

City of Rock Springs)
County of Sweetwater)
State of Wyoming)

City Council met in special session on September 9, 2019 in the Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. Members present included Councilors Glennise Wendorf, Keaton West, Billy Shalata, Rob Zotti, and Jeannie Demas. Councilors David Halter, Tim Savage, and David Tate were absent from the meeting. Department heads present included Matthew L. McBurnett, Dave Lansang, Jim Wamsley, and Richard Beckwith. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Mayor Kaumo announced that Councilmen Halter and Savage wrote with their opinions, and turned the meeting over to Councilor Keaton West. Councilor West stated that currently, \$228 million in projects have been presented by the cities and towns in Sweetwater County. The purpose of tonight’s meeting is to define the City of Rock Springs project list, which currently totals \$40.8 million. Councilor Zotti asked about the College Drive widening project and what it would consist of. Mayor Kaumo stated that Paul Kauchich was not available to attend this evening, but that this project is not a dire need and could wait. He also added that the Water Reclamation Facility Odor Control project is a priority at this time.

For the Water Reclamation Facility and water/sewer projects, a support system could be a rate increase if the projects aren’t successful in this special purpose tax round. Councilor Zotti stated that he wants to make sure that we are exhausting all other options before taxing citizens for them. Mayor Kaumo stated that with grants there are still matches involved, and that agencies are focused more on desperate needs for facilities, which odor is not seen as a desperate need. Mayor Kaumo added that the City was unsuccessful for phase I of the East Belt Route project when applying for grant funding. The Water Reclamation Facility Odor Project is his first priority, second is the detention basin to alleviate flooding, and third are sewer/stormwater/water projects, with the remaining to be discussed for a later date. The East Belt Route is more important than the College Drive and Dewar Drive Widening projects, but not as much of a priority as others. Councilor Zotti stated that he doesn’t think asking for infrastructure upon infrastructure in one tax request is a good idea.

Councilor Shalata stated that the County Commissioners stated that it was recommended to put an \$80-\$100 million cap on the request. Mayor Kaumo stated that he is dismayed that no citizens in the community are present. Councilor West is tasked with bringing forward the City of Rock Springs list. Ranting on social media does not mean that citizens are making a difference when voicing their opinions, showing up to a meeting is important to express one’s opinion. Mayor Kaumo stated that he would like to reconsider the quality of life projects, and that the East Belt Route could be done in ½ phases, and grant dollars could be pursued.

Councilor Wendorf asked whether there was any discussion with the County regarding the Century Parking Lot project. Mark Lyon, Parks Superintendent, stated that there is a recreational lease with the BLM and that developments haven’t been finished in order to be eligible for the purchase of the land, which the lease could be revised to change this and possibly allow a purchase. Mayor Kaumo added that the traffic passing through this subdivision is bad and needs to be looked at.

Councilor West stated that he has been promoting quality of life, and that with the Beautification Committee in particular, funding is a struggle. The purpose of the sixth cent has historically been driven more towards infrastructure needs. The idea from the Beautification Committee has been to dress up the gateways to Rock Springs, including Elk Street and others, and asked if the Governing Body would consider removing items 6 & 7 on their list of projects, and adding a \$1 million gateway beautification fund in their place.

Councilor Zotti asked about adding a roundup to water bills and how that works with the enterprise funds. Matthew L. McBurnett, Director of Administrative Services, stated that he has discussed this with Rick Beckwith, City Attorney, and that a good solution to reduce administrative time managing the funds could not be found. Councilor Wendorf stated that Exit 107 was done with some help and grant funding from WYDOT. Mr. Lyon clarified that these grants are small, approximately \$7,000 per year, which are not sufficient. Councilor West added that signage alone at Exit 102 totaled approximately \$16,000, so costs are high. Mayor Kaumo stated that he feels it is just as important to consider quality of life projects to make our community a better place to live, and that he supports Councilor West's request.

Mayor Kaumo stated that he would like to open it up to outside agencies for questions from the Governing Body.

\$3,360,000 - Southwest Wyoming Regional Airport

Councilor West asked Devon Brubaker, Manager at the Southwest Wyoming Regional Airport, what the funding request is from and whether it is for the same thing that the supplemental funding was requested for back in July to the Governing Body. Mr. Brubaker clarified that these are two separate funding models for different scenarios, depending on additional monies that are coming later in the year, or into next year. This funding request for the Specific Purpose Tax is based on not receiving funding from the FAA. Mayor Kaumo stated that if we are not 100% sure that this is going to be accepted, at what point will we know one way or another. By the beginning of December, a clear picture should be known and then in March, after public comment, projects are finalized. Mr. Brubaker added that grant options will have been exhausted. Councilor Wendorf asked if this request could be withdrawn, and Mayor Kaumo stated that once the money is coming in, projects cannot be changed. Mr. Brubaker stated that they are doing everything they can as well, to include charges added to airline tickets and rental cars. Discussion took place regarding the amount change from \$18 million to \$18.5 million, which Mr. Brubaker clarified that the extra \$.5 million is to build a new station and line for natural gas, as the airport is over capacity currently. Councilor West asked about funding needed after special purpose tax money, should it be approved. Discussion took place regarding how the pieces could come together for funding. Councilor Zotti asked about a timeline for getting final costs for the project, and Mr. Brubaker stated that by December, an RFQ could be submitted to finalize design and price. There are opportunities to right-size the project according to budget. Councilor Zotti asked whether a cost estimate would be provided by April 30, when the Commission finalizes everything. In fees, it would cost \$20,000-\$25,000 for a guaranteed not to exceed price by the beginning of April. Mayor Kaumo stated that getting a finalized number to move forward is critical and that having an overage or shortage with the specific purpose tax is not a good idea. The due dates for giving the required notice for ballot initiatives are April 30 for the primary election and July 16 for the general election. Mr. Brubaker also added that the beautification idea is a good one and that he agrees with it.

\$3.5 Million - YWCA

Mayor Kaumo asked Melinda Baas, Executive Director of the YWCA, to explain any other additional funding that has been explored. Day-to-day operations are funded with Wyoming Community Foundation grants, or businesses like Dominion or Tata Chemicals. The difficulty of where to go with this project arises with grants asking all avenues to be exhausted, including the special purpose tax. Ms. Baas added that this addition will be focused more toward children aged 4 and up, which is not as expensive as younger children. Mayor Kaumo asked about the land acquisition and what the status is. Mr. Beckwith stated that the appraisal is still in process and should be completed soon. Ms. Baas added that without the addition, the pool is still there and purchasing a pool as part of the land is concerning. Ms. Baas added that the YWCA is trying to bridge a gap between children aged 4 and those that are old enough to enter the Boys and Girls Club. Councilor Zotti asked about the total of \$3.5 million and what that will consist of. Ms. Baas stated that PlanOne could have an estimate coming by April for specifics of the project.

\$13,050,000 - Multi-Use Facility

Mayor Kaumo asked about the numbers from PlanOne, whether they are totaling \$13 million. Ms. Anderson confirmed and added that the addition to the existing Rec Center totals roughly around \$8 million. Ms. Anderson stated that making the number manageable was difficult, which is what resulted in a focus on the new facility build, as opposed to the addition. Councilor Zotti stated that there is not a facility for kids to practice sports year-round in the area, and that young families are predominantly what makes up Rock Springs. On the other hand, the City already struggles to keep two existing facilities open and running, so the possibility of adding a third is concerning. Ms. Anderson stated that an additional usage fee must be added to cover costs and people in the community have expressed support of this. If either existing facility closes, will the community be adequately provided with locations to practice? Mayor Kaumo added that businesses would most likely love to sponsor and name the building to help keep it operational. Assistance with the costs of utilities and 1 or 2 employees is possible. Ms. Anderson added that this is a legacy thing, that it is not self-serving and that it would also have a huge impact on the local economy. Mayor Kaumo expressed support of quality of life. Different options were discussed for the building. Councilor West asked about discussions with the School District and whether that has happened. Ms. Anderson stated that they have secured funds to demolish Lincoln School and build a much smaller facility, and with the current proposal, there will not be much extra as this will be strictly a school district facility, with pay-to-use if there are outside agencies using it.

CITY OF ROCK SPRINGS PROJECT VOTES

\$4 Million - Water Reclamation Facility Odor Control/Improvements Project

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$2.5 Million - NE Rock Springs Detention Basins (Lionkol)

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$5 Million - Miscellaneous Sewer Projects

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$5 Million - Miscellaneous Water Projects

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$5 Million - Miscellaneous Storm Water Projects

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$2 Million - College Dr. Widening Project

The following voted in favor: None. Project will not move forward with Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo voting no.

\$1.5 Million - Dewar Dr. Widening Project

The following voted in favor: None. Project will not move forward with Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo voting no.

\$15.8 Million - East Belt Route Phase I & Century Parking Lot

The following voted in favor: Councilor Wendorf and Mayor Kaumo. Project will not move forward with Councilors West, Shalata, Zotti, and Demas voting no.

\$1 Million - Miscellaneous Gateway Beautification Projects

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project will move forward with Councilor Zotti voting no.

OUTSIDE AGENCY PROJECT VOTES

\$3.5 Million - YWCA

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$3,360,000 - Airport

The following voted in favor: Councilors Wendorf, West, Shalata, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward.

\$13 Million - Multi-Use Facility (Option 2: New Facility)

The following voted in favor: Councilors West, Zotti, Demas, and Mayor Kaumo. Project moves forward with Councilors Wendorf and Shalata voting no.

Councilor Zotti asked about the ballot and the way it would look, that he would support the multi-use facility, but thinks it should be listed separately on the ballot from infrastructure. Mayor Kaumo stated that his concern is that the way distributions are received by the state is by population, so maybe the County Commissioners should consider requests based on population when establishing the ballot. Mayor Kaumo stated that as a recommendation from the Committee, this could be presented to the County.

Bonding was discussed. Mayor Kaumo stated that smaller communities have a hard time because dollars must be expended in order to get projects rolling, so the bonding process works better for them. Mr. Beckwith stated that the bonding process is a marketing tool for the community and that taxpayer dollars cannot be used to market the ballot. Councilor Zotti expressed concern about the increase in construction costs if bonding were to not be used. Councilor Shalata expressed his lack of support for bonding, as the cost for bonding would allow for more projects to be done for the City of Rock Springs. Discussion took place regarding current bonding rates.

Councilor Shalata asked whether Councilor West will recommend that quality of life projects be added as a separate ballot initiative as recreation. Councilor West confirmed that he will recommend this to the Committee and the County Commissioners.

The total list is now \$42,410,000, with outside agency sponsorship requests.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

By: _____
Council President

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor