

## GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

October 18, 2021

**Meeting Convened:** 4:00 p.m. Meeting held in person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live streamed via GoToWebinar.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 7:40 p.m.

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

**Staff present:** City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Human Resources Director Shelley Caskey, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Deputy Finance Director Scott Rust, Financial Analyst Matt Martinez, Budget Coordinator Linda Longenecker, Risk Manager Brett Bergman, General Services Director Jay Valentine, Financial Analyst Shane O'Neill, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Recreation Superintendent Emily Krause, Parks Maintenance Supervisor Marc Mancuso, Chief Technology Officer Ben Barrio, IT Operations Supervisor Scott Hockins (via webinar), IT Supervisor Jackson Trappett (via webinar) 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, Engineering Manager Ken Haley, Visit Grand Junction Director Elizabeth Fogarty, Senior Assistant to the City Manager Greg LeBlanc, Management Analyst Johnny McFarland, Deputy City Clerk Selestina Sandoval, and Deputy City Clerk Janet Harrell.

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Mayor McDaniel called the meeting to order.

### **Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics**

**a. 2021 Budget Workshop: Capital Budget Presentation, Horizon Drive Business Improvement District Operating Plan and Budget Presentation, Downtown Development Authority Business Improvement District Operating Plan and Budget Presentation, Downtown Development Authority Budget Presentation, Economic Development Partners Funding Discussions (Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Inc., Air Alliance, Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission) Non-profit Funding Discussion, Budget Follow Up and Reconciliation**

#### **Capital**

Each year the City of Grand Junction invests a significant portion of the annual budget in capital improvements in the community. Through the continued assessment of the condition of City assets and a series of long-term capital and financial funding plans, the City of Grand Junction ensures that existing infrastructure is adequately maintained, and that future infrastructure is constructed in a fiscally responsible manner. In 2022 the recommended capital plans dedicate \$84.7 million to critical

utilities, transportation, street maintenance, parks and recreation amenities, public safety, curb gutter, sidewalk, and drainage projects.

City Manager Caton provided an overview.

Public Works (PW) Director Prall reviewed operations, staffing changes/needs, highlighted four key changes to be implemented in 2022 (Weed Abatement/Right-of-Way Weed Control Program moving to PW and expanding, increasing the storm drain cleaning program, conducting a Freight Transportation Logistics Feasibility Study and adding a Real Estate Manager position) and major projects.

Discussion included that the improvements budgeted for 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Streets will be similar whether they remain one way or change to two way, how a Freight Transportation System would function with the local transportation systems, the City's history with a Real Estate Manager position and the duties for this position, the TABOR funds approved for PW projects, how previous project costs are used to budget for future projects, which projects Bond funds will be allocated toward, and how the scope of the Colorado River Levy Renovation Project was determined.

Parks & Recreation Director Sherbenou highlighted 2022 projects (Monument Connect Trail, Dos Rios Amenities, Lincoln Park Stadium Renovation, Pickleball Court Expansion, Botanical Gardens Master Plan, Blue Heron Boat Ramp) and which will use grant and/or fundraising dollars.

Discussion included why the Hale Avenue area does not have landscaping (irrigation system is not installed), what fund sources are included in "Parkland" funds, how the cannabis tax was projected, why cannabis tax was used as a source in this budget, why other fund sources that are currently available weren't used and if identified fund sources are not able to be used the budget can be amended.

Utilities Director Kim reviewed water supply (Purdy Mesa and Kannah Creek Flowlines, Carson Lake Dam, Grand Mesa Reservoirs and ranch improvements), distribution (waterline replacements, lead service lines and increasing the Kannah Creek storage tank) and water treatment plant (motor control center and miscellaneous improvements) projects.

### **Business Improvement Districts (BID), DDA**

The City Council annually approves the operating plans and budgets of business improvement districts inside the City which are the Horizon Drive Association Business Improvement District and the Downtown Business Improvement District.

Horizon Drive Association Business Improvement District Executive Director Vara Kusal discussed the 2022 budget and reviewed the following: new landscaping/underbrush cleanup, trespassing/camping issues, roundabout art, and bus kiosk improvements.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA) & BID Executive Director Brandon Stam reviewed the purpose, funding, District boundaries (Central Business, Rail, and River), budget and the following highlights: summer Ambassador Program, increased event attendance, new vendor activity, new art installations, increased business activity, new properties incorporated in Rail & River Districts, 4th & 5th Streets Feasibility Study, and increased in gift card sales. Mr. Stam also noted the following topics the DDA will be looking into: a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) extension and possible rate change, the 4th & 5th Streets Study, public restroom facilities, alley improvements, and parking pay stations.

### **Economic Development Funding**

Economic development has been identified as a City Council strategic priority and the City has devoted significant funding toward the development of strategies and amenities designed to strengthen the community as a regional economic hub and attract new residents and businesses.

City Manger Caton reviewed the Economic Development Fund allocations in the City's recommended budget.

Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce President & Chief Executive Officer Diane Schwenke presented information on their Business Retention & Expansion Program highlighting the following: the North Star Study, assistance in \$21.2 million local business capital improvements, visited 127 businesses, took positions on 42 pieces of legislation, 131 jobs created, partnered with City and County, hosted 18 webinars for local businesses, continued assistance with West Star Aviation, Timberleaf Trailers, & Soft Gel, Inc., business expansions, supply chain, logistic needs, and Mesa County Economic Development Strategy. Ms. Schwenke then reviewed the efforts of the Industrial Developments, Inc. (manages community assets for projects that involve creation of primary jobs to include incentive funds and discounted property) and Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance (GJRASA), (improves commercial air service by providing industry marketing incentives).

Discussion included the GJRASA marketing plans provided and if their financial statements should be a public record.

Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission Executive Director Ben Snyder reviewed new and returning 2021 events and partnerships, 2022 planned events and recruiting opportunities, and requested continued receipt of .75% of the City's Lodging Tax.

Discussion included cultivating more local partnerships, opportunities for ice rink events, additional revenue options, and growing existing events.

### **Non-Profit Funding**

Support of community non-profit organizations is a long-standing practice of City Council through allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds as well as direct funding. For direct

funding, community non-profit organizations request that funds be allocated in the City's budget annually, beginning with an application process in the summer.

Non-profit funding comes from the General Fund and thirty-two agencies are funded for a total of \$1,450,186. With dues and memberships of \$96,986, the total is \$1,547,172.

Discussion included revising the application process.

### **Budget Follow Up and Reconciliation**

Housing: The current housing position as presented in the 2022 Budget is proposed to assist in matters related to affordable and attainable housing. Specifically, the position is anticipated to organize, build capacity and implement housing policy recommendations, and manage related project activities to meet the City's priorities and strategic objectives.

At the October 4th City Council workshop, it was noted that Council may want to consider prioritizing a broader initiative to specifically address the houseless population. If it is desired that the City work more directly on the issue of the houseless and housing the houseless, staff anticipates another position would be needed. The position could be designed to support efforts such as combining affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of chronically homeless people, connecting people to shelter services or short-term housing, coordinating with other houseless service providers and/or the provision of other related services.

Discussion included City resources that go to homelessness and when new positions will be phased in.

Fire Station No. 5 Ambulance: At the October 4th City Council Workshop, Council asked about placing ambulance service at Station No. 5. Staff revised the estimated cost from the memorandum to City Council in September to include all costs including personnel (at 2022 rates), ambulance, equipment, academy, and personal protective equipment for six positions. The total cost is \$1.1 million and would need to be funded initially through the General Fund.

Discussion included Fire Station No. 5 provides full medical care and only lacks the ability to transport patients, ability to staff trained employees, agreement between the City and Rural Fire Protection District regarding specific responsibilities and if the terms of the agreement are being met, and call volume demand per district and ambulance use.

Private Ash Tree Treatment Assistance Program: At the October 4th budget workshop, City Council asked about the health of trees on private property and asked for the development of a program to support the health of ash trees not only in the public right-of-way or in parks but also on private property. The cost of the program is planned at \$84,276 and would be funded from the General Fund. These funds will be devoted mostly to covering the cost of the subsidy. Other costs will cover public

outreach, tree planting for those trees lost that are too small to treat and program administration.

Water Rates: At the October 4th City Council Workshop Council asked if water rates for the base rate of water usage less than 3,000 gallons could be held flat instead of the proposed 2% rate increase in 2022. Staff analyzed that impact and if base rates are held flat in order to generate the same revenue, an increase of 9% would be needed for the higher usage tiers instead of the proposed 7% rate increase in 2022. While keeping the base rates flat for all water users will maintain affordability and promote water conservation, a higher increase for higher usage tiers will have a cost impact to commercial and government customers that are large water users. The increases for these example types of users ranged from \$45 more per year to \$12,300 more per year.

Discussion included possible landscaping restrictions and how this would impact the community.

Department Full Time Position Chart:

*Reconciliation:* The budget development is fluid and will continue through final adoption of the budget. After the October 4th City Council Workshop there were a few changes to the budget that had an overall positive impact on the General Fund and the First Responder Fund.

**Agenda Topic 2. City Council Communication**

Councilmember Simpson requested budget information on the Self-Insured Health Insurance Fund. City Manager Caton will send a memo to Council on this item.

**Agenda Topic 3. Next Workshop Topics**

The November 1st workshop discussion topics are Cannabis Regulations and the Distribution of Opioid Settlement Funds.

**Agenda Topic 4. Other Business**

There was none.

**Adjournment**

The workshop adjourned at 7:40 p.m.