

COUNCIL PREMEETING
Tuesday, August 2, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
City Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. One Cent
2. Public Information Officer
3. Agenda Review

Mayor Pacheco called the pre-meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Cathey, Knell, Pollock, Gamroth, Sutherland, Engebretsen, Johnson, Vice Mayor Freel and Mayor Pacheco.

1. One Cent

City Manager Napier began by expressing that this item was added to the agenda to give the Council one last time to go over amounts and discuss any issues before moving forward with the formal process of adopting the measure by resolution. He stated that the direction given by Council in the last work session was directly deployed into this resolution. He explained that the resolution would become the commitment to the community in regards to how the \$64.5M will be spent over the four-year time period that One Cent #17 is in place if it passes in November. City Manager Napier then brought attention to the newest addition to the list, the \$2.2M for nonprofit contracts pursuant to the direction Council previously gave to staff. Other notable items included street repairs at \$4.8M and the funding for water and sewer projects according to the breakdowns discussed at recent work sessions. City Manager Napier added that some smaller items from the building repairs proposal had been removed. Councilmember Engebretsen expressed that she believes more money should be given to non-profits and less should be allocated to streets projects. City Manager Napier stated that the amounts listed are consistent with the direction taken from Council in previous meetings and discussions. Councilmember Knell brought attention to the fact that nonprofits have other means of receiving funding, whereas the costs of streets, maintenance, and repairs do not have that ability. Councilmember Cathey asked for clarification on the amounts allocated to streets. City Manager Napier explained the \$4.8M listed is the accurate figure. The figure Councilmember Cathey mentioned did not include the \$2.6M from the vehicles and equipment allocation that had been removed. Councilmember Gamroth expressed the need for the funding to go to streets explaining that 13.5% of roads are backlogged, meaning they are in poor or very poor condition. That is above the national average of 12% and ideally, they should be closer to 10%. If the current budget is merely maintained this would increase to 25%. Councilmember Knell raised a question to City Manager Napier on where the police assault vehicle ended up in this proposed funding. City Manager Napier explained that the item had been removed from the One Cent prospectus. Those funds were moved over to Metro Animal Services primarily for facility purposes under the direction received from Council at the last discussion. City Manager Napier elaborated on the \$4.8M allocation for streets and asked Public Services Director, Andrew Beamer, to expand on the streets study and amounts needed to maintain streets. Mr. Beamer explained that the \$5.5M that had been previously brought forward to Council was

the minimum amount needed to maintain streets and that even with the \$4.8M that is proposed, the overall rating will decline over the next four years. Mayor Pacheco confirmed that nothing more was needed for discussion on One Cent and moved on to the next agenda item.

2. Public Information Officer

Next, City Manager, Napier discussed Chief McPheeters's memo which outlined that he intends on moving forward with hiring for the position of Public Information Officer for the Casper Police Department in light of the recent departure of Rebekah Ladd. City Manager Napier elaborated on some of the high points the Chief mentioned in maintaining the role of Public Information Officer within the Police Department including the improvements made in transparency, communication and community relationships that the position has helped achieve since 2019. City Manager Napier then reiterated that the discussion surrounds not whether the position should exist but where the position is housed. He said he believes there are advantages in the position remaining within the Police Department as well as advantages of the position moving to the City Manager's office. He continued that aside from either side's advantages, the position is desperately needed. Councilmember Knell asked where the money for this position comes from. City Manager Napier explained that the funding for this position comes directly from the general fund and has since 2019 and continued that the funding would follow the position if it did indeed move. Councilmember Knell expressed concern over budgetary constraints down the road with the possibility of needing two of these positions, one within the police department and one in the City Manager's office, and that combining the two positions would be beneficial to the budget. Councilmember Cathey conveyed that the position is currently funded by the police budget, resides in the police department and it should continue as such that it gives the person in this position an important and strategic advantage with quick access and proximity not only to the Police Chief but the entire Police Department. Vice Mayor Freel elaborated on the position and the work it has achieved. Vice Mayor Freel stated that the concern he brought up in the previous meeting was around the fact that he thought someone should be operating as a Public Information Officer for the entire organization as a whole. He continued that information he received about the marketing team being developed by the City Manager's Office would operate as such and would be a voice for the overall organization. He stated that in his opinion the Public Information Officer position should stay within the Police Department.

Councilmember Pollock added that there should be a more cohesive marketing strategy employed for the City as a whole and that preference for the Public Information Officers' location should be given to wherever that goal can best be achieved. Mayor Pacheco asked City Manager Napier about what direction was needed.

City Manager Napier asked for direction on where they would prefer the position be housed. Mayor Pacheco recommended leaving the position where it is and that future conversations should take place about how to represent the City with one voice by utilizing the City Manager's Office marketing team and the Public Information Officer positions in a cohesive way. Councilmembers Cathey, Engebretsen and Johnson along with vice Mayor Freel gave thumbs up, while Councilmembers Knell, Gamroth, and Pollock declined. Councilmember Pollock expanded that Council may not be the right people to make that decision. Mayor Pacheco ended by stating right

now things should be left as is, but that a future conversation should take place around the marketing team the Public Information Officer, and what a city-wide approach to communication with the public looks like.

3. Agenda Review

Next City Manager, Napier said he had nothing to discuss on the agenda review. Mayor Pacheco concluded the pre-meeting.

The pre-meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF CASPER, WYOMING
A Municipal Corporation

Fleur Tremel
City Clerk

Ray Pacheco
Mayor