

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

March 7, 2018

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 7th day of March 2018 at 6:00 p.m. Those present were Councilmembers Bennett Boeschstein, Chris Kennedy, Phyllis Norris, Barbara Traylor Smith, Duke Wortmann, and Council President Rick Taggart. Councilmember Duncan McArthur was absent. Also present were City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, and City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann.

Council President Taggart called the meeting to order. Councilmember Wortmann led the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by an invocation by Adrian de Lange, Senior Pastor of New Life Church.

Presentations - Economic Development Funding for the Grand Junction Economic Partnership, Business Incubator Center, Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission, Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Developments, Inc.

Council President Taggart presented the following businesses with checks for the purpose of Economic Development:

Business Incubator Center - \$102,600 which will be used for Makers Space, website design and upgrades, and general operating expenses.

Grand Junction Economic Partnership - \$189,000 which will be used for travel, prospects visits, trade and press visits, email marketing, website design and upgrades, advertising, trade show sponsorship and promotions, and general operating expenses.

Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce - \$30,000 which will be used for business round tables, tracking and communications, and publicizing success stories.

Industrial Developments Inc. - \$68,200 which will be used for incentives for job creation.

Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission - \$73,800 which will be used for a feasibility report, marketing, association memberships, operational costs, and trade shows.

Proclamation - Proclaiming March 2018 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in the City of Grand Junction

Proclaiming March 2018 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in the City of Grand Junction. Councilmember Traylor Smith read the proclamation. Doug Sorter,

Vice President of Business Operations & Development with Strive was present to accept the proclamation. Mr. Sorter thanked City Council for the proclamation, gave a history of Strive and explained their future goals.

Appointments - Ratify Appointment to the Mesa County Building Code Board of Appeals

Councilmember Kennedy moved to ratify Roy Anderson to the Mesa County Building Code Board of Appeals. Councilmember Traylor Smith seconded the motion. Appointment ratified by unanimous roll call vote.

Citizens Comments

There were none.

Council Reports

Councilmember Norris attended the Grand Junction Housing Authority meeting on February 26th and spoke of how that organization has done a lot for people in Grand Junction who are in need of housing. During this meeting they approved Highlands II, the second portion of center started last year which will be completed by 2019. This housing is for seniors, with an emphasis for Veterans and Veteran's widows. There were 400 people on the waiting list for the first portion of that center, so this housing is very much needed. She attended the special meeting by the Visit Grand Junction group where they discussed the 3% lodging tax to determine how to move forward. On the 28th she attended the Circulation Plan Open House at the main library where City staff did a great job answering questions.

Councilmember Traylor Smith attended the Grand Junction Regional Airport open house where they did a great job explaining the progress they are making and what their future plans are. On March 7th she attended the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce Health Care Summit which was very informative.

Councilmember Kennedy attended many meetings revolving around educators and health care. He thanked community members who participated in the caucus on March 6th and spoke of the unique process in Grand Junction.

Councilmember Boeschstein attended the Incubator meeting where the Workforce Center had a presentation on Grand Junction's employment. He attended the Horizon Drive Association Business Improvement District meeting where Colorado Mesa University (CMU) students spoke about how dangerous the intersections are for pedestrians and bicyclists and proposed some solutions.

Councilmember Wortmann attended the Parks and Recreation Board Meeting and said there are great projects moving forward. Through his many travels he speaks to many people who are moving into this area and he is excited about hearing how they love Grand Junction. He also attended the Republican Caucus on March 6th.

Council President Taggart attended the dedication of a CMU building to Levi Lucero and his wife, which was a very nice event. He attended the airport open house and was pleased that many members of the community attended. He is thankful to have had the opportunity to thank Mark Aiken for his work and service to the Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority. On March 6th he sat through the PLACE (People for Local Activities and Community Enrichment) community meeting for a potential community recreation center. Earlier that day he attended the Rotary Club luncheon where they walked through the State of the City address.

Consent Agenda

Councilmember Kennedy moved to approve adoption of Consent Agenda items #1 through #4 and to move item 5.b. to the consent agenda for consideration at the March 21st Regular Meeting. Councilmember Traylor Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of the February 21, 2018 Regular Meeting
- b. Minutes of the February 28, 2018 Special Session

2. Set Public Hearings

- a. Quasijudicial
 - i. Set a Hearing to Consider a Request by ReGeneration LLC for Review of a Service Plan for the Proposed Lowell Village Metropolitan District
 - ii. Introduction of an Ordinance Zoning the Camp Annexation CSR (Community Services and Recreation) and C1 (Light Commercial), Located at 171 Lake Road, and Setting a Hearing for March 21, 2018

3. Contracts

- a. Purchase of Three Side Load Trash Trucks

- b. Contract Approval for Construction Manager/General Contractor for the Two Rivers Convention Center Improvements Project

4. Resolutions

- a. Resolution Designating New Authorized Signatories for Water Resources and Power Development Authority Loan Agreement
- b. A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Submit a Grant Request to the Mesa County Federal Mineral Lease District for the Development of Las Colonias Park.

Discussion and Possible Direction Regarding the School Resource Officer Program

City Manager Greg Caton presented the item. The discussion started a few weeks ago with the Florida school shootings.

The safety of our students is of the highest priority and they are best served through a comprehensive effort from all agencies and schools in the Grand Valley. While not a singular solution to a comprehensive issue, expanding the City's School Resource Officer (SRO) program will help to address the recent need for additional safety in schools. This will allow for two officers at Grand Junction High School and will provide one officer at each of the four middle schools within city limits. Expanding the SRO Program would improve the safety of students and the public, and would be a welcome and responsible investment in the community. This is an opportunity to discuss this issue and for City Council to provide direction on addressing public safety in our schools.

He addressed four Elements of School Safety:

1. School Resource Officer Program
2. School Security Officers
3. Infrastructure Improvements & Technology
4. School District 51 Safety Work Group

Mr. Caton's presentation emphasized element number one, as that is the primary role that the City can play in improving the safety of Grand Junction's schools. Expansion of the SRO Program would increase authorized SRO positions from 9 to 16 (countywide); two SROs in each high school and one in each middle school. The SROs are specially trained to handle school-related incidents and are a critical link between law

enforcement and the safety of the public within District Schools. There are currently four funded positions (of which one is unfilled) and the City needs to fund two more. The goal is to fill these positions by August 2018, although City Manager Caton and Chief Nordine have concerns about the ability to achieve this. City Manager Caton stressed that the SRO Program is proactive policing; SROs are in the schools to build trust, and relationships with the students. He said SROs are very different from Security Officers who are reactive to incidents where SROs are about mentoring and teaching students to have a relationship with officers.

City Manager Caton spoke of the other three elements and how he saw them as opportunities to work with the School District to improve our schools. He displayed a map of Mesa County with Mesa County Valley School District 51 school boundaries to demonstrate that it is a countywide issue. The City of Grand Junction's boundaries cross with many schools' boundaries.

He listed the next steps which were to expand the School Resource Officer Program, improve school facilities, and improve communication and collaboration with partners and community. Adding SRO's was a middle range goal for the City, but given circumstances and events, this is now being brought before City Council.

Councilmember Kennedy thanked the City Manager for the update. He believes SROs are a good move, and in the long run properly vetted police officers are the right path. He felt the current process is to triage the symptoms, but not addressing the core issues creating problems. Students should be in a safe, inviting environment free of violence, worries, and threats. Councilmember Kennedy said the school district itself has a lot to do. He noted the Public Information Spokesperson for the school district, Emily Shockley, said they are hiring private security guards as a temporary solution until Spring Break. Long term solutions include hiring two more security officers in the spring and two more over the summer, and adding more keyless entry points and security cameras. She said they are not considering arming teachers at this time. Councilmember Kennedy believes they are not addressing causality either. He spoke of the expense involved in hiring security guards versus hiring mental health counselors to be proactive in finding and addressing students with issues in elementary schools. He believes a conversation about long term solutions needs to take place. He supports the SROs but believes the community needs to do a lot more to get to the root problems and address them.

Councilmember Norris said this is an emotional national issue. As a Council, they need to do what they can to help the community with what they are presented with at the meeting. She believes SROs are effective and that they should expand the program. She thanked City Manager Caton and Chief Nordine. She believes the School Board is

doing their part to work with the different agencies to come up with the best solutions. She spoke of an incident around Fruita High School earlier that week and of the information available on the School District 51's website for parents. She spoke of it being a countywide issue, and how some of the new taxes that were passed last year could be contributed to agencies for more officers to keep the students safe. She supports expanding the program.

Councilmember Boeschstein said this is a difficult issue. Hiring more SROs is not the real solution, hiring more counselors is, although he is unsure how to fund it. He believes more mental health counselors should be hired, the campaign against bullying should be expanded, the ban on assault weapons should be renewed, the sale of guns to people under the age of 21 should be prohibited, and the sale of high capacity magazines should also be prohibited.

Councilmember Traylor Smith said the entire country has a mental health issue that is not being addressed. She validated other concerns that were voiced, but commended City staff for their work on the SRO Program. She feels the community can build upon tools to move toward solutions.

Council President Taggart opened the floor to citizen comments.

Joe Higgins, who worked 34 years with the Partners Program, endorsed the expansion of the SRO Program. He was involved with the training of the first resource officers in Grand Junction so he is aware of what they do. He told a story of a young man who was arrested by an SRO for bringing a fake pipe bomb to school because he wanted attention. The SRO maintained a relationship with the young man until his graduation as a role model and helped him become a business owner as an adult. Mr. Higgin's feels SROs are role models and mentors to students, not just police officers. He said SROs dedicate their lives to those students; they are not just people close to retirement.

City Manager Caton emphasized the proactiveness of SROs in reaching out to students. They are an investment in the community who are about mentorship and relationships.

Council President Taggart summarized council's direction to staff to move forward and requested a supplementary budget on what the expansion would cost at a future meeting.

Councilmember Kennedy also wants to see the County contribute to the cause. Council President Taggart said the County announced they were implementing six new SROs; City Manager Caton clarified that only two additional SROs were added.

Councilmember Wortmann said the community reacted very quickly and had the discussions that were needed in order to find a solution to keep students safe. He said as Councilmembers, it is their job to show the community “we have their backs” and by staffing those positions, that is what we are doing.

Councilmember Norris said this is not a fix, but rather a long-term solution for the students.

City Manager clarified the breakdown of the 16 SROs and how Mesa County agencies are contributing.

Councilmember Kennedy asked about the sense of urgency (if there are unfilled positions) and what is the timeline to have all the positions filled. City Manager Caton said the expansion is planned to be up and running by August 2018 and the unfilled positions are mainly due to the demand in other areas and resource allocation.

Chief Nordine spoke to the reality of staffing – patrol is down 15% (six officers on injury leave, and eight newly hired officers in training) and therefore there is an inability to staff the streets; they need officers to respond to 911 calls. The City is actively working to recruit and train officers.

Councilmember Norris asked about recruitment. Chief Nordine said they have done a good job, but the pool is drying up quickly. The goal is to find existing officers in order to negate the need for academy training. City Manager Caton said the City has had some success in attracting lateral moving officers.

Councilmember Kennedy moved to authorize the City Manager to present council with a supplementary budget request and a plan to increase officers to fulfill the expansion of the SRO Program. Councilmember Wortmann seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Consider a request by Two R & D, LLC to Accept the Dedication of 15.06 Acres of Open Space in the Pinnacle Ridge Subdivision Instead of Payment of the City’s Open Space Fee

This item was moved to the consent agenda for consideration at the March 21st regular meeting.

Contracts - Contract for the Las Colonias Business Park Phase 1 and 1A Project

The Las Colonias Planned Development zoning set the vision and provides guidance and establishes appropriate land uses for the 147-acre Las Colonias site. Conceptual design of the business park includes the development of approximately 10% of the

entire Las Colonias Park for the location of several businesses in a campus setting combined with public park amenities consistent with the Las Colonias Park Master Plan.

This project is the first phase of construction for the Riverfront at Las Colonias Park development that is being completed in partnership with the Downtown Development Authority.

Trent Prall, Director of Public Works, presented the Outline Development Plan for Las Colonias Park, gave a history of the property, and detailed the future plans for Phase 1 and 1A. Phase 1 is broken out from Phase 1A because of a grant that was awarded for a portion of the project. They are looking to break ground on March 30th and finishing the project August 30, 2019.

Councilmember Kennedy thanked Mr. Prall for his presentation and said it was nice to see the bids being so competitive. He asked if there were any anticipated delays in the project and Mr. Prall said he didn't.

Councilmember Boeschstein said he heard they are working towards a Google-like campus and asked about hiding parking with trees and planters to mitigate the amount of asphalt. Mr. Prall said the Google-like campus came into play on the design of the interiors of the businesses and well-manicured campus between the buildings. Parking hasn't been fully determined yet, but they are trying to balance parking with landscaping. Councilmember Boeschstein asked if MM Skyline Contracting, Inc is capable of this scope of project, and Mr. Prall said they are.

Council President Taggart asked if the \$2.8 million is close to the original estimate for 1A and Mr. Prall said it is.

Councilmember Traylor Smith asked if Skyline's bid is over or under the budget? Mr. Prall said it came in under the anticipated budget.

Councilmember Traylor Smith moved to authorize the City Purchasing Division to enter into a contract with MM Skyline Contracting, Inc. of Grand Junction, CO for the Las Colonias Business Park Phase 1 and 1A Project in the amount of \$2,845,692.

Councilmember Boeschstein seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Non-Scheduled Citizens & Visitors

There were none.

Other Business

Councilmember Kennedy asked about the Development Corporation and City Manager Caton said that board has been established with five board members. Councilmember Norris is the Council Representative and they are up and running.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Wanda Winkelmann, MMC
City Clerk