

CITY OF GREEN RIVER
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS
December 13, 2011

The governing body of the City of Green River met in workshop session at 6:33 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Castillon called the meeting to order. The following Council Members were present: Gary Killpack, Adam Coppolo, Tom McCullough, Jim Boan, and Lisa Maes. The following were present representing the City: City Administrator Barry Cook, Director of Public Works Mike Nelson, Director of Finance Jeff Nieters, Director of Human Resources Debbie Klein Robertson, Director of Community Development Laura Leigh, Interim Chief of Police Chris Steffen, Director of Parks and Recreation Allan Wilson, Recreation Supervisors: Kevin Sadler, Katie Duncombe, Sherry Schumacher, and Public Affairs Specialist Stephen Pyles.

Council Member Smith was not present.

Crystal Classic

Recreation Supervisor Kevin Sadler said the event is planned to take place on February 17, 2011 and February 18, 2011 at the Expedition Island.

He said when the event was put together there were four main goals they wanted to take place.

- Make this event a Winter Festival
- Have the Ice Carving as a central part of the event but have other event to keep people there all day. They are planning for a live band, s'mores station, kid's games, ice cube hunt, pancake breakfast, and a 5-k run.
- Make it a family friendly event
- Have an event that will bring in a large number of people local and non-local. Promote Green River along with the local businesses.

The advantages of having the event on the Expedition Island are: there are bathrooms, better decorating possibilities, a place for people to be able to get warm, and there is a place to host some of the events. There would be one central location for all activities. The Parks Department would not have to move the ice blocks as far. He said Mr. Wilson is looking into having a wagon pulled by a tractor in order to transport people to and from the island.

He said there are some issues with having it on Flaming Gorge Way: staff would have to block the street, make arrangements with the county to use their bathroom facilities; the drive-up windows on some businesses cannot be blocked and blocking the street does block the drive-up windows.

He said staff did present these ideas to the URA Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and both boards agreed with having the event on the Island.

Mr. Wilson said if there is a wreck in the tunnels, Flaming Gorge Way will have to open right away to traffic and that would cause the event to be interrupted. This has never happened but has always been a concern.

Council Member Boan said the event was put back into the budget in order to support the downtown businesses and utilize the parking lot on Railroad Avenue. The plan is good but it defeats the whole purpose. He thought the plan was to have it take place on Sunday and Monday to offset the overtime costs. He is disappointed that staff spent the time creating this event on the island when it was suppose to be downtown.

Mr. Sadler said a good majority of the downtown businesses are not open on Sunday and Monday. That was one of the reasons they moved the date. He said in a way the event was an inconvenience to the businesses. Staff felt having it on a Friday and Saturday would give people an option to come. Staff has looked into hosting the event at both sites but thought it would be good to make it a winter activity.

Mr. Wilson said this does not take away from the downtown. Once the shelter and fence on Railroad Avenue is completed, the event could be moved.

Mr. Sadler said having the pavilion open so people can get warm is a big reason why they wanted to have it at the island. This way they are not getting cold and leaving.

Mr. Wilson said as far as overtime. They have compared both options, having the event on Friday and Saturday opposed to Sunday and Monday really would not cost any more or less. He said they have \$1,000 for advertising from the Travel and Tourism Board but if this is approved then they will go back to the Travel and Tourism Board to ask for more advertising money.

Council Member Killpack said the bottom line is success. When it was on Main Street it was not successful otherwise it would have been put in the budget. He applauded the Parks and Recreation Department for thinking out of the box. He thinks it can be a great success. The merchants could still be involved by putting something from their business in the bags that will be passed out at the event.

Council Member Coppolo said this event was cut just because there was no money for the event not because it was not successful. He said they need to find a way to tie the island and downtown together. You could have the ice carving on Main Street and the other events at the island.

Council Member Maes said she agrees with Council Member Coppolo. These carvings are a piece of art, and they bring in tons of walking traffic. If they are down on the island the sculptures will be gone in a few days and no one will see them. Sunday and Monday did work for the carvers who have to travel. She said you could have some events on Saturday and then carry it over to Sunday and Monday. It is not much harder for the parks staff to bring the ice to Flaming Gorge Way opposed to the Island.

Mr. Sadler said the main reason they have it in one location is to keep people there instead of leaving to different locations.

Council Member Coppolo said they could offer a wagon ride from ice carving on Flaming Gorge Way to the island.

Mr. Wilson said he would not be comfortable with hauling people from Flaming Gorge Way to the island under the underpass because of safety issues.

Mike Brown vice chair on the URA board said they were approached by staff about both options and they decided having it on the island would be better option. This does not mean the main street business won't benefit from this event, just because it is located on the island. They can have coupon books and other items put into the gift bags given out on the event. This is a city event and not just a main street event.

Council Member McCullough said he appreciates both board's opinion but he thinks there needs to be a compromise. The ice carving should be on Railroad Avenue/Flaming Gorge Way and other events can happen on the island. He thinks having it on Friday and Saturday would be fine.

The Mayor said he agrees with Friday and Saturday event. He said if the plan is to have the ice carving on Railroad Avenue he will guarantee that people will not stay for the finish of the carvings. It would be better to have the event in one place, a place for families along with a place to get warm. He likes the idea of a winter festival and he thinks it would draw more people. Having it on Flaming Gorge Way is not the ideal situation.

Council Member Maes asked if anyone had talked to the downtown business owners.

Mr. Wilson said no.

Council Member Killpack said he does not see why they should not try something different and see how it does.

Council Member Boan said he will support the event taking place on the island. Changing it to a winter festival might bring more people in and keep people in one area so they do not leave. The main street businesses do not support events that take place downtown and he is tired of funding events down there and not having the business stay open. He said let try something new.

Council Member McCullough said he would support the island but if he sees that it does not have a lot of people attending, staff will have a hard time during the budget convincing him to fund this event.

Owner of Book and Bean Misty Zimmerman said she has opened every year except one because the event date was changed multiple times. She said she would like to see the event stay on Flaming Gorge Way because the ice sculptures will be protected and they will last longer in the shaded areas. The tourists stop to look at the sculptures and many other people walk the area also. She wants this event to be a success no matter where it is. She is hoping the council does not judge the success of this event by one year only because it is a big change and people might not be aware of it. That does not mean it won't be a success in the next year.

Discussion on Water and Sewer Lines

Mr. Cook said staff is seeking direction on the separation point for sewer lines in the City of Green River and where the responsibility will be divided between the city and the property owner. Currently, it is the property owner's responsibility for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of the sewer line that comes out of the house and goes all the way to the connection on the main. The water line is separated at the property line. The reason for the difference is because the water is controlled by the city and they sewer line is not.

The Mayor said the water line stops at the curb stop and some curb stops are on the sidewalks so how would that work as far as ownership.

Mr. Nelson said it would not change the ownership. The property line is the end of the property owner's responsibility from there it is the city's responsibility. He said the curb stop is the city's responsibility so if something goes wrong with it the city fixes it but the demarcation line is the property line.

Council Member Coppolo said what about the people who have curb stops in the middle of the property line.

Mr. Nelson said it does not matter; the responsibility of the owner goes to the property line.

Council Member McCullough said it is up to the owner to maintain the sewer and the city maintains the water line.

Council Member Coppolo said if work is being done and a line is damaged then it is the contractor's responsibility, not the city.

Mr. Nelson said they surveyed ten cities in Wyoming. In all ten cities, the homeowner is responsible from the curb stop to the house for water line maintenance. In eight of the ten cities the homeowner is responsible from the house to the sewer main. In Worland their ordinance was not clear and in Riverton the homeowner is responsible from the house to the property line.

Council Member McCullough said he would support an ordinance saying the homeowner is responsible from their house to the main line, for sewer.

National League of Cities Service Line Warranty

Utility Service Partners Regional Account Manager Bill Diones said they partnered with the National League of Cities to offer an affordable home protection solution for property owners. This helps them deal with the financial burden of unanticipated utility line repair and replacement costs that are not the city's responsibility to repair. Some of the benefits to the program are:

- There is no cost for cities to participate

- Affordable rate for residents
- The repairs are made by trusted local contractors
- Reduces local officials' frustration
- Increases citizen satisfaction
- There is no deductible
- 24/7 customer service
- All repairs are performed to local code

Currently, they have eighty cities and towns that are part of this program.

The program provides \$4,000 of coverage per occurrence with no annual aggregate. This is for repair or replacement of the line. It also provides an additional \$4,000 for street or sidewalk cutting so if there is a need to cut into either it will be covered. The standard rates are \$4.50 per month for water and \$5.95 per month for sewer. There are two different levels of discounts: if you sign up during the campaign cycle you receive a 10% discount and if you pay on an annual basis you get another 8% discount. If the city chooses not to take the royalty you would receive an additional 10% discount. The company has paid around fifty to fifty-five thousand claims with a claim denial rate under three percent usually due to non-payment of premiums. The average repair cost for water is around \$1,275 and for sewer is \$3,800.

Their commitment is to the homeowners, the city and to the National League of Cities. Their headquarters are in Canonsburg, PA and he is based in Centennial, Colorado. They are owned by Macquarie Bank which is a three hundred billion dollar bank that invests in infrastructure investments. They partnered with the National League of Cities in 2010 and in that time they have partnered with eighty governmental organizations. They have been doing this since the mid ninety's.

The essence of the partnership is a partnership marketing agreement. Which is a year-long agreement with full indemnification and they pay for all costs of the program. The agreement itself is a page and a half including signature blocks so it is a straight forward, honest, and fair arrangement where they work with the city.

Council Member McCullough asked if the city has to belong to the National League of Cities. How long does a person have to wait before they can file a claim? Can a person go with one or the other coverage's?

Mr. Diones said no the city does not have to belong to the National League of Cities. A person has thirty day waiting period when coverage is purchased outside the campaign period and no waiting period if they purchased during the campaign period. They can pick and choose the coverage they want.

Council Member Killpack clarified that there was no deductibles for water or sewer coverage. He asked if the discounts would apply every year.

Mr. Diones said if a person enrolled and paid for the coverage annually it would carry over every year, if they continue their coverage. He said if someone dropped the coverage and they paid annually they could get some of their premium back.

Council Member Boan asked if they could start the coverage tomorrow.

Mr. Diones said they do the sign ups in March but they can go ahead and inform the residents immediately through advertising and mailings. They typically find responsiveness is the best when they have the campaigns in March and in October.

Council Member Boan said he completely supports this.

Council Member Killpack asked if the prices are the same for businesses.

Mr. Diones said this coverage is for residential only.

Council Member Maes said she agrees.

Mr. Nelson asked how it works with a plugged sewer.

Mr. Diones said a plugged sewer is covered under the program. If someone has a clog in the sewer line and there is a problem with the line, they will video the line to see what is going on and it would be covered.

The Mayor asked how many households have service in Green River.

Mr. Nelson said around 4,000.

Council Member Boan said it should be posted online on the city's website, facebook, twitter, and channel thirteen.

The Mayor said they could include a flyer in the city billings too. He asked who collects the fees. He asked if this will take a form of a resolution, if so if could be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Diones said they do the billing and they collect the fees. If the city chooses to take the royalty they will send it back to the city.

The Mayor said he thinks it should be passed to the citizens.

All council members agreed.

Police Department Presentation on Fraud

Detective Tom Jarvie said fraud has become an issue in Green River. He said he has ten years working with these types of issues. Globally, there was a two trillion dollar loss in 2009. In the United States the crime losses reported doubled last year. In 2010 there were 725,087 fraud complaints in 2010 and the losses were \$1.7 billion.

Fraud is a unique crime and some of the people enter into it willingly and if that is the case people are less likely to report it.

Types of fraud:

Relationship – suspect forms a relationship with the victim through an on-line dating service and then convinces the victim to send money.

Grandparent/emergency – suspect calls claiming to be a grandchild or a lawyer for a grandchild in trouble asking the victim to send money immediately through Western Union or Money Gram. The caller may also claim to be a lawyer representing the grandchild.

Overpayment – suspect offers to purchase an item sold through a classified as or online auction. Suspect pays more than the asking price with a cashier's check or money order and asks for the balance to be sent back. The original payment is later found to be counterfeit.

Mystery Shopping/Employment – being enticed by a seemingly great work from home job offer, the victim is asked to pay a fee; ship the merchandise that was purchased to them, or send the money from a cashed check or money order.

Payday Loan – shortly after applying for or checking into on-line payday loan you begin receiving aggressive demanding collection calls. Callers usually have foreign accents. Even though you sent one to a legitimate payday loan it can go to other places that are not good.

He said there are a lot of problems with overseas fraud and these are almost impossible to trace.

Lottery/Prize/Inheritance – If you are offered winning or inheritance from another country, it is fraud.

Guidelines:

- Never send money to someone you don't know
- Never send out personal information online because you do not know where they are
- Never assume any check or money order will clear, the counterfeit ones look very real
- Always report fraud to IC3.gov or your local police department. This website is run by the National White-collar Crime Center and the FBI. Reporting fraud to this website will give us some idea of the total amount lost due to fraud in the United States.

The Green River Police Department will always take a report whenever someone becomes a victim of fraud. Prevention is the best way to stop fraud from happening so he will continue to educate everyone on fraud and how to prevent it from happening.

Council Member McCullough said it is amazing how much people know about you once you have purchased something online. Everyone should be aware of fraud and report it when it takes place.

Council Member Maes said she received an email thanking her for her purchase. She looked into it and it was fraudulent. She reminds everyone to look at their bank accounts and keep track of what is going on.

City Administrator's Report

Mr. Cook said there have been some concerns with Cowboy Corner. He has been informed by the building inspector that they are under compliance with the nuisance orders and ordinances in the city. He understands that the governing body would like to clean up the city but there are ten businesses that are located in B1 area and are all zoned properly and have business licenses as towing/auto repair business. If we look at one business we will be looking at all ten businesses.

Council Member Coppolo said after the comprehensive study is completed and the zoning structure changes these businesses would be grandfathered in. They would not have to change until they leave so we could address these issues at that time.

Director of Community Development Laura Leigh said the Comprehensive Plan would give goals and objective statements; it does not change the zoning ordinance. That would be second step. If the city changes the language to say that towing operations are no longer permitted those business would be legal until that use is discontinued for a period of eighteen months or longer.

Council Member Boan said just because they have a business license does not give them a right to have a junk yard.

Mr. Cook said he is working with the police department on a contract for services to house animals at our facility, from anything west of the tunnels. The animal shelter has room and would be able house these animals but he wants to make sure they charge correctly and he does not want to fill it up with animals from out of city corporate limits.

He is looking at the Municipal Court taking over the Driving under Influence and the Driving under Suspension violations.

He said the Traffic Committee has met and they are looking into several intersections in the city. There are looking into a request for two hour parking on Flaming Gorge Way. The traffic committee is reluctant to do so because there is no issue with parking down town. They are looking into the speed limits within the city to clarify the new legislation that was passed. They are looking into traffic light at intersections but there are a lot of requirements that go along with those being installed. They are also looking into roundabouts which would slow traffic down but allow the traffic to keep moving.

The Mayor asked if the traffic committee is coming up with any ideas to help with parking in the downtown area.

Mr. Cook said no they have not. If the two hour limit goes into effect it would be for owners of businesses and residents so they are hesitant to require the two hour limit. It seems to be a perception issue more than a real problem.

The Mayor said there are issues with parking and he would like to see the committee come up with some suggestions on how to fix it.

Council Member Maes said she does shop down town and she has never had a problem finding a parking place no matter what time of day she is there.

The Mayor said some businesses do have parking lots but they are off limits to other people.

Council Member Coppolo said there were issues before with courthouse employees parking on the street instead of the parking lots. So this is something that can be discussed with the County. He has not had a problem with parking either.

Mayor and Council Reports

Council Member Killpack said Merry Christmas. He thinks roundabouts are efficient.

Council Member Boan had nothing to report.

Council Member Maes agreed with the roundabouts being a good way to help with the traffic problems. She said she appreciates the Parks Department work on the Crystal Classic. She reminds council that the event is weather driven and is being changed so the participation could be down.

Council Member Coppolo thanked Parks and Recreation for their ideas. He said roundabouts area an accident waiting to happen. One in a large space can be good but if there is not adequate space it is a problem.

Council Member McCullough had nothing to report.

The Mayor said he is disappointed with the flyers for the National High School Rodeo. For some reason the city is not on them. It is promoted as a community event. He is bothered by the fact that the city fought hard to be a part of this event and they seem to get left out of the advertising part.

Mr. Wilson said Mr. Lloyd will be sure to contact him so he can make sure the city logo will be included on the next batch. He said Mr. Lloyd will be putting binders together that will be given to every state and provenience. They asked for a two page spread about Green River Parks and Recreation and what there is to do in Green River, all of which will be included in this binder, so he will be preparing it.

The Mayor said there is a problem with the traffic at intersections but he is not sure about the roundabouts. He thanked the Parks Department for their work on the Winter Festival.

Adjournment

The Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk