

**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY**  
**June 29, 2020**

**Meeting Convened:** 5:29 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium

**Meeting Adjourned:** 7:42 p.m.

**City Councilmembers present:** Kraig Andrews, Chuck McDaniel, Phyllis Norris, Phil Pe'a, Anna Stout, Rick Taggart, and Mayor Duke Wortmann.

**Staff present:** City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Principal Planner/CDBG Administrator Kris Ashbeck, Public Works Director Trent Prall, Finance Director Jodi Romero, Utility Director Randy Kim, Management Analyst Johnny McFarland, Senior Assistant to the City Manager Greg LeBlanc, and City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann.

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Mayor Wortmann called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics**

**a. 2020 Program Year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding Requests**

Mr. Caton introduced the topic by stating that the purpose of this workshop is to establish a work plan for the 2020 CDBG Program Year by recommending which projects should be funded. Ms. Ashbeck noted that the City has received grant requests of \$655,867 from outside agencies and has identified nine City capital improvements projects totaling \$1,028,595 that would be eligible for CDBG funding for a total of \$1,684,462 in grant requests (excluding \$75,000 administration funding requested). The City's allocation is \$469,134 for the CDBG 2020 Program Year.

Discussion ensued about capital requests, such as vehicles, for which HUD has provided direction are considered service projects. Support was given to fully fund the HomewardBound Homeless Shelter Remodel.

Ms. Ashbeck reviewed the City capital requests. Conversation followed about the requests for the West Lake Park improvement, historic preservation of the water plant, and lead water lines.

Prior to the second discussion topic, City Council expressed support for holding special meetings on Mondays for land use items. The purpose of workshops was also explored.

**b. Tobacco & Vaping Discussion**

Recent community conversations have highlighted the opportunity to explore taxing the sales of tobacco and vaping products. Taxes on tobacco and vaping products is universally used by state

governments in the United States. The rationale behind these taxes is typically to reduce the demand for tobacco products due to associated health risks, and to generate tax revenue for tobacco secession and tobacco related health services and education.

Kelsey Fife with Mesa County reviewed tobacco and vaping use in Mesa County. Tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable death. Additionally, vaping and its associated products appeal to young people because of the flavors offered and the high-tech look of the devices. Ms. Fife described community strategies to reduce youth vaping and tobacco use: smoke/vapor free areas, price increase, and tobacco retail licensing.

Discussion ensued about whether the County will put a tobacco tax on the ballot, the fact that the State will have a question this November, vaping products currently are not taxed, increasing the cost for products will unfairly impact individuals who earn lower wages, a request to receive additional information from Jodi Radke, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, and Naomi Amah, American Heart Association, policy considerations to increase the required 15' distance of smoking from a business's doorway to 25', and the timing of ballot question for November election.

### **c. DeBrucing Discussion**

City Manager Caton reported the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will negatively affect the City's revenues, and 2020 revenues are projected to be 25% lower than budgeted. Because the formula to calculate the TABOR surplus is based on the previous year's actual revenues or the revenue allowed under TABOR restrictions (TABOR Limit), whichever is lower, this reduction could result in a greater amount of 2021 and future revenues being subject to the TABOR Surplus calculation. The "whichever is lower" requirement of the TABOR amendment is what causes the ratchet-down effect.

Discussion ensued about the TABOR ratchet-down effect, how the CARES Act would impact the TABOR calculation (Federal monies are exempt from TABOR calculations), the debt service, communities who have permanently "de-Bruced," the Gallagher amendment being placed on the State ballot, and a possible sunset of 10-years to de-Bruce.

City Attorney Shaver stated that staff is recommending a 15-year sunset and support was expressed for this recommendation.

### **Agenda Topic 2. City Council Communication**

Decorum at City Council meetings was addressed and Councilmember McDaniel discussed a suggestion by Councilmember Taggart about a possible pledge or policy with principles, practices, and actions that lead to fruitful conversations. The pledge would note that it is possible to disagree without being disagreeable, there are a lot of emotions associated with this job, the dais has been used to criticize other institutions and individuals, and support to add the policy as a resolution to Wednesday night's Council meeting agenda.

Councilmember Stout suggested that City Council issue a statement in support of the Police Department. It was requested that the statement wait until a plan is solidified regarding the hiring of legal counsel to provide in-house services for our first responders.

Councilmember Stout reported that there will be a Task Force meeting tomorrow evening. The Task Force will explore ways to ensure a transparent process is in place in terms of the documentation, reporting structure, and a separate website.

**Agenda Topic 3. Next Workshop Topics**

Mr. Caton stated that the July 13 Workshop will cover the following topics: marijuana licensing, tobacco and vaping, Parks and Recreation Open Space master plan.

**Agenda Topic 4. Other Business**

There was no additional business.

**Adjournment**

The Workshop adjourned at 7:42 p.m.