

**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY**  
**August 17, 2020**

**Meeting Convened:** 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium

**Meeting Adjourned:** 6:35 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, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Senior Assistant to the City Manager Greg LeBlanc, Management Analyst Johnny McFarland, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, and City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann.

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Mayor Wortmann called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics**

**a. Tobacco and Vaping Discussion**

City Manager Caton stated that there have been several discussions with City Council regarding a possible tax on tobacco and vaping products. He noted that the Agenda Review Committee requested this item be brought back for discussion as additional information is available regarding the possible amount collected in taxes, which was included in the agenda materials.

Tax on tobacco/nicotine products has been used as a measure to reduce youth smoking. Municipalities along the I-70 corridor have passed a \$4/per pack tax for this purpose. Also, past discussions included the idea that the revenue from this tax could be used to fund Parks and Recreation. The modeling for revenue estimates included a \$2/pack tax and 30% for other nicotine products. Communities that have adopted a tobacco tax struggled to come up with projected revenues. Mr. Caton noted he received a suggestion that a cap be put in place because certain products, such as cigars, can be very expensive.

Discussion ensued about the reason this item was coming forward so soon after the workshop on August 3 with the same topic, the new information that was provided in the agenda materials, a possible review of the policy regarding the role of the Agenda Committee, the timing of bringing this forward as it will penalize consumers and businesses, partnering with the County so that an area-wide tax could be considered, the need to wait until the Parks and Rec Open Space study is complete to determine the community's needs, consideration of starting at \$1/pack and increasing to \$2/pack over three years, and consideration to include other items to tax such as marijuana, alcohol, etc.

Support was expressed to bring this topic forward in time for a possible ballot question in April 2021.

**Agenda Topic 2. City Council Communication**

Councilmember McDaniel discussed the policy that describes how the agenda is set and the ability for the Agenda Committee to bring back items for reconsideration. It was suggested that the policy, which was set this year, may need time to be enacted and future changes can be made as the need arises.

Councilmember McDaniel noted he and Mayor Pro Tem Andrews and Councilmember Stout interviewed nine candidates for the Planning Commission and have one additional interview yet to be scheduled. Discussion ensued about ways to keep applicants engaged by perhaps using the orientation given to new members to all candidates so that next time they might be better prepared. Gratitude was expressed to the current alternates who have done a lot of work this past year. How can additional seats or alternate positions be added to the Planning Commission to keep individuals participating and engaged?

Councilmember McDaniel addressed the email sent by citizen Brian Masters, who conveyed his disappointment that he wasn't allowed into City Hall to speak with Council at the August 5 meeting. Attorney Shaver advised Mr. Masters of the law and Mr. Masters has a different interpretation.

Because the Auditorium and overflow rooms have limited seating capacity due to social distancing requirements, conversation was held about the need to inform the public how they can participate. Mr. Caton stated that the City is responsible for the health and safety of meeting attendees. The doors for the meeting will open at 5 p.m. and staff will establish six-foot queuing for folks outside. Flyers will be available to announce how citizens can still participate when the building has reached capacity. Citadel security will help with the overflow areas and will assist the Police Officers at the door. A break will be taken after Citizen Comment and those seats freed up will be offered to those waiting outside. The front row of the Auditorium seats will be reserved for guests, those receiving proclamations, etc.

A future need may arise for a larger venue to accommodate larger crowds. Could this expense be covered as an eligible expense under the CARES Act?

Councilmember Stout noted it would be helpful for those senior citizens and members of the public who feel vulnerable due to the pandemic be allowed to leave a comment by voicemail for City Council, rather than attend the meeting in person. This option will be included on the September 2 agenda.

Councilmember Taggart stated the pre-meeting could start earlier and Citizen Comment could be moved forward also. Discussion ensued about the options and support was expressed to start the pre-meeting at 5:20 p.m. and the Regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. Citizen Comment will be the first item on the agenda after the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda Topic 3. Next Workshop Topics**

This item was not discussed.

**Agenda Topic 4. Other Business**

This item was not discussed.

**Adjournment**

The Workshop adjourned at 6:35 p.m.