

City Council Meeting Minutes

**October 12, 2016
City Hall, Council Chambers
749 Main Street
7:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Muckle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken and the following members were present:

City Council: ***Mayor Robert Muckle, Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Lipton,
Councilmembers Jay Keany, Chris Leh, Susan Loo,
Dennis Maloney, and Ashley Stolzmann***

Staff Present: ***Malcolm Fleming, City Manager
Heather Balsler, Deputy City Manager
Kevin Watson, Finance Director
Joe Stevens, Director of Parks & Recreation
Ember Brignull, Open Space Manager
Dean Johnson, Parks Superintendent
David Baril, Head Golf Professional
Dave Hayes, Police Chief
Becky Campbell, Public Services Manager
Meredyth Muth, City Clerk***

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Muckle called for changes to the agenda and hearing none, moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Keany. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – CITY MANAGER’S PROPOSED 2017 – 2018 BUDGET AND 2017 – 2021 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

City Manager Fleming stated this is a continuation of the budget conversation. Tonight will focus on the Parks, Open Space and Trails, and Recreation Programs. Based on previous meetings and Council direction, the materials tonight have been updated with new revenue and expenditure projections and a new comparison of changes in full-time

equivalent employees (FTEs) and a comparison of FTEs to other communities was added to the packet. He reiterated the proposed budget will not include any positions paid for by one-time revenue.

Parks

City Manager Fleming noted the top priorities for Parks includes a new administrative assistant partially funded by the Open Space & Parks Fund and partially funded by the Golf Fund. Director Stevens stated this is a priority of the Parks Board to relieve the workload on the Parks Superintendent and City Forester as they provide support for the Board. This position will also work with the golf operation to provide bookkeeping support for the merchandising and the golf shop.

Councilmember Loo stated the Parks Board is interested in completing a Parks Management Plan. They would like the Parks Superintendent to do this in-house but he will need additional time to complete this task. Director Stevens stated this administrative position would relieve the Superintendent and City Forester of some tasks to then allow them to work on long-range strategic planning and work on some of the Board's priorities.

Councilmember Loo stated the Parks Board members are putting their own time and effort into examining parks and gathering data but they are now at the point where they need more input and help from staff.

City Manager Fleming stated the parks maintenance technician for turf is needed but is not recommended at this time due to a lack of funding.

City Manager Fleming stated there is proposed funding for additional parks seasonal positions. Superintendent Johnson stated there is a need for these seasonal positions to help maintain the facilities and provide a higher quality job of maintaining facilities.

Councilmember Keany asked about the goal of removing noxious weeds and if it includes more than just Type A Noxious weeds. Director Stevens stated staff tries to remove all weeds, but the removal of the Type A weeds is mandated by the State so we note it specifically.

City Manager Fleming and Councilmember Stolzmann indicated the Finance Committee requested the subprograms of Forestry and Horticulture be reallocated under the Parks and Streetscaping Subprograms.

Open Space and Trails

City Manager Fleming stated the priorities for this Program included a new senior natural resources specialist but that is not in the proposed budget as the revenue projections are insufficient to support it.

City Manager Fleming stated he is proposing an increase in seasonal positions for this Program. Open Space Manager Brignull stated this seasonal position will be used to increase maintenance in high use areas, especially for weed removal. She added that previously the Parks Division was handling much of the open space maintenance and this will properly allocate the work to the Open Space Program.

Councilmember Loo asked why we haven't done the controlled burns we have been discussing for a few years. Open Space Manager Brignull stated in some cases burns actually increase the weeds, also this takes a great deal of coordination and staff wants to only do it if it meets the resource objectives of that property. Director Stevens stated the department is still working to identify the best areas for any prescribed burns and to make sure the burn truly meets resource management needs.

Councilmember Stolzmann asked when the open space zoning project would be completed. She stated she thought the plan was to zone one property per year. Is this to be completed next year and if yes, do we have enough funding budgeted to do this? Open Space Manager Brignull responded zoning one property per year would have a cost and may be something we can contract out. Mayor Muckle agreed the plan was for one per year.

Councilmember Keany stated there are residents in Ward 1 who would really like to volunteer to help with maintenance of open space. He wants to make sure we take advantage of such offers. Director Stevens stated the department is happy to work with volunteers and find projects for them. Councilmember Leh concurred there are residents willing to help with projects.

Councilmember Leh asked if there is additional funding available for trail connections, particularly to study a way to connect areas north of South Boulder Road with areas to the south. City Manager Fleming stated this will be taken into consideration for the proposed budget.

Mayor Muckle stated he would like to see the natural resources manager funded, perhaps mid-year if the numbers show it is possible. Councilmember Maloney noted to fund this will take more money from the General Fund so compromise will be needed.

Councilmember Stolzmann would like to see the open space tax listed specifically as open space revenue and advocated this revenue be used for open space needs before parks needs. Councilmember Keany noted the tax is specifically dedicated to open space, parks, and trails, not just open space.

Recreation

City Manager Fleming stated the revenue listed in this Program comes from recreation center fees, but it is not allocated to different recreation subprograms.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated he has been hearing from residents that the City should raise the non-resident rates at the recreation center. Director Stevens stated no increases are incorporated for 2017 as staff is waiting to see if the expansion is supported. Fees would be raised if an expansion is built.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated that is unacceptable and he would like to see non-resident rates increased in 2017. He stated staff is not being aggressive enough about charging, particularly non-residents.

Councilmember Loo agreed with an increase for nonresidents for 2017, but noted an increase in use of the facility in 2018 is unlikely if the center is under construction.

Director Stevens noted the non-resident rates were raised in 2016 to generate more revenue at the direction of City Council. It can be raised again this year if that is what Council directs.

Councilmember Stolzmann agreed fees should be increased. Councilmember Keany agreed 2017 non-resident fees should be increased as long as they are in-line with fees in neighboring communities.

Councilmember Loo asked if the key indicators for recreation could more clearly identify what the costs are and why the numbers have changed so much with the change to program budgeting.

Councilmember Keany asked if the preschool program is competing with the private sector as there are now many options available in the area. If we keep the program it should not be subsidized if it competes with private enterprise.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton noted Nite at the Rec attendance is up significantly and this is the kind or metric that is helpful in reviewing the budget.

Golf Subprogram

City Manager Fleming stated the revenue projections for this subprogram are greatly affected by the debt service the Golf Fund owes the Utility Fund. He noted the need to set aside funds to replace normal equipment is between \$60K - \$300K annually to cover normal capital replacement costs plus savings for large capital needs. Currently, the City believes the fund is earning sufficient revenue to afford some capital improvements and pay the debt service to the Utility Fund for 2016, but it does not allow the fund to set aside any reserves for future needs and the projections show it being underwater for at least 10 years if the debt service is required. One option is for the General Fund to cover the debt service which would leave the Golf Fund in good condition with adequate reserves.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated if we require the Golf Fund to pay the debt service it will not be able to afford its capital maintenance costs. The only way to set up the Golf Fund as a successful enterprise fund is to relieve it of the debt service.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated the only real option is to pay the loan from the General Fund so the Golf Fund can become self-sustaining.

Councilmember Maloney stated the only way to make this a successful enterprise is to get rid of the debt. If that happens the golf course would be able to cover all of its short term capital costs. Longer-term, bigger items will be a point of discussion for future city councils about whether that will be at the cost of the Golf Fund, the Capital Fund or the General Fund.

Councilmember Loo stated as policy she would like to see the Golf Fund be self-sustaining sooner rather than later.

Mayor Muckle stated he supports paying off the loan to help the Golf Fund and also to help clean up the balances of the Utility Fund.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton asked what are we giving up by paying off this loan from the General Fund. City Manager Fleming stated it would be a one-time transfer from the General Fund so it would be taking funds away from future projects to be paid from the General Fund.

Councilmember Maloney stated the City needs to have a strategy for paying for the larger capital costs the golf course will face over time. Items such as new greens, or clubhouse updates are costly.

Mayor Muckle asked for public comment.

Helen Moshak, 493 Eisenhower Drive, chair of the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB), stated the Board is fully supportive of the natural resources manager position and the proposed capital budget expenditures for open space. She asked Council to consider prioritizing this position for 2018 if it can't be funded in 2017.

Mike Schantz, 623 West Hickory Court, a member of OSAB but speaking for himself, agreed with Councilmember Stolzmann that the open space tax revenue should be prioritized for open space and not used broadly for other projects. That funding should be used for the resources manager position.

Linda Smith, 632 Columbine Court, a member of OSAB, asked that the Council prioritize the open space wayfinding funding.

Deb Fahey, 1118 West Enclave Circle, stated she would very much like to see more funding devoted to, and discussion of, sustainability initiatives. There has been no

discussion of the topic in any budget meeting to date. The City could join the Colorado Communities for Climate Action for about \$30,000 per year which would be money well spent. Please do something about sustainability now.

City Manager Fleming asked what additional information the Council would like to see for the public hearing. He reviewed a number of items he has decided not to fund in the proposed budget and corresponding reductions in service levels. Additionally, staff has been looking at ways to stretch the resources we have and continues to look for additional resources.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she wants to make sure the Dillon Road railroad crossing is added to the Quiet Zone CIP sheet. She would like more information about if our wage increase is reasonable when compared to other cities. She supports the senior accountant position. She would like clean-up of the municipal code prioritized.

Councilmember Loo stated for the FTE comparisons she would like it noted which of these cities have paid fire departments so we can compare appropriately. She also would like Boulder included in the list for comparison as many residents compare us to the Boulder service level.

Mayor Muckle stated he would prioritize the senior resource manager position and look at what could be removed to pay for it.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated he doesn't see enough funding in the Open Space Fund to support all of the existing costs of the Open Space Program and fund the resources manager position. He would like to see what wouldn't be paid for if this position is included in the budget.

Mayor Muckle asked for the budget to show what we are proposing to do in the Sustainability Subprogram. Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated we do already fund a number of sustainability initiatives and that should be recognized.

Councilmember Leh would like more detailed numbers on the Golf Fund debt and how it might be paid off.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated his strong support for paying the Golf Fund debt from the General Fund. He noted he is concerned about administrative workload on staff. Our residents have high expectations for service levels and that has created more work for staff, we have to recognize this. He supports the purchasing manager position and would like it included in the budget. He supports the resource manager but would like to see what would not be paid for if we fund that. He would like to see some funding dedicated to updating the sign code. He also would like to have more conversation on a livable wage and wants some funding set aside for this in 2017. He supports the City Manager's budget generally.

Councilmember Maloney stated he also supports relieving the Golf Fund of the debt.

Councilmember Keany stated he is concerned about adding the cost of the resource manager to the budget and the affect it will have on the General Fund. He does not want that position to be prioritized and funded from the General Fund which could be used for police staffing. He strongly supports adding back in at least one if not two police officers in the budget.

Councilmember Loo would like to see what wouldn't be paid for if the resource manager is paid for. She added her support for the senior accountant position saying it should be prioritized over the resource manager. She also supports putting more funding in maintaining roads in the long-term.

Councilmember Leh stated that while the road maintenance is important, he questions whether we have set the bar too high on road maintenance and if perhaps some of that money could be used for other programs. Perhaps this is not as big a trade off as we think and funding paving at such a high level places undue pressure on the budget.

Councilmember Leh reiterated his request for funding for a study for connections from north of South Boulder Road to areas south of it.

COUNCIL COMMENTS, COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she had attended the Rocky Mountain City Summit. The DRCOG draft MetroVision plan is now available on-line for review. She reported on DRCOG activities.

Councilmember Leh stated the Consortium of Cities is working on sustainability issues including a recent study on "Future Climate Extremes in Boulder County." He noted the Consortium's study on affordable housing and homelessness is very informative and encouraged Council to read it.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Councilmember Leh moved for adjournment, seconded by Councilmember Keany. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Robert P. Muckle, Mayor

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk