

COUNCIL PRE-MEETING
Tuesday, June 1, 2021 5:30 p.m.
Casper City Hall - Council Meeting Room

AGENDA

1. One-Way to Two-Way Conversion Study
2. Open Container Notification
3. Agenda Review

Mayor Freel began the pre-meeting session at 5:33 p.m. with Councilmembers Cathey, Engebretsen, Gamroth, Johnson, Knell, Lutz, Pacheco and Mayor Freel in attendance. Absent: Pollock.

City Manager Napier spoke briefly about the proposed study of converting some downtown streets from one-ways to two-ways and he requested further information from staff. He also stated that a downtown business owner who brought this forward is in attendance if Council has questions. Jeremy Yates, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Supervisor, provided background information on previous recommendations to study this topic. He then explained that the long-range transportation plan identified this conversion study as a priority and shared that the conversion would be beneficial for entry into the parking garage as well as making travel easier in the downtown area.

Councilmember Knell asked about the cost to transition the streets and asked if it would be constructive to carry out a study if there is a lack of funding to carry out the transition. City Manager Napier recommended allowing the MPO to fund the study and to provide good data for a decision in the future. Mr. Yates further explained that 90% of the MPO funding is provided by the federal government and they emphasize long-range planning and public input on local matters. He stated that the portion that will be paid directly by the City of Casper for the study is roughly \$2,700.

Councilmember Gamroth asked why a study has not been carried out previously, since the conversion study has been recommended before. Mr. Yates indicated that it was one of many options presented, and that it had been suggested several times. Councilmember Gamroth requested to hear from the local downtown business owner in attendance, Ryan Stepp. Mr. Stepp, Vice President of Donells Candies, shared that the one-way traffic makes it difficult for drivers to park near his store and is an imposition because it diverts traffic and makes some routes more difficult than necessary.

Councilmember Knell asked why people would be opposed to the conversion. Mr. Yates indicated that the negatives of the conversion are the cost and the loss of some parking. Councilmember Engebretsen asked if the conversion study could include projections for the traffic safety due to the conversion. Mr. Yates shared that the one-way streets already cause some accidents. Chief McPheeters indicated that one-way streets are problematic, and that changing traffic patterns often cause initial problems. He stated that his opinion is that two-way traffic is safer overall. City Manager Napier requested that costs associated with the conversion be included in the scope of the study. Mr. Yates said that the consultants could address the costs. Council supported the inclusion.

City Manager Napier then spoke on the downtown open container area. He shared that the resolution passed last Tuesday had some scrivener's errors and that the area map needs to be adjusted, neither of which are substantive changes. He also requested that Council consider adding a notification requirement so that City staffing could be arranged for setting up and picking up area barriers as well as Police staffing for patrolling the area. Councilmember Cathey asked if the resolution would need to be amended on the floor. Christa Wiggs, Assistant City Clerk, shared that the base resolution did not include the provision for advance notification, but that a proposed amendment could be offered on the floor to add it to the resolution.

Mayor Freel asked if participating businesses could request to participate for multiple days ahead of time. Carla Mills-Laatsch, Licensing Specialist, said they could and indicated that Frontier Brewing will be participating every weekend this summer.

No one had concerns with the agenda. Mayor Freel adjourned the pre-meeting at 5:56 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Steven K. Freel
Mayor