

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

December 4, 2013

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 4th day of December, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Auditorium. Those present were Councilmembers Bennett Boeschstein, Martin Chazen, Jim Doody, Duncan McArthur, Phyllis Norris, Barbara Traylor Smith, and Council President Sam Susuras. Also present were City Manager Rich Englehart, City Attorney John Shaver, and City Clerk Stephanie Tuin.

Council President Susuras called the meeting to order. Councilmember Traylor Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by an invocation by Dave Edwards, Ohr Shalom Jewish Community Center.

Council Comments

Councilmember Boeschstein had just returned from Boston and he relayed that he was able to greet and shake hands with the Mayor of Boston, Mayor Menino. He then went to the Town of Norwalk and met with the former Mayor of Norwalk, Mayor Collins.

Councilmember Doody noted that the streets were pretty cleaned up from the storm and cautioned everyone to be careful.

Councilmember Chazen said on November 22nd, he attended the Grand Junction Fire Academy graduation. He delivered brief comments at the graduation in celebration of the recruits' achievements. On November 23rd, he went for a ride-along with the Police Department; he was impressed with the professionalism of the officers. He encouraged others to do the same. On November 25th, he attended the Associated Governments of Northern Colorado (AGNC) meeting and Governor Hickenlooper was in attendance. The group asked the Governor for help in releasing \$3.8 million in mineral revenues. These funds should have been released to the local jurisdictions.

Councilmember Traylor Smith went to the STRIVE open house and she saw how they have consolidated their facilities to serve their clients.

Citizen Comments

Heather Anne Bovat, 3238 E I-70 Business Loop, Clifton, distributed a handout and then addressed the City Council regarding her dog that her son brought home at five weeks old that became her service dog for 11 ½ years. Ms. Bovat said she has post-traumatic stress syndrome. While she was hospitalized for several months last April for the syndrome, her dog stayed with a family in Collbran. Upon her return she retrieved the dog and she spent a day with her but then Ms. Bovat had the dog stay with friends again

until she could make travel arrangements to bring her to her new home in Lake Tahoe. While the dog was with friends, the dog ran away and ended up at Animal Services. Ms. Bovat looked for the dog and went to Animal Services. The dog had been micro-chipped, however, when Animal Services scanned the chip, they retrieved the wrong information. What followed was an advisement that her dog had been euthanized. She asked the Council to ensure that there is a fail-safe process to prevent this from happening again. She has heard this has happened to other dogs. She urged owners to make sure their microchip information is updated.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Doody read the Consent Calendar items #1-3 and then moved to adopt the Consent Calendar. Councilmember Boeschstein seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.

1. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Action: Approve the Minutes of the November 18, 2013 City/County Annual Persigo Meeting, November 20, 2013 Special Meeting, and the November 20, 2013 Regular Meeting

2. **Property Tax Resolutions for Levy Year 2013**

The resolutions set the mill levies of the City of Grand Junction (City), and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The City and DDA mill levies are for operations.

Resolution No. 72-13—A Resolution Levying Taxes for the Year 2013 in the City of Grand Junction

Resolution No. 73-13—A Resolution Levying Taxes for the Year 2013 in the Downtown Development Authority

Action: Adopt Resolution Nos. 72-13 and 73-13

3. **CDBG Subrecipient Contract with STRIVE for Previously Allocated Funds within the 2013 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Year** [File #CDBG-2013-09]

The Subrecipient Contract formalizes the City's award of \$20,000 to STRIVE allocated from the City's 2013 CDBG Program as previously approved by Council. The grant funds will be used for rehabilitation of two buildings utilized for The Parenting Place.

Action: Authorize the City Manager to Sign the Subrecipient Contract with STRIVE for The Parenting Place Rehabilitation for \$20,000 for the City's 2013 Program Year Funds

ITEMS NEEDING INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

Public Hearing—2013 Supplemental Appropriation Ordinance and 2014 Appropriation Ordinance

This request is to appropriate certain sums of money to defray the necessary expenses and liabilities of the accounting funds of the City of Grand Junction for the 2013 amended and 2014 proposed budgets.

The public hearing was opened at 7:23 p.m.

City Manager Rich Englehart presented this item. He noted that other Staff members are present and available to answer any questions.

City Manager Englehart started with the service the City provides through its employees and how employees serve with honor, integrity, teamwork, and respect. He related a story that occurred on Halloween; a police officer was approached by a person with a toy gun who was trying to threaten the Police Officer, however, because of his training and experience, the officer came close, but in the end did not pull the trigger on his gun. Another story was shared about a rescue of a family pet by the Parks Department Staff and Fire Department personnel.

City Manager Englehart then reviewed the development of the budget and the meetings and hours spent on this process. City Manager Englehart reviewed the numbers. The budget proposed is \$132.4 million in total spending which is an 8% decrease over 2013. He reviewed Operating Expenses, Labor Expenses, and how they will be implementing the second half of the market wage implementation. There will be increases in health care costs and there are no new full time positions being requested.

The sources of revenues were explained and they are projected to be flat for 2014. The spending by type was then detailed with \$20.5 million dedicated to capital projects. He then reviewed spending by department.

City Manager Englehart displayed a map that demonstrated the location of the various capital projects. He listed the Council's commitment to community investment.

In conclusion, City Manager Englehart said it is the community's budget and he is proud of the process and the use of the taxpayer's dollars.

Councilmember Boeschstein thanked the City Manager and Staff for the work done on the budget. He noted the tough economic times but said he was supportive of the community investment by the City.

Councilmember McArthur asked about the zero balance in the Transportation Capacity Fund at the end of 2013. Financial Operations Director Jodi Romero advised that money available in that fund went to the truck stop project, and the general fund will make up the difference. They anticipate receiving enough funds in 2014 to cover the projects being proposed.

Councilmember McArthur thanked the Staff for their work and appreciated all the work in getting the new Councilmembers up to speed.

Council President Susuras opened the public hearing for public comment at 7:45 p.m.

Jon Maraschin, Incubator Center Executive Director, thanked the Council for having the confidence and continued support in the Incubator programs. He invited the City Council to their annual open house.

Councilmember McArthur noted that there are people who do not know about the services of the Incubator. Mr. Maraschin said they have helped 761 businesses get started, so he is disappointed if there are people who don't know about them, but they will continue to try to get the message out.

Councilmember Norris said she was excited about the Incubator's "Maker Space" project as well as the economic gardening project.

Rob Bleiberg, Executive Director of the Mesa Land Trust, thanked the City Council for their continued support of the Land Trust in the project along Monument Road.

There were no other public comments.

The public hearing was closed at 7:51 p.m.

Councilmember Boeschstein said he is pleased with the budget and that the City is doing innovative and creative things for the community.

Councilmember Doody noted the hard work, especially by Staff; he said it was the best budget cycle he has been a part of. He pointed out a few funding items: the partnership with Colorado Mesa University (CMU) for the classroom construction and the increased funding for the Western Slope Center for the Children.

Councilmember Norris thanked the Staff for all their work to help them understand and answer all their questions. She also appreciated the work of the Council together.

Councilmember Chazen read a statement thanking the Staff and everyone that participated.

“Thank you Mayor Susuras. Before commenting on the 2014 budget, I would like to thank all the City employees who worked on this budget these past few months. Virtually all of the City Staff was involved, reviewing and re-reviewing, and finally submitting a financial plan that reflects their best guess for 2014. Speaking from years of experience, budgeting is hard, thoughtful work, and I want to thank those who participated. I would like to thank our City Manager Rich Englehart for overseeing the process and bringing us to this point. And I would especially like to thank our Financial Director Jodi Romero and her staff who prepared the many schedules and reports. Any comments made tonight, good or bad, do not detract from the sustained effort of those who worked on this financial plan. The purpose of a budget is to lay out a financial plan that achieves strategic operational goals. For me, those goals for 2014 are Economic Development, Public Safety, and Infrastructure Improvement, all within a financial framework that we can afford. Before implementing this budget, it is useful to ask if this budget achieves these goals. With regard to public safety and essential services, the answer is clearly yes. These areas of operations continue to deliver good value for the taxes and fees our citizens pay and the departments are staffed by dedicated individuals who are truly good at what they do. But this budget also includes areas of weakness and risk. We need to understand these areas and be prepared to deal with them. Primarily, uncertain revenues from a weak economy is one of the areas we need to closely watch. My preference was to have budgeted more money for economic development and street repairs. I would also have liked to see a set-aside of reserves for capital projects likely to hit in subsequent years. In the end, a large factor of my decision has been the assurance that management recognizes the risks and is committed to reacting quickly to changes in economic conditions. We have also been assured that, during 2014, management will look for ways to improve operations. So, after months of wrestling with the issues, taking the pluses and minuses into account, I believe that on balance, the 2014 budget is workable and it has my full support. Once again I would like to thank the Staff for their efforts and commitment to delivering the best possible service to our citizens, and I honor their perseverance during these difficult times. 2014 will be an interesting and challenging year. Thank you.”

Councilmember Traylor Smith thanked everyone for the work and effort in review and explanation of everything.

Councilmember McArthur said no one in the valley had an easy time doing their budgets this year and the City Council also had to make difficult decisions. The changes that were

made were made in order for them to do their best. He is concerned about economics in the coming year. He lauded everyone for their efforts. He will support the budget.

Council President Susuras also read a statement:

“Rich and John, I want to thank and compliment you, along with the Department Heads, Staff, and Council for your efforts in producing the 2014 budget. I believe it was a very good process. We, together, put in many long hours of preparation, discussion, debate, and decision making. I believe we have produced a good, sound budget for 2014. This budget is the fourth City budget that I worked with Staff and Council to produce. In every one of these budgets, there were some line items that I agreed with, and some I disagreed with. Some line items in my estimation should have been more or less. But, in our decision making, once four or more Council members agree to a line item amount, it is a done deal. I have learned that once a decision is made on an issue, even if I personally disagree, it is important and necessary that I accept a majority decision and move on. For the Council to be effective, I believe I must buy into and take ownership of the final budget each year I serve on City Council. I take ownership of this budget as a member of the Council. I will be voting yes on Ordinances 4609 and 4617.”

Ordinance No. 4609—An Ordinance Making Supplemental Appropriations to the 2013 Budget of the City of Grand Junction

Ordinance No. 4617—An Ordinance Appropriating Certain Sums of Money to Defray the Necessary Expenses and Liabilities of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado and the Downtown Development Authority for the Year Beginning January 1, 2014, and Ending December 31, 2014

Councilmember Doody moved to adopt Ordinance Nos. 4609 and 4617 and ordered them published in pamphlet form. Councilmember Traylor Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Extension of Website Marketing and Advertising Contracts for the Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB)

This request is for the extension of two existing contracts for an additional one-year term for the period of January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014. Currently, the Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) utilize the services of Miles Media Group LLLP for Website Marketing and PILGRIM (formerly known as CCT Advertising) for Tourism Advertising on an annual basis. Both Advertising and Website services will be competitively solicited through a formal process in 2014.

Debbie Kovalik, Economic, Convention, and Visitor Services Director, presented this item. She explained that the Visitor Convention Bureau (VCB) is requesting an extension on

two of the contracts for advertising and website services. Both contractors have had annual renewable contracts with the VCB. Both were awarded the original contracts through a competitive bid process. She detailed the services provided by each. The contracts have a provision to provide for a reduction in services and payment if revenues fall significantly. The Miles Media contract is proposed to be increased by \$35,000 for the Get Smart feature. The reason they are asking for an extension of these contracts is that the VCB Board will be developing a new strategic plan in 2014 and then they will be able to devise the scope of services for the new service contracts.

Councilmember Boeschstein lauded Ms. Kovalik's work and his personal positive experience with the VCB and their relationship with visitors. He noted the low number of visitations to the City. Ms. Kovalik said the low numbers parallel the local economy. In order to stay competitive, many of the lodging facilities are reducing rates. Councilmember Boeschstein noted the fires around the State were partly to blame for low visitation numbers. Ms. Kovalik agreed and said the government shutdown also had an impact on the amount of visitors to Grand Junction.

Councilmember Boeschstein asked about the status of the change of the Monument to a National Park. Ms. Kovalik said the VCB Board will give her an update and she will then update the Council.

Councilmember Doody reminded Ms. Kovalik he would like to talk about the VCB being a standalone entity in the future.

Councilmember Norris was pleased that the VCB is doing a strategic plan. She noted a couple of events were brought in to Grand Junction and complimented the work that they did.

Councilmember McArthur said he attended the board meeting where the Get Smart presentation was done and he was impressed.

Councilmember Traylor Smith expressed her appreciation of the work they do and said she had a conversation with Barbara Bowman regarding daytrips.

Councilmember Chazen said this is truly economic development. He fully supports what the organization is doing with social media. He would like to see continuity from the current vendor to any new vendor and wanted assurances that the content belongs to the City. Ms. Kovalik assured him that is a provision in all of their contracts and they have never had a problem.

Ms. Kovalik encouraged everyone to log onto their website.

Council President Susuras thanked Ms. Kovalik for her work and professionalism.

Councilmember Boeschstein moved to authorize the Purchasing Division to execute a one-year contract extension with Miles Media Group, LLLP for website marketing at the VCB in the estimated amount of \$160,000 and to authorize the Purchasing Division to execute a one-year contract extension with PILGRIM (formerly known as CCT Advertising Services) at the VCB in the estimated amount of \$375,000. Councilmember McArthur seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Non-Scheduled Citizens & Visitors

There were none.

Other Business

There was none.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Stephanie Tuin, MMC
City Clerk