

City Council Meeting Minutes

**September 24, 2019
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. The following members were present:

City Council: ***Mayor Robert Muckle
Councilmember Jay Keany
Councilmember Chris Leh
Councilmember Susan Loo
Councilmember Ashley Stolzmann***

Absent: ***Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Lipton
Councilmember Dennis Maloney***

Staff Present: ***Heather Balsler, City Manager
Megan Davis, Deputy City Manager
Kevin Watson, Finance Director
Nathan Mosely, Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Director
Ember Brignull, Open Space Superintendent
Kurt Kowar, Public Works Director
Rob Zuccaro, Planning Director
Dave Hayes, Police Chief
Kathleen Hix, Human Resources Director
Chris Neves, IT Director
Meredyth Muth, City Clerk***

Councilmember Leh stated Judge Kristan Wheeler has been appointed to a new position with the 17th Judicial District and has resigned as Presiding Municipal Judge in the Louisville Court. Wheeler thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve as judge. She stated she is leaving the Court in good hands and she notes the Court is in full compliance with the law and working well. She thanked everyone for the opportunity and the experience.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP PRIORITIES AND GOALS FOR FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF CITY OPEN SPACE

Laura Scott Denton, chair of the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB), stated the goal of this exercise is to define the long-term goals and priorities for open space management. It is time to change the focus from acquisition to management. The OSAB Committee is looking at costs, gaps in funding, optimal practices, and how to align staff workload with City priorities. This is built upon the PROST Master Plan and they hope to update it to align with current goals. She added these goals are subject to OSAB and Council discussion.

The priorities they are discussing include:

- Foster Citizen Engagement – education programs; marketing pride in stewardship; increase volunteer engagement and visibility.

Councilmember Loo asked for the budget to be more clear on how many staff are supporting the education program in their duties and would like a discussion on the work priorities of open staff staff.

- Resource Management – native prairie restoration, new Senior Natural Resource Manager, wildlife habitat enhancement, weed management.
- Invest in Wetlands – bird habitat enhancement, Coal Creek investments including access points to the creek, management of wetlands for riparian ecosystem health.
- Pursue scientific approach to land management – repeatable, in-house inventories for vegetation and wildlife; on-going, long-term ecosystem health scoring system; updates to the public on how preserving land.
- Enhance User Experience – outreach and enforcement of rules and regulations; decreasing barriers to usability; serving diverse user types, look for opportunities to enhance nature play and access; and provide adequate maintenance staffing.

Members discussed the pros and cons of wayfinding signs for open space.

- Respond to Citizen Trail needs – social trail prevention and remediation; develop a trails master plan; create a new category for hiking trails; and a city-wide network approach to trail building.

Councilmember Stolzmann would like a plan or policy on how the City addresses social trails. Mayor Muckle stated we know residents want more variety in trail type and that should be discussed.

Councilmember Stolzmann recommended making sure the group looks at the open space definitions in the charter to be sure the plans align.

Councilmember Stolzmann would also like to see a maintenance plan for the dog off leash areas so the areas don't just turn to dirt. She feels the City needs to understand what the resource need is in this area.

Mayor Muckle stated the group should look at the wayfinding and how to make it less expensive. He added this will be refined and more detail added and then the recommendations will come back to Council with funding numbers.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED 2020 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET AND FISCAL POLICIES

Director Watson reviewed the changes since the September 3 presentation, which include adding a Fiscal Impact Model Development (\$75,000 for 2020); adding a Windsorce Project (\$28,000 per year); updating sales tax revenue projections; updating expenditure projections; and removal of transfers from the General Fund to Capital Projects Fund.

Director Watson stated he feels the 1.5% increase estimate for sales tax is a very reasonable estimate for next year. However, due to the many one-time anomalies/increases in the current year's sales tax revenue projections, the year-over-year change for 2020 will be a negative 3.3%

Director Watson showed a graph with FTE increases versus population. It shows FTEs have increased at a rate slightly greater than population increase. City Manager Balser stated there is only one new full-time FTE proposed for the 2020 budget.

Director Watson reviewed the long-term financial plan outputs for various funds. City Manager Balser noted Council should have a policy discussion on whether it wants to reduce operational costs when there are large capital balances.

Director Watson reviewed the recurring transfers from the General Fund to other funds based on the current fiscal policies. He noted the analysis of the operating surplus or deficit for the General Fund. He also discussed the definition of the operating revenue and the operating expenditures.

Members discussed how the formula for the renewal and replacement reserve in the Recreation Fund is calculated and if the correct amount is going into this fund. They discussed how the building improvements fit into those calculations and how that compares to the maintenance on other City buildings.

City Manager Balser stated staff would like a full year of operation of the recreation center with financial information to better evaluate what is needed for this fund and how the interfund transfers play into this. She noted changes may be needed when we have a better feel for this.

Mayor Muckle stated the Finance Committee recommends sticking with the recommendation here for the 2020 budget and then going forward when there is more information. Changes can be addressed in the 2021-22 budget.

Director Watson noted the Golf Fund probably needs more work. Beginning in 2021, all of the capital outlay for the golf course is proposed to be paid from the Capital Projects Fund. If Council wants golf course capital needs to compete with all other capital needs this plan can stay. If Council wants the golf course to have dedicated money for capital improvements policy changes will be needed.

Mayor Muckle stated the Finance Committee thinks this capital plan is needed as the golf fund can't generate enough to pay for those capital needs. They think it makes more sense for the golf capital to compete with other capital projects rather than make a transfer to the fund to pay for projects.

City Manager Balsler said there is a recognition we need to look at long-term capital needs for the golf course and how we fund those.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she wants to clarify that she doesn't want an updated fiscal model but rather a new one that staff can run more easily. City Manager Balsler stated she is wary to assume we can simplify the model as she believes that would be very difficult given the complexity of the model and the type of data people want from the model.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she would like a process that is less effort and can be run easily by staff. She would like a model that is repeatable and without a marginal cost model. She wants a more straightforward approach.

Councilmember Loo stated \$75K for this is a lot of money to hire a consultant. She would prefer we don't change the fiscal impact model again; it takes too much staff time. She is not sure this is a priority.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she doesn't think we can continue to use this model without it being better.

City Manager Balsler stated she is not sure it is realistic to assume we can make this simpler given the expectations people have. Director Zuccaro stated the issue with the current model is that only staff can run it, so then people feel it is not transparent. However, given the complex information people want to see this is the only way to provide the information.

City Manager Balsler stated we have to have realistic expectations of what we can achieve with an update or change to the model.

City Manager Balsler asked if Council has any changes to this recommended budget.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated she would like a place holder for pedestrian safety improvements on Pine Street. City Manager Balser stated that can be part of the placeholder that is already included for the Transportation Master Plan projects.

Councilmember Loo asked about the financial policies for the Rec Fund Reserves. She stated the new dedicated sales tax is supposed to pay for the new part of the Rec Center, not towards the old sections of the building. She would like that clear in the policy.

ADVANCED AGENDA & IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Members reviewed the advanced agenda.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Robert P. Muckle, Mayor

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk