

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY July 15, 2024

Meeting Convened: 5:30 p.m. The meeting was in-person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live-streamed via GoTo Webinar.

City Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Scott Beilfuss, Cody Kennedy, Jason Nguyen (virtual), Dennis Simpson, Anna Stout, Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz, and Mayor Abram Herman.

Staff present: Interim City Manager Andrea Phillips, City Attorney John Shaver, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Engineering and Transportation Director Trent Prall, Finance Director Jennifer Tomaszewski, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. Business License Program Discussion

The purpose of this discussion was to present the basics of a city general business license program, including the costs and benefits, and to gauge whether the Council is interested in proceeding toward the development of such a program. Grand Junction currently lacks a general business license, unlike many similar-sized communities. Interim City Manager Andrea Phillips presented this item.

Benefits included:

- Early contact with fire and police departments for inspections and safety.
- Better understanding of economic trends and business locations.
- Creation of a comprehensive business database for emergency contact and economic development.

Challenges: Costs and resources needed for implementation.

Council Feedback:

- Concerns about privacy, economic impact on small businesses, and potential misuse of data.
- Suggestions to collaborate with economic development partners and ensure minimal burden on businesses.
- Council directed staff to move forward with researching the program and report back once more information has been compiled.

b. I-70 Interchange at 29 Road

Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction have been working collaboratively on the development of the 29 Road corridor as a major arterial for over 25 years. More recently, staff has been working with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) on the planning, environmental, and permitting components for the proposed interchange with I-70. Colorado State Transportation Commission approval will be sought later this summer, followed by FHWA consideration/approval of the Interstate Access Request this Fall.

The consideration of the funding strategy for the interchange is an important consideration for the City Council. If the City Council commits to the proposed draft intergovernmental agreement (IGA), the City will be agreeing, subject to annual appropriation, to participate in the repayment of the \$80 million debt necessary to build the project. The IGA is an important step in Mesa County's consideration of referring a ballot measure to the November 5, 2024, election. That ballot measure, if approved by the voters, will be for the issuance of bonds to finance the I-70 Interchange at 29 Road and the associated reconstruction of 29 Road from the interchange to Patterson Road.

Transportation and Engineering Director Trent Prall presented this item.

Discussion focused on funding and debt service of the City's commitment and potential debt service implications. Council expressed concerns with project priority, funding mechanisms, impact on city budget, and future grant opportunities.

There were four councilmembers in support of moving forward with the preparation of a draft Intergovernmental Agreement with Mesa County and potential ballot initiative for voter approval to come before Council for approval.

c. Orchard Mesa Pool Discussion

Mayor Herman updated the Council on discussions with Mesa County Valley School District 51 Board President and Superintendent regarding the future of Orchard Mesa Pool. He summarized the following points of the proposed agreement:

- The City would keep the pool open until mid to late 2026 and pay 100% of utilities and operations.
- The gymnasium and band room would be demolished thirty days from the agreement.
- Escrowed demolition funds in the amount of \$100,000 that would be refunded if unused.

The final agreement will come to Council for consideration in August.

d. Council Policies-Draft Budget Policy

The City Council discussed the preparation and implementation of a new budget policy, focusing on key components such as the budget calendar, roles and responsibilities, performance measurement, monitoring, fund transfers, carryover savings, and fund balances. The policy aims to consolidate existing practices into a single guiding document to aid the council in annual budget decisions.

Interim City Manager Andrea Phillips presented this item and highlighted the points of the policy.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Utilization of Budget Savings - A proposed allocation of any surplus in the general fund, with percentages designated for things such as council strategic priorities, safety equipment reserve, non-profits, and general fund reserves.
- Labor Vacancy Savings - How to budget and whether this should be addressed in the policy.

- Quarterly Financial Reports - Actual versus budgeted amounts in quarterly reports, as well as the feasibility and utility of including projected expenditures. There was consensus that while projections are valuable, they should be balanced with staff capacity and workload considerations.

The Council generally agreed to move forward with the budget policy as proposed, with noted adjustments and clarifications, and to continue refining the process based on quarterly reports and staff input.

2. Council Communication

The Council briefly discussed potential support for homeless non-profits, such as providing storage for water and supplies, and emphasized that such operational decisions should be handled by staff unless they rise to the level requiring council policy direction.

3. Next Workshop Topics

Mayor Herman outlined future workshop items.

4. Other Business

Interim City Manager asked for concurrence from Council on the Impact Fee Stakeholder Group. After discussion, the Council asked the group to stay as is without adding an additional member, as requested by the Association for Managed Growth and Development.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Workshop adjourned at 9:34 p.m.