

CITY OF POCA TELLO, IDAHO  
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Mayor Brian Blad called the City Council Study Session to order  
ROLL CALL at 9:02 a.m. Council members present were Heidi Adamson,  
Roger Bray, Steve Brown, Gary Moore, and Michael L. Orr.  
Council member Jim Johnston arrived at 9:03 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Frank Hartlieb, Chair Person from the Pocatello Arts Council  
POCA TELLO ARTS was present to discuss the Arts Council's goals and projects, as  
COUNCIL UPDATE well as City Council's policies and expectations.

Mr. Hartlieb gave an overview of recent activities by the Arts Council. He also reviewed the educational programs the Council has worked on which included music and art activities. Mr. Hartlieb described the travertine art sculptures that the Council hopes will be placed in City parks. Unveiling of the sculptures will be held during the Sagebrush Arts Festival. Mr. Hartlieb will contact the Park and Recreation Advisory Board for their recommendation of where to place the sculptures. It was mentioned the Idaho Commission of the Arts 50 Year Anniversary is this year and multiple activities are happening.

Mayor Blad stated it has been a busy year and the Arts Council has done a great job to boost the arts in Pocatello.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Kathleen Lewis, Chair Person, and Matthew Lewis, Planning  
PLANNING AND ZONING Manager and Staff Liaison; representing the Planning and  
COMMISSION UPDATE Zoning Commission were present to discuss the Commission's  
goals and projects, as well as Council's policies and expectations.

Mr. Lewis noted City staff appreciates all the Commission does to review applications and analyze data. He mentioned time spent reviewing the subdivision policy was a busy time for staff and the Commission.

Ms. Lewis noted the individuals that serve on the Commission are an excellent working group. The members are dedicated and are a good representation of the community. She noted there has been increased development in the community which is keeping them busy. It was mentioned the City's subdivision ordinance had a full review and multiple meetings were held to accomplish this.

Mr. Moore stressed the importance of what the Commission does for quality development in Pocatello. He feels the review of applications and suggested amendments by the Commission are a vital part of smart development and addressing water quality issues in the community.

In closing, Ms. Lewis stated when reviewing items, the Commission considers the impact on the community and environment.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Janet Schubert, representative of Family and Friends of Dr.  
COLLEGE William W. Schubert; Shannon Ansley, College Neighborhood  
NEIGHBORHOOD Association; Jerry Myers, Myers-Anderson Architects; and Ron  
REFLECTION GARDEN Dykman of Dykman Construction; presented information  
PROJECT-CALDWELL regarding placement of a Reflection Garden in Caldwell Park.  
PARK The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has reviewed the  
proposal and recommends approval. Donations to fund

construction of the project have been secured by the resident group. Other associated costs will also need to be addressed.

Ms. Schubert reviewed the group's goal and fundraising efforts to move forward with the proposed project. She noted Mr. Myers has designed the proposed Reflection Garden for Caldwell Park and the project is fully funded. Ms. Schubert reported the garden was presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on August 4, 2016. The Board's suggestions have been taken into account and the plan modified accordingly.

Mr. Myers explained the group looked at a few different sites before settling on the Caldwell Park area. He noted the contractor is very excited about the project. Mr. Myers gave a description of the bubbling water area within the pad and proposed lighting features. He mentioned a small plaque will be placed to recognize the donors. Mr. Myers explained the group has been working on the project for six (6) years and hope to get direction from Council to move forward at this time.

Mr. Moore feels partnering with organizations is a great way to get projects like these done and he supports the concept.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Myers outlined the water feature recirculating process and lighting features. He mentioned the bubblers will not run all of the time.

In response to questions from Council, John Banks, Parks and Recreation Director, anticipates minimum costs to maintain trees near the garden. However, he does have concerns with maintenance costs for the water bubbler features. This is a highly used park and the addition of the Reflection Garden should not hinder regular activities. It was noted the water bubblers will only operate in the warmer weather months.

Ms. Adamson shared her appreciation to all that have worked on the project. The group's fundraising efforts and pleasant garden design of the garden will be a great addition to the park.

Mayor Blad mentioned Council needs to keep in mind the popular use of Caldwell Park. He noted that the Park is used by several organizations for their annual events and the School District Summer Lunch program.

Mr. Banks provided information noting that staff is supportive of the project request, and are of the opinion that the Reflection Garden would be a wonderful park amenity that would be very much enjoyed and heavily used. Staff also agrees with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board that the project would be a great example of public/private partnership for the benefit of the community. The majority of the Reflection Garden is virtually maintenance free, or includes maintenance which can be absorbed by the Parks Department in the general maintenance efforts for Caldwell Park. However, staff does have concern with the potential for on-going maintenance of the water feature components (water bubblers, re-circulating pump and filtration system, etc.), as well as the possibility for on-going water bubbler issues due to misuse, and the resulting costs associated. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the request with the following conditions: a) requesting group be financially responsible for on-going care and maintenance/repair of the water feature components portion of the Reflection Garden, to include water bubblers, re-circulating pump and filtration system, and associated tumbled cobble/mosaic tile areas, via establishment of a perpetual care/contingency fund (or the like); b) secure needed building permits and provide all plans/construction drawings/specifications necessary to obtain needed permits; c) Reimburse City/Parks Department for the costs of tree removals associated with the project; d) reimburse

City/Parks Department for the cost of potable water supply connection associated with the project; e) reimburse City/Parks Department for park irrigation system retrofitting needed to accommodate project; f) consultation with City Arborist regarding appropriate tree selections for the project/Caldwell Park; g) provide signage indicating that the water feature water is not suitable for drinking and/or splashing (final sign wording to be determined); and h) should current park electrical capacity prove to not be sufficient to accommodate project needs, reimburse City/Parks Department for the cost of providing additional needed electrical capacity.

A majority of the Council supported the Reflection Garden concept. It was noted that a final decision will be voted upon at a later date.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Ladd Edmo, Land Use Commissioner; Alonzo Colby, Planning Director; Anthony “Pete” Broncho, Transportation Manager; and Sherwin Racehorse, Senior Planner, representing Shoshone-Bannock Tribes; and Shelly Wade, AICP, Project Manager for STRATEGY PRESENTATION Agnew::Beck Consulting were present to discuss the development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. The CEDS is an Economic Development Administration-funded effort to develop a plan to build stronger, more economically resilient Southeast Idaho communities, tribes and region.

Ms. Wade gave a brief overview of the CEDS process, their project timeline and key milestones. As well as, the potential role of the City Council in this process. She highlighted the following concepts: a) demographic and economic profile of Southeast, Idaho, including trends and projections; b) Regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that will help or hinder economic development in Southeast Idaho; and potential economic development projects, including opportunities for community and regional collaboration. Ms. Wade introduced representatives of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in attendance with the addition of Monte Gray, Legal representative.

Mr. Edmo thanked the City Council for the opportunity to give today’s presentation. He noted that Tribal members come to Pocatello daily to do business and he would like City Council to understand they want to work with agencies to improve east Idaho.

Mr. Racehorse gave a project overview of what a CEDS is. It is his desire to be known as the Planning Department that produced. His department applied for federal funding and was awarded \$90,000.00 for projects in 2015. Mr. Racehorse thanked the Mayor and City Council for their work with the Tribal Council and he would like to encourage rebuilding with city and county representatives by conducting a regional stakeholder process.

Ms. Wade reviewed the timeline and progress to date. They are: CEDS Committee Development; Three Business Council and CEDS Committee meetings; over 40 regional stakeholder interviews; review of over 20 past/existing planning documents; “Draft” demographic and economic data profile; draft SWOT Analysis and Potential Projects list. There are currently 5,892 tribally enrolled members. (2016); 67% of tribal members live on the reservation; the total population on the reservation is 5,896. (2014); the Tribe directly employ 920 individuals; and additional 1,475 jobs are created through tribal activity such as agriculture, tourism and construction; Fort Hall Indian Reservation encompasses 544,000 acres, of which 110,000 acres are tribally owned agricultural lands; and 98% of reservation land is owned by Shoshone-Bannock Tribes or individual tribal members.

General discussion followed. It was mentioned an upgrade to exit 80 on Interstate 15 is being discussed with Idaho Transportation Department. This is part of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes master plan to create new business and economic development on the reservation. The CEDS Committee extended an invitation to City Council members to attend a meeting to discuss the CEDS project. It was suggested that the City appoint a couple of City representatives to attend the meetings. The date will need to be established and noticed.

Mr. Colby thanked the City Council for meeting with the Commission today. He would like to make southeast Idaho a great place for children to live.

Mr. Racehorse encouraged both groups to move forward in what they are doing because they are one community. There are great things happening and he enjoys being on the transportation side. Mr. Racehorse would like to work together with the City moving forward.

Mr. Moore acknowledged there is an active gaming industry/casino on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. He would like the City to be more active to inform individuals visiting Pocatello about gaming options located at the casino.

Mr. Colby explained they have a marketing representative that can help with ideas to spread the word about the casino. He mentioned that construction is scheduled for a new casino and the contractor will be out of the Idaho Falls area.

Ms. Wade suggested some kind of strategic marketing effort to benefit the community be researched.

In closing, Mr. Orr added that he feels the groups need to move forward.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Cindy Robbins, Utility Billing Director, and Joyce Stroschein, Chief Financial Officer/Treasure, were present to suggest changes to Pocatello Municipal Code 13, Chapter 30, "Utility Billing Services", which include the retention of the deposit for any new account through the account's activity; revising the access to the premises section; and adding a new section regarding the unauthorized material and injury to equipment. An Ordinance has been prepared based on the proposal for Council action at a subsequent meeting. Staff is also seeking Council guidance for establishing a deposit amount.

Ms. Robbins gave an overview of the current deposit guidelines. She suggested a change to the deposit criteria based upon a user's collection history. The suggestions are: a) increase deposit to cover 3 months of service (\$225.00 to \$300.00); b) increase deposit to cover 2 months (\$150.00 to \$200.00); and c) all deposits will be held until the final billing as guarantee of payment. This change will be applied to all accounts going forward. All accounts established prior to the change will still receive their deposit back after 12 months. However, the account will be subject to the new ordinance if services are shutoff for nonpayment.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Robbins clarified the actual number of utility accounts that are delinquent. She explained the number of accounts provided to the Council is just a one month snapshot.

Mr. Bray would like a breakdown of actual losses for sanitation, sewer and water departments as a result of delinquent accounts and how each department is affected. He feels if the monetary losses can be minimized, the City will not need to consider high utility rate increases.

Ms. Stroschein stated the City is not trying to obtain a late fee on utility accounts. Staff would prefer the consumption be paid timely to avoid the extra staff time and cost to process delinquent accounts.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Robbins explained it is very difficult to obtain a judgement for payment once renters have moved without paying their utility bill. The City does not require landlords to pay for past due utility accounts left by their renters. She noted that in most cases, the renter does not provide a forwarding address. After three collection letters have been issued by staff, the account is submitted to the City's Collection Agency.

Council discussion continued regarding the costs of sending past due accounts to collections. Costs for the collection agency and difficulty to enforce and serve a judgment were reviewed. Discussion regarding adequate deposit amounts followed. It was also suggested the period of days to allow the account to be delinquent be limited to 60 instead of 90 days. Utility Billing staff could set up the automated late payment reminder phone call to go out earlier, as well.

Ms. Adamson expressed her appreciation that staff is looking at modifying the process. She agreed that a deposit should be retained until the account is closed. However, she shared her concerns with determining a deposit amount. If the customer is a high credit risk, implement a higher deposit and if they have a good credit score, the deposit could be lower. Ms. Adamson would like to consider the establishment of tiers to identify the deposit amount to be based upon a customer's credit score. She agreed the service should be turned-off sooner than 90 days.

Ms. Stroschein explained staff could research the credit score tier system. However, once a customer is late or the services are turned-off, they must provide a deposit. She feels the biggest impact to customers will be increasing the deposit from \$65.00 to \$150.00.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Robbins explained she does not feel comfortable with charging renters a higher deposit than property owners.

Council discussion continued regarding credit report costs and charging a fee to cover the credit report expense. It was mentioned Idaho State University students may not have an established credit history to determine a deposit amount. Council would like more information regarding the costs to run a credit report and establish a tier system. It was suggested the final notice should be sent once an account is at approximately 60 days. Establishing a fair deposit amount was debated.

Ms. Robbins explained the issues she has experienced with the existing deposit process and provided the following example: 1) a customer's \$65.00 deposit is returned under the current process, 2) unexpected problems occur regarding the account and services are terminated, 3) another deposit and the past due amount are required to restore services. This results in: a) additional burden on a customer already in a difficult situation and b) leaves the account without any guarantee of payment when the account is finalized (even the best accounts can have the owner pass away leaving a balance due).

Ms. Robbins feels the proposed change to retain deposits within the account will decrease the number of unpaid utility accounts and help customers who fall behind on their account. However, a

deposit amount needs to be established to meet the City's needs and be affordable for new utility users.

A majority of the Council supported the \$150.00 deposit and to shorten the cut-off of accounts to 60 days. It was noted that a resolution establishing the deposit amount and an ordinance with proposed amendments, as outlined, will be considered at the September 15, 2016 Council meeting.

Council instructed staff to prepare information regarding the pros and cons of establishing a credit score/tier deposit system for City utility deposits. The information will be presented at the October 13, 2016 Study Session.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Joyce Stroschein, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer was present to discuss proposed "September" amendments to the current FISCAL YEAR 2016 SEPTEMBER BUDGET AMENDMENTS Fiscal Year 2016 budget.

Ms. Stroschein gave a brief overview of the proposed amendments. She mentioned 8 amendments affecting 8 funds are listed. They are: Mayor and Council Department (\$347.00); Street Department (\$150,000.00); Recreation Department (\$44,894.00); Transit Urban (\$20,000.00); Science and Environment (22,938.00); Water Department (\$2,544,208.00); Ambulance (\$68,837.00); and Eastern Idaho Development Corporation (\$48,000.00). Total amendment is \$2,898,684.00. Ms. Stroschein noted a public hearing to discuss the proposed amendments will be held on September 15, 2016. An ordinance has been prepared for Council consideration following the public hearing.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: At 11:15 a.m. Mayor Blad and Council members Adamson, Bray, COUNCIL WORKING Brown, Johnston, Moore and Orr left the Council Chambers and LUNCH participated in a working lunch in the Mayor's Conference Room. Discussion centered on economic development, Council involvement with City advisory boards and general City topics. No formal action was taken.

Mayor Blad adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

APPROVED:

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BRIAN C. BLAD, MAYOR

ATTEST AND PREPARED BY:

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RUTH E. WHITWORTH, CMC, CITY CLERK