informed in order to make the appropriate decision.

### **Special Council Meeting**

The Special Council Meeting started at 3:30 p.m. following the retreat/workshop.

### **Adjourn to Executive Session**

Council motioned to adjourn to executive session on personnel at 3:31 pm. Motion carried. (7-0)

### **Reconvene**

The governing body motioned to reconvene at 3:35 p.m. Motion carried. (7-0)

### **Adjournment**

The governing body motioned to adjourn at 4:30 p.m. Motion carried. (7-0)

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H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk