

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

October 4, 2021

Meeting Convened: 4:08 p.m. Meeting held in person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live streamed via GoToWebinar.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:11 p.m.

City Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Abe Herman, Phil Pe'a, Randall Reitz, Dennis Simpson, Rick Taggart, and Mayor Chuck McDaniel. Councilmember Anna Stout was absent.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Human Resources Director Shelley Caskey, Human Resources Supervisor Ann Guevarra, Risk Manager Brett Bergman, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Deputy Finance Director Scott Rust, Financial Analyst Matt Martinez, Budget Coordinator Linda Longenecker, General Services Director Jay Valentine, Financial Analyst Shane O'Neill, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Recreation Superintendent Emily Krause, Parks Superintendent Randy Coleman, Chief Technology Officer Ben Barrio, IT Operations Supervisor Scott Hockins, Public Works Director Trent Prall, Fire Chief Ken Watkins, Deputy Fire Chief Chris Angermuller, Deputy Fire Chief Gus Hendricks, Police Chief Doug Shoemaker, Deputy Police Chief Matt Smith, Deputy Police Chief Mike Nordine, Utilities Director Randi Kim, Water Services Manager Mark Ritterbush, Visit Grand Junction Director Elizabeth Fogarty, Financial Analyst Kim Machado, Senior Assistant to the City Manager Greg LeBlanc, Management Analyst Johnny McFarland, City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann, and Deputy City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

Mayor McDaniel called the meeting to order.

Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics

a. Presentation of the City Manager's 2022 Recommended Budget to City Council

City Manager Caton presented the City of Grand Junction 2022 Recommended Budget which totals \$237.9 million (\$237,904,579), a \$24.9 million, or 11.7% increase from the 2021 Adopted Budget of \$213 million. The 2022 Recommended Budget is balanced, with a surplus in the General Fund. The projected 2022 ending General Fund balance is \$32.4 million which includes \$2.7 million in restricted funds and \$21.8 million in minimum reserve. The budget represents the allocation of resources to achieve the goals identified in City Council's Strategic Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. The Strategic Priorities are Public Safety, Quality of Life, Housing, Mobility and Infrastructure, and Economic Development.

Discussion ensued regarding the content of the budget document submitted to the Colorado Government Finance Officers Association for review (the City of Grand Junction is an annual award

recipient), content of the materials in the binder provided to City Council, the additional information included in the appendix, new positions proposed for 2022, revenue projections, costs to conduct the April 2023 election, specific line items in the City Council's budget, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and the cost for employee health insurance.

Overviews from the following major operating departments included:

Police – Chief Shoemaker reviewed the staffing levels, recruitment and retention, diversification and expansion of special units, increased proactive policing time, intelligence-led policing initiatives, wellness and resiliency, training and succession planning, enhanced victim services, the co-responder program, expanded outreach efforts, code compliance additions, reinvesting in community partnerships, safer spaces, operating budget, and the communications center.

Conversation was held about contract services (grant services, co-responder program, animal control services, camp clean up services), traffic enforcement, number of new employees proposed for 2022, and expansion of services.

Utilities - Water Services Division – Utilities Director Randi Kim noted the main goal of the Water Services Division is to provide high quality, reliable drinking water. Grand Junction has received the Directors Award for delivering water that exceeds requirements. Ms. Kim reviewed distribution operating projects, plant operating projects, contract services for long-term planning for water reliability and drought management, maintenance of water infrastructure, community participation, affordable water rates that promote water conservation, comparison of water rates, and operating budget.

Information was provided about the aging water plant, filter system upgrade that occurred four years ago, sound structural integrity of the water plant, condition assessment of the concrete reservoirs, above-ground steel tanks, rate increases and base rate.

Visit Grand Junction (VGJ) – Elizabeth Fogarty discussed trends, lodging tax collections, market performance, projects, the visitor guide, branding, VGJ budget compared to other Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), and operating budget.

Discussion ensued regarding VGJ volunteers, communication between volunteers and staff, hotel market performance, hotel metrics, 2019 actuals, vaccination rate on visitors to Grand Junction, and new positions in the department.

A break was called at 6:10 p.m. The workshop resumed at 6:21 p.m.

General Services – Director Jay Valentine reviewed the staffing in the department, landfill rates, utilization of Monument Waste transfer facility in 2022, recycling, Waste Reduction Coordinator

position planned for 2022, area solid waste rates, and the solid waste operating budget. General Services oversees the City's two golf courses – Tiara Rado and Lincoln Park. Mr. Valentine also reviewed local golf rates, the fund balance history, 2022 goals, and the golf operating budget.

Questions were answered about the size of cans for solid waste and compost material, pay-as-you-throw programs utilized by some municipalities, equipment cost increases and security enhancements.

Parks & Recreation – Director Ken Sherbenou reviewed the City's pools, recreation programming, trails, forestry, park maintenance, participation increases, skate park, riverfront graffiti, mural projects, weed abatement, custodial responsibility, recreation program expansion, protection and improvement of the urban tree canopy, facilities as major economic drivers, Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan, and the operating budget.

Discussion ensued regarding Horizon Drive park, golf as an enterprise, pool rates, annual passes, subsidies for low-income families, treatment for ash borers, and the Orchard Mesa pool and its maintenance needs.

Fire – Chief Ken Watkins reviewed the department's growth from 2021 (150 full time positions, 6 fire stations) to 2022 (171 full time positions, 7 fire stations), priorities, recruitment/hiring, implementation of EMS plan, training/safety equipment, wildland fire mitigation program, accreditation, and operating budget.

Inquiries were answered about the large grant received for firefighter salaries, increase in calls, call types, equipment replacement and the disposition of old equipment, wage increases to remain competitive, and Redlands service area.

Community Development Director Tamra Allen reported that the new Housing Coordinator will implement the newly adopted Housing Strategy and oversee administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The Community Development Department uses seasonal/contract workers for tasks such as development review, special projects, and staffing Planning Commission meetings.

Upcoming Budget Workshops:

October 18 - Economic Development Partners Budget Discussion-Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce, Air Alliance, and Sports Commission; Presentation of budgets by Horizon Drive Business Improvement District, Downtown Development Authority, and Downtown Business Improvement District; Review and discussion of Economic Development and Non-Profit funding and Major Capital Projects.

October 27 – Joint Persigo Board Budget Meeting.

November 3 – First public presentation and ordinance reading.

December 1 – Second public presentation and ordinance reading.

b. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) I-70B Update

CDOT has been working on adding capacity to the I-70B corridor through the expansion, limitation/reconfiguration of accesses, and improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities from 24 Road to 15th Street since 2008. The first four phases of improvements have been completed from 24 Road to American Way. Two additional phases include:

Project Phase 5 – This phase is currently under construction and will reconfigure the intersection of 1st Street & Grand Avenue, west to Mulberry Street, east to 2nd Street, and south to Rood Avenue. Construction is slated to be completed by June 2022.

Project Phase 6 – This phase would reconstruct the 1st Street segment from Rood Ave south to 2nd Street modifying the street section from four lanes to six lanes. With Senate Bill 267, CDOT has funding available to start construction of Phase 6 in 2023.

Mr. Prall provided an overview of the I-70B project and introduced Shoshana Lew, CDOT Executive Director, who attended virtually. Ms. Lew provided a brief history and noted CDOT would like to compromise and put forward a good faith effort to find a solution.

Grand Junction Resident Engineer with CDOT Kaitlyn Clark introduced other members of the CDOT team (Jason Smith, Region 3 Program Manager, Michael Goolsby, Region 3 Director, Matt Casey, Project Engineer, and Nathan Lindquist, Planner) and reviewed the concerns with the current I-70B plan. The proposed plan prioritizes traffic at the expense of bicycles, pedestrians and virtually every other mode of transportation. Improvements need to include traffic calming to reduce speeds and improve safety. The traffic data is old/outdated and the I-70B improvements threaten to cut off lower downtown. Finally, CDOT hasn't worked with City of Grand Junction nor interest groups and the new footprint is worse than the existing one.

Ms. Clark reviewed a new proposed design for Phase 6 which includes wide shared-use paths (detached where possible), narrow lanes for traffic calming, raised median to deter unsafe pedestrian crossings, pedestrian signals near 2nd Street, landscaping, and a potential transit priority lane.

Discussion ensued about the impact a six-lane interstate will have on that area of town and blighted areas, the preference for the three lanes to be reduced to two-lanes, and traffic capacity.

The next steps include a resolution being considered by City Council at the October 20 Regular City Council meeting to support this reconstruction. CDOT is exploring a mobility hub grant, will begin design this winter 2021, and will continue investigating traffic calming measures (narrow lane width, wide striping, and additional Federal Highway Administration recommendations for these types of projects).

Ms. Clark reviewed successful CDOT – City of Grand Junction projects: the Redlands Roundabout, the Diverging Diamond Interchange, and improvements to North Avenue.

Agenda Topic 2. City Council Communication

Mayor McDaniel noted there is Council support to explore the model proposed by Dr. Pramenko for nonprofit entities to hold marijuana business licenses, with the profits dedicated to fund social programs. This model will be discussed at the November 1 workshop.

Mayor McDaniel reviewed Sister Karen's request for a *Letter of Support* for the Mother Teresa House.

Mayor McDaniel requested that City Council send their recommendations for the American Rescue Plan Advisory Committee members to the City Manager as soon as possible.

Agenda Topic 3. Next Workshop Topics

This topic was reviewed earlier in the meeting.

Agenda Topic 4. Other Business

Mayor McDaniel and Councilmembers Pe'a and Reitz volunteered to serve on the interview committee for the Commission on Arts and Culture.

Adjournment

The workshop adjourned at 9:11 p.m.