

August 8, 2019

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Regular Council Meeting, Thursday, August 8, 2019, in the Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, Idaho at 7:30 p.m.

**Call to Order:**

There were present:

Mayor Rebecca L. Noah Casper  
Councilmember Thomas Hally  
Councilmember Jim Francis  
Councilmember John Radford  
Councilmember Michelle Ziel-Dingman  
Councilmember Shelly Smede  
Councilmember Jim Freeman

Also present:

All available Department Directors  
Randy Fife, City Attorney  
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mayor Casper requested Oliver Lewis, City Information Technology (IT) employee, to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment:**

James Lee, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Mr. Lee expressed his concern for businesses along 17th Street that are dying. He questioned how it could be made more beautiful or desirable even though it is crowded. He imagined 25th Street on 17th Street, where there is a middle lane, which he believes is a crash area. He suggested taking out the middle lane of 17th Street, narrowing it down, putting in right and left hand turns, and, putting trees in to make it more beautiful. He also suggested requiring businesses to place trees and shrubs in front of their buildings to make the area more desirable. Mr. Lee requested budget money be considered to make the changes to increase business and not kill business. He stated there is a lot of growth but that growth is going elsewhere. Mr. Lee shared a picture of businesses on Gilman Boulevard (located in Washington) with trees on both sides of street and noted that business increased after improvements were made.

Michael Uebelhack, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Mr. Uebelhack distributed information regarding Sandy Downs. He stated the City's website uses the term "passive recreation", he then defined the term. Mr. Uebelhack stated he was once interested in purchasing Sandy Downs and was surprised to find it is within City limits. He noted Sandy Downs is zoned similarly to other parks within the City but questioned why it receives special treatment. He indicated last year the main entrance was cabled off with signage although he has not seen signage at other parks. He also noted the overflow parking was not blocked off. Mr. Uebelhack believes if there were some problem it would be addressed by the County. He questioned why the City is limiting the use of the revenue attracting venue. He stated if he were to own Sandy Downs he would consider concerts, swap meets, horse things, car shows, truck smashing and races, outdoor church, outdoor movies, wintertime igloo mazes, and, festivities of all types. Mr. Uebelhack suggested donation boxes be placed for an eastside dog park. He also stated the neighbors may be clueless to Sandy Downs intentions as he has been approached not to play there. He noted the Sandy Downs Master Plan was revised 2007.

**Consent Agenda:**

Public Works requested approval of Bid Award – Sewer Line Replacements - 2019.

August 8, 2019

Municipal Services requested approval of Treasurer's Report for the month of June, 2019.

The Fire Department requested approval of Bonneville County Fire Protection District #1 Service Agreements; and, Eastern Idaho Health Services Transport Service Agreement.

The City Clerk requested approval of minutes from the July 16, 2019 Council Budget Session; July 18, 2019 Council Budget Session; July 22, 2019 Council Work Session and Executive Session; July 23, 2019 Council Budget Session; and, July 25, 2019 Council Meeting; and, license applications, all carrying the required approvals.

It was moved by Councilmember Dingman, seconded by Councilmember Smede, to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Smede, Hally, Dingman, Radford, Freeman, Francis. Nay – none. Motion carried.

### **Regular Agenda:**

#### **Municipal Services**

#### **Subject: Quote to Purchase Body Cameras, Software Licenses and Maintenance for Idaho Falls Police Department**

It is the recommendation of Municipal Services and Idaho Falls Police Department to approve the purchase of additional law enforcement body cameras, software licenses and maintenance from Enforcement Video, LP (WatchGuard) of Allen, Texas in the amount of \$60,812.00.

Councilmember Freeman stated this purchase will get the Police Department closer to having every officer with a camera. He noted how valuable the footage can be for officer safety and public safety.

It was moved by Councilmember Radford, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to approve the purchase of additional law enforcement body cameras, software licenses and maintenance in the amount of \$60,812.00, and give authorization for the Mayor to execute the necessary documents. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Freeman, Radford, Smede, Francis, Dingman, Hally. Nay – none. Motion carried.

#### **Subject: Public Hearing - Tentative 2019/20 Fiscal Year Budget**

The purpose of the public hearing is for public comment of the tentative 2019/20 Fiscal Year budget pursuant to Idaho Code 50-1002.

Mayor Casper stated under the laws of the State of Idaho it is the responsibility of the City Council to adopt a budget for each fiscal year. She believes adopting a budget is a privilege for the Council as it allows the elected officials to shape the future of the community. She attests to the citizens that the Council has worked diligently to honor the law and fulfill their responsibility. Mayor Casper expressed her appreciation to those who participate and share their thoughts with the Council. She stated the budget process is a multi-month process and involves a great deal of meetings, time, and, expertise. She noted additional conversation will take place following this public hearing and the Council will adopt the budget on August 22, 2019. She stated the Mayor's role is to help guide the process with sound data. Mayor Casper expressed her appreciation for the City departments, directors, and, staff. She also expressed her appreciation to Municipal Services Director Pamela Alexander and her finance team staff.

Director Alexander reviewed highlights of the 2019/20 budget process including budget meetings, Budget Watch, live streaming and archiving of Budget Work Sessions, and, publications of tentative budget and proposed fees. She stated the tentative budget is a not to exceed amount of \$238,805,558 consisting of: statutory 3% property tax levy allowable of \$1,032,260; property tax levy total of \$36.3M; the Idaho Falls Power capital outlay for \$32.8M; Idaho Falls Airport grants for \$12M; and, capacity for City Council approval of operating and capital requests. She also stated the funding priorities include: an increase to the City employee contribution for health benefits; maintaining

## August 8, 2019

the current level of service across departments; projects or donations; spending that is required for safety or accreditation; and, repair and/or replacement of existing equipment and buildings.

### Slide 1 – Tentative Budget - General Fund

Director Alexander noted 75% of the total proposed budget is for Parks and Recreation, the Fire Department, and, the Police Department. The remaining 25% of the proposed budget is allocated to all other departments.

### Slide 2 – Special Revenue Funds

Director Alexander noted 77% of the funds go to the Ambulance Fund, Street Fund, Recreation Fund, Golf Fund, and, the Idaho Falls Public Library Fund. The remaining 23% is allocated to other funds.

### Slide 3 – Capital Project Funds

Director Alexander noted 84% of the funds are for the Zoo Capital Improvement, Parks Capital Improvement, Municipal Capital Improvement, Street Capital Improvement, and, Water Capital Improvement. The remaining 16% is allocated to other funds.

### Slide 4 – Enterprise Funds

Director Alexander stated these funds are the City utilities.

### Slide 5 – Projected Revenue

Director Alexander noted the total revenue and the fund balance are equal.

Mayor Casper stated the budget is premised on income, fees, and, rates. She noted public notice is required when fees increase more than 5%.

## **Subject: Public Hearing - Tentative 2019/20 Fiscal Year Fees**

The purpose of the public hearing is for public comment of the proposed fees for the 2019/20 Fiscal Year pursuant to Idaho Code 50-1002.

Director Alexander briefly reviewed the proposed new fees and increases greater than 5%. She stated next steps include City Council discussion of public hearing comments and consideration of the final budget on August 12 and, if needed, another discussion on August 13. The City Council will adopt the 2019/20 budget and fees during the regular City Council meeting on Thursday, August 22.

Mayor Casper reviewed decorum for the public hearing. She opened the public hearing.

Arthur Kull, Idaho Falls citizen and Chair for the Civic Center for the Performing Arts Committee, appeared. Mr. Kull recognized the capital projects, specifically the Civic Center Capital Improvement Fund of \$250,000, and the importance of the funds. He indicated renovations are currently being finished for Phase One of the Civic Center and the committee is embarking on how to renovate the front and back of the house. Mr. Kull stated the committee has committed to raise half of the \$500,000 needed for the next two (2) phases.

Andi Elliott, Jefferson County resident, appeared. Ms. Elliott urged the Council to support the Idaho Falls Animal Shelter (IFAS) Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) Program as the program has been a tremendous success. She stated one (1) cat and her kittens can produce over 65,000 offspring in a five-year period. The IFAS TNR program has reduced the kill rate from approximately 50% of cats/kittens to 5%. Ms. Elliott stated when the City spends money on a skating rink, skate park, or, splash pad it affects a narrow part of the population. Stray cats affect public safety and they are a tremendous burden on Animal Control Officers. Ms. Elliott noted she's been associated with the animal shelter for seventeen years and has seen a tremendous change under Animal Services Manager Irene Brown's leadership which has benefited animals and the public. Animal Control Services has recently received awards for the TNR program which should be emulated by other cities. Ms. Elliott urged continued support of the program and believes it is good for publicity and public morale.

August 8, 2019

Krista Stafford, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Ms. Stafford stated the TNR program is needed along with a Special Projects Coordinator to make the TNR program a success. There are not enough employees without that particular employee. The IFAS has made great strides in the past year to make the shelter a no-kill shelter. Ms. Stafford reiterated cat euthanasia rates and noted the 5% killed is for severely injured or extremely sick cats. The coordinator would also oversee rescues from other States. Coordinating the rescues and transportation takes more than a week. During that time the shelter must find a temporary foster home as there is not room at the shelter. The process takes hours of time and work. Currently this is done by volunteers with the idea that the Special Projects Coordinator would soon become a reality. Without the coordinator the TNR cannot continue to run. Ms. Stafford stated the coordinator could have time to look for more grants which could possibly help the program pay for itself. She stated \$45,000 is not asking too much for a coordinator's position. The program is not sustainable without this employee. Euthanizing is difficult. Ms. Stafford believes with Idaho Falls to be a no-kill status the City should be proud. Taking a step backward would be sad for Idaho Falls and will look terribly upon the City.

Lisa Keller, Bonneville County resident and owner of several Idaho Falls properties, appeared. Ms. Keller begged for fiscal responsibility. She questioned how many years the City has raised the 3%. She believes it has been a lot. The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) has not increased for herself or her husband or her renters. Ms. Keller stated she has to raise rent and does not want to. She shared situations of tenants that are not able to afford an increase in rent. She stated when she had an apartment for rent she had sixty inquires, thirty people looked at the apartment, and, ten people wanted to put in applications as there are no other affordable places. Ms. Keller stated she cannot afford to pay her bills while not having to raise taxes on tenants. She begged the Council not to raise taxes for multiple years. She believes the Council can be more fiscally responsible. She shared frustration of seeing new projects knowing it is putting a burden on her tenants.

Ty Tomchak, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Mr. Tomchak gave kudos to Ms. Keller. He stated his home assessment increased 24% and noted the City is one of the highest tax cities in the State. He stated he lives on a fixed income and suggested the Council find a way to cut money as he has had to do and live within a budget. He pleaded the Council be fiscally responsible. Mr. Tomchak stated he has no issues with fee increases as participants need to pay their way but insisted the 3% increase stop. He stated he will have to continue to pull money from his savings and retirement to pay his property taxes. Mr. Tomchak expressed his support for the Police and questioned why the old Deseret Industries building couldn't be remodeled rather than spend millions on a new police station. He reiterated the Council to be responsible.

Richard Brizzee, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Mr. Brizzee stated he submitted letters to the elected officials regarding the TNR program. He noted he is a community-based rehab technician. He shared a success story of a client at Sand Creek Apartments and stated it made the community a better place. He also stated statics are important but there are unseen success stories in the community and he wanted to make it known to the Council.

Karissa Hernandez, Idaho Falls resident, appeared. Ms. Hernandez works at the IFAS. She stated the shelter has involved the public with TNR and many other programs. She stated the shelter is not asking for extra money to care for the animals, they are asking for help and the community is responding. Ms. Hernandez reviewed statistics of the City website pages. Without the coordinator position the shelter does not have the manpower, time, or, resources to reach out. The shelter is relying on the City as support. Ms. Hernandez begged the Council to consider this information.

Mike Uebelhack, reappeared. Mr. Uebelhack questioned how to communicate with the elected officials. Mayor Casper stated all emails are listed on the City website. Mr. Uebelhack stated he will do a line-by-line item investigation on the budget.

Ty Tomchak, reappeared. Mr. Tomchak stated his wife spends countless hours at the IFAS. He requested support of the TNR program.

Mayor Casper closed the public hearing on the budget.

August 8, 2019

Mayor Casper opened the public hearing on the fee schedule.

Jeremy Stafford, Bonneville County resident, appeared. Mr. Stafford believes the City could increase events at Sandy Downs. He stated the golf increase is appropriate for supply and demand. He suggested not raising childrens' fees although he believes an increase in VIP fees would be appropriate.

Mayor Casper stated the fees displayed represent the maximum that can be charged.

Mayor Casper closed the public hearing.

**Announcements:**

Mayor Casper noted the Roaring Youth Jam began on August 8 and the Duck Race will be held August 10.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton  
CITY CLERK

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper  
MAYOR