

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY**  
**January 19, 2015 – Noticed Agenda Attached**

Meeting Convened: 5:09 p.m. in the City Auditorium

Meeting Adjourned: 7:24 p.m.

City Council Members present: Boeschstein, Chazen, Doody, McArthur, Norris, Susuras, and Traylor Smith.

Staff present: Englehart, Shaver, Moore, Finlayson, Schoeber, Rainguet, Thornton, Kovalik, Dackonish, and Tuin.

Others present: CenturyLink – Danielle Franklin, Abel Chavez, Charter Communications – Charles Eady, Doug Thomason, Christopher Fulton, Erik Rasmussen, Gary Underwood, Paul Kugler, Western Colorado Museum – Peter Booth, Grand Junction Rockies – Tim Ray

Others: Dennis Simpson, Jon Maraschin, and Mr. and Mrs. John Borgen

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Agenda Topic 1. Broadband

City Manager Englehart opened the meeting and introduced the topic which is part of the Economic Development Plan. The availability of broadband in the community is a high priority from the Council's standpoint, local businesses, and for recruiting new businesses. This topic was discussed at the Retreat and the options with Senate Bill (SB) 152 and how the City can do something with the local providers. With SB 152, the City's hands are tied. City Manager Englehart said Jim Finlayson, Information Technology Manager for the City, will begin the presentation.

Information Technology Manager Jim Finlayson began with a recap for Charter and CenturyLink representatives talking about some of the things that were discussed at the City Council Retreat, and on how important broadband is to Economic Development. Broadband is now being considered like a 4<sup>th</sup> utility along with sewer, water, and streets. He provided comparisons of internet speed with other cities to demonstrate how Grand Junction is not competitive above 10 Mbps. There are areas in Colorado, especially in the front range that have speeds closer to 100 Mbps with Longmont having speeds around 1 Gbps. Many of these areas have approved an override of SB-05-152. Companies looking to relocate look at internet speeds when deciding where to locate.

Mr. Finlayson advised a set of questions were sent to each of the providers – Charter and CenturyLink – and their representatives can address their answers.

Danielle Franklin, CenturyLink Market Development Manager, provided background on the average internet user, technology, and internet usage statistics. As technology has improved, most is wireless, using more mobile devices. The traffic on the internet has increased 400%. Eighty-one percent of broadband users are 18-29 years of age and are heavy internet users, accounting for 80% of the video streaming minutes per month. Ms. Franklin addressed one of the questions posed from the City, which was how the City and the Grand Valley can help the broadband initiative. CenturyLink came up with four distinct roles: 1) the City as broadband user, this will drive up the demand; 2) the City as a regulator to reduce regulatory impediments; 3) the City as a financier to offer financial assistance and/or apply for grants; and 4) the City as an infrastructure developer to provide network elements necessary to provide communication services and addressing solution based decisions.

Councilmember Susuras asked what is the specific regulations impeding growth within the City. Mr. Abel Chavez, Director of State/Local Government Affairs with CenturyLink, answered the biggest deterrent is the cost and time of permitting. He stated CenturyLink has a strong relationship with City of Grand Junction and works well with the City.

Council President Norris said that with Colorado law today, due to SB 152, the City is not allowed to do some of the things being asked of them. She is in favor of putting an override question on the ballot.

Mr. Chavez said he believed SB 152 is likely to be a topic of this legislative session, maybe even repealed. He said there are 12 communities which have opted out.

Council President Norris said the City has a ballot going out in April and this is something the Council will discuss and possibly bring to the citizens in April.

Councilmember Boeschstein asked what improvements CenturyLink is making right now to improve the system.

Mr. Chavez responded the big push is to get more fiber into the neighborhoods and to increase the speed. A lot of what CenturyLink is trying to do is build to meet capacity. Mr. Chavez explained about the Connect America Fund where local governments can apply for grant dollars to help expand services. This could be a public/private partnership. Establishing a State fund would also help leverage the funds.

Councilmember Boeschstein asked about the industrial parks and how that is being looked at for Economic Development?

Mr. Chavez said the industrial parks and incubators will drive the need for more fiber optic.

City Manager Englehart asked about the map Mr. Finlayson had up showing the areas in red and looking at the Grand Junction area where there is hardly any red. Mr. Chavez said they are looking at the cost dynamic, it is just not making its way to the Grand Valley. Mr. Chavez said

CenturyLink is looking at other communities along with partners, both from the private sector and public sector. CenturyLink is trying to get the FCC to visit western Colorado. That is one thing as a community the City can do is work with Senators Gardner and Bennett so they can understand the needs in the valley. Ms. Franklin said Senator Cory Gardner is from Yuma County Colorado and they are facing these same issues and are developing a broadband task force.

Councilmember Traylor Smith said looking at the map, the Aspen area has high speed service. What did they do to get better service?

Mr. Chavez said some communities have a lot of providers, and there is a lot of private investment. The demand created the market.

Councilmember Chazen asked about Steamboat Springs and what would be the difference there. The geography in this valley looks like it would be easier to develop here than up in Steamboat Springs.

Mr. Chavez said Steamboat Springs was part of a Phase 1 of Connect America Project. The Federal government dictated some expansion to the cable companies. The details of the next phase of Connect America will be known soon.

Charlie Eady, Mountain States Sales Manager with Charter Business Communications, introduced the other Charter members present: Doug Thomason, Commercial Sales Manager for Colorado, Paul Kugler, Director of Field Operations, Erik Rasmussen, Sr. Manager Government Affairs, Christopher Fulton, VP and General Manager Mountain States, and Gary Underwood, Senior Director, Regional Government Relations.

Mr. Eady began by saying in Grand Junction 70% of the businesses are within 2000' of connection which means reasonably reachable. Charter has over 589 employees in Colorado; over 100 reside in Grand Junction. Charter's capital investment across the State is over \$33 million. Charter has partnerships throughout the communities. Mr. Eady explained what Charter has in place currently, that Charter brings fiber to the neighborhoods, and then the neighborhoods can expand. Charter has gone from 30 Mbps to 60 Mbps for the same price for residential with an option to increase to 100 Mbps.

Several Councilmembers asked what are the costs associated with doing this.

Mr. Eady said Charter is bringing fiber to the customer. It does take an engineering site survey to figure specific costs. Mr. Eady said the red area on the map shows the 100 Mbps areas available and it is here in Grand Junction, it just isn't shown on this map.

City Manager Englehart inquired who updates the map. Mr. Eady said Charter will work on getting this map updated. Jon Maraschin, Executive Director of the Business Incubator, said he has the contact information to update this map.

Mr. Eady said Charter has recently gone through a change in their network to go all digital whereas before it was analog; this maximizes bandwidth for internet customers. It was a necessary step and now the system is more reliable. It was a massive undertaking by Charter. Mr. Eady said Charter is local and they are staying here in the valley.

Councilmember Chazen asked what the City should tell interested companies regarding the availability of fiber.

Mr. Eady said it is on a case by case base here. Charter would like to be involved in the planning stages so they would be able to provide estimates and develop strategies along with the City. It is the last mile that could increase the costs, but if a business located in a building that already had fiber (i.e. Alpine Bank), then the costs are minimal.

Councilmember McArthur asked if there are any companies in Grand Junction currently using 10 gigs. Mr. Eady responded there is currently one. He said that he can't get into specific costs due to non-disclosure, but if a group of businesses worked together, the costs would be better. He said Charter will look at some case studies and possibly be able to share with Council.

Jon Maraschin said he just went through the process with a company who had to provide the "middle mile". Mr. Maraschin said it was a business downtown that just went through this to get fiber from the street into the business and the cost was about \$30,000. Cost to get it down to the Business Incubator Campus from downtown was approximately \$250,000 from CenturyLink.

Councilmember Boeschstein stressed how important it would be to sit down with the City Planners to identify the locations and the business parks so Charter would be able to service all of these businesses.

City Manager Englehart said that the Industrial Park Analysis has been done. The City has worked with both CenturyLink and Charter so the information is included with the City's information for all the utilities.

Mr. Finlayson said the locations are already identified and available with the distance to the property or location through the City's GIS mapping, but the costs are not available. The City has been working in partnership with CenturyLink and Charter on this.

Gary Underwood, Senior Director of Government Relations with Charter Communications briefly described the update that has taken place in Grand Junction in the last 15 months. He explained the issues with the upgrade, and what caused a cascade effect, noting it has been tough on customers. At the same time there are several things that Charter is proud of; internet speed has increased to 60 Mbps at no additional cost to the residential customers. They are currently back to the service level that is expected from Charter. Also available to residents today is the increased bandwidth to 100 Mbps. Any business using Charter Business

Internet has been increased to 60 Mbps as the standard offering. Very soon businesses will be able to get 100 Mbps for an additional cost.

That concluded the discussion and Council took a short break.

### Agenda Topic 2. Museum Projects, Use of Trust Funds

City Manager Englehart introduced this item and reminded Council that when Council was reviewing the Economic Development Budget they discussed the Heywood Trust that can be used for the Museum or the Library. Half the Trust amount is \$78,500.

Peter Booth, Executive Director of Western Colorado Museum, thanked Council for having him present a cost estimate summary for items that have been needed for both the Whitman Education Center and the Museum of the West for a number of years. Mr. Booth listed each area of need per building including HVAC, roofing, and technology.

There were discussions about the Council's responsibility in disbursing the funds and how the Council is to know the intent of the grantor.

Mr. Booth and Councilmember Boeschstein explained the Museum Board's desire to upgrade the Whitman Education Center so it can be a revenue generator.

Council President Norris said the documents presented with the cost estimate and the background is a good list, and she is comfortable in going forward. She asked if this would need to be brought to a formal action.

City Attorney Shaver said yes, in the form of a resolution which could be added to Wednesday night's agenda.

It was agreed to add this resolution to Wednesday's night's agenda under consent.

### Agenda Topic 3. Grand Junction Rockies Fireworks

City Manager Englehart introduced this discussion regarding the fireworks at Suplizio Field for the Grand Junction Rockies Games. There has been an additional request from CMU to have fireworks after one of their games and two other dates by JUCO including Memorial Day, and the City for Independence Day.

Rob Schoeber, Parks and Recreation Director, stated this has been the third year for the Rockies request which has been a nice add on to their Friday night games. The Rockies have made modifications to their event in hopes of minimizing the concerns raised over the last couple of years. Mr. Schoeber said there are three different areas they have looked at, those being the frequency of the displays, the times, and size of shells. Last year the Rockies moved the game

start times to 6:30 p.m., by doing this there was only one game that ran into the 10 o'clock hour. They have also changed their shell size for fewer loud reports.

Mr. Schoeber said the other thing they have worked out with the Rockies is a mailed notification to the surrounding areas. This is how the Rockies and the Parks and Recreation Department notify people who live in the adjacent neighborhoods and letters were sent out with the schedule.

Councilmember Traylor Smith had concerns about over use of fireworks in the community and how it effected the veterans at the VA Hospital.

Mr. Tim Ray with the Grand Junction Rockies said their attendance to the games increases by 79% when they have fireworks. They average approximately 2,200 attendees on a normal night, but on the average for Friday night games it increases to just under 3,600. Mr. Ray said that he visited with the Director of the VA Hospital last year and he was told that the patrons there enjoy the show. Mr. Ray said there will be a total of 5 shows this year.

Councilmember Susuras asked how many complaints have been received. Mr. Schoeber said with everyone he has checked with, they are very minimal.

After a general discussion regarding all the things each Council person has heard, it was agreed for the most it is a positive event in the community.

Mr. Ray said that Grand Junction Rockies will work with the City to do letters to the surrounding neighbors. The total fireworks show only last 11 minutes and they are very sensitive to the neighborhoods concerns.

Mr. Schoeber said there have been additional requests for the use of fireworks and asked if when the notifications go out, would Council agree to send out all of the notifications in one letter. There was a consensus to do this.

City Manager Englehart said it will be scheduled for the February 4, 2015 City Council meeting since they need to contact all of the agencies wanting to do a fireworks display to include all the dates.

#### Agenda Topic 4. Other Business

Pork N Hops – City Manager Englehart brought up the Pork N Hops event, and asked Mr. Schoeber to address this issue due to the number of complaints regarding the music. Mr. Schoeber said this is a combination of a national BBQ competition on a national tour and concert. There are approximately 50 cooks that come to compete. The way this is set up, the music piece helps subsidize the BBQ piece, through ticket and beer sales. Over the last several years there have been numerous adjustments due to complaints. The event will now end at 9:30 p.m. Last year, the City turned over the music portion to Town Square Media, but with

that they have lost some of the control over the event. He asked Council if they wish for the City to continue with this event. Town Square Media has added two significant acts to the show and they want to get going on the promotion. Mr. Schoeber said the event has lost money the last several years due to weather but the City actually made \$5,000 last year since the City did not have to secure the music acts.

After a general discussion on some of the issues, Mr. Schoeber said the better place in the future will be Las Colonias Park. It was agreed to continue with this event at the current location for now.

Questions and Answers from Charter and Century Link – City Manager Englehart handed out their comments, said that even though it is stated “confidential and proprietary” on Charter’s documents, Charter agreed to hand those out to Council thus making them public.

#### Agenda Topic 5. Board Reports

Councilmember McArthur said he is meeting with the Fruita City Council on the drainage issue the following night.

Councilmember Chazen said the Downtown Development Authority went into Executive Session for their meeting.

Councilmember Boeschstein had a meeting with the Las Colonias design team.

Councilmember Susuras said the Grand Junction Airport Board has received a letter from Ben Johnson that he will stay on until they find a replacement for him.

Councilmember Traylor Smith said the Grand Junction Housing Authority’s Annual Meeting is being held in the Hospitality Suite on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January. She urged anyone planning to attend to RSVP.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL  
MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2015**

**WORKSHOP, 5:00 P.M.  
CITY AUDITORIUM  
250 N. 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

*To become the most livable community west of the Rockies by 2025*

1. **Broadband** **Attachment**
2. **Museum Projects, Use of Trust Funds**
3. **Grand Junction Rockies Fireworks** **Attachment**
4. **Legislative Update**
5. **Other Business**
6. **Board Reports**