

MINUTES
Wyoming City Council
August 17, 2020

The Wyoming City Council met in regular session on August 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting was also presented live on Facebook due to COVID-19 precautions. Mayor Hoffmeister called the meeting to order. In attendance were:

Council Members:

Thaddeus Hoffmeister, Mayor
Nancy Averett
Al Delgado
Zach Green
Jeff LeRoy
Jim O'Reilly
Sarah Stankorb Taylor

Others:

Lynn Tetley, City Manager
Michelle Reid, Acting City Solicitor

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Mr. Delgado moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Stankorb Taylor seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda carried with all voting yes:

- July 20, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes
- July 28, 2020 Special City Council Meeting Minutes
- July 28, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
- Resolution Authorizing License Agreement for Storage Shed Located at 1206 Springfield Pike

SPECIAL REPORTS/MINUTES:

Ms. Stankorb Taylor provided a report on the Wyoming Kindness Connection. Wyoming Kindness Connection was launched in spring 2020 as a response to the global pandemic and its ongoing impact within our community. This initiative is a multi-pronged volunteer program designed to check in on residents, help them lift one another's moods while sheltering at home, and create a thin safety net for those experiencing stress during this time. In July 2020, Wyoming Youth Services provided funding to hire part time Project Manager, Shannon Hautman, and support the Kindness Connection's activities through October 1, 2020.

Kindness Connection offers a variety of enriching social activities (primarily virtual, with a few in person socially distanced programs), referrals for individuals needing support with mental health services, essential items (food, personal hygiene, etc.) financial relief, housing, senior services, pastoral care, and more. Wyoming residents also have the opportunity to offer kindness to neighbors through our Ambassadors program, which connects neighbors that can help each other with grocery and pharmacy pickups,

assistance with yard work, and the simple notion that a friendly face is just a few doors down.

A new initiative launched in August, Kindness Corps, seeks to directly impact Wyoming youth and provide employment training for its members through a paid leadership program. To date, Corps members have collaborated with Wyoming Recreation Foundation to develop a park adventure booklet (coming this fall) and are formulating a supportive and safe social media presence for their peers. As a team, the Corps members are learning invaluable skills that will transfer to future career paths while bettering their community. For one Corps member, the experience of joining a positive local initiative and earning a first paycheck has made this a summer of possibility and hope.

Since its inception, Wyoming Kindness Connection has served over 100 individuals through outreach initiatives and over 200 individuals through special interest groups. Kindness Connection has approximately 10,000 audience engagements through various social media channels, a dedicated web page, and an article in Wyoming Living Magazine.

REPORTS OF STANDING COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

Mr. LeRoy asked Mr. Jeremiah Caudill, Finance Director, for an update on the tax receipts following the July 15, 2020 tax filing deadline. Mr. Caudill reported that the receipts totaled what was expected through July 31, the receipts are on target for the budget estimates and are on the same pace as they were in 2019. He continues to watch the income tax receipts closely to see where things go moving forward. As Mr. LeRoy mentioned, the April 15, tax filing deadline was moved to July 15 and those tax receipts coming in are the balance of the activity from 2019. Moving forward, the estimates will be based on the 2020 income into next year and the 2021 filings will be based on 2020 incomes. He will continue to monitor the situation.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

Mayor Hoffmeister provided the credentials for calling in to address City Council and noted that also, the meeting was being live streamed on the city's Facebook page. After several minutes, and having received no comments, the meeting moved into the Business portion of the agenda.

BUSINESS:

A. Presentation of the Urban Forestry & Beautification Commission Annual Report: Mr. Mike Lippert shared his screen showing a PowerPoint presentation from the Commission. Mr. Lippert explained that the Commission had planned to give this presentation in March of 2020 but due to the COVID-19 outbreak it has been delayed. It was hopeful that the Commission would have been able to present the report to City Council in person however as the Zoom meetings will continue on it was determined to proceed with the presentation

of the report this evening. He stated that the Commission consists of ten members, a City Council representative, Nancy Averett, and himself as the Staff representative. Bobbi Strangfeld is the Chair.

Pollinator Workshop

- This was the third workshop sponsored by the Urban Forestry & Beautification Commission.
- This has been the most successful workshop and 57 people attended this event in the spring of 2019.

Mr. Lippert added that he attended the workshop and found it to be very educational, informative, and fun.

Arbor Day

- Arbor Day was held on May 3, 2019 at Vermont School.
- The children participated in a tree identification game which was a big hit.
- The Mayor's Proclamation on Arbor Day was read to the children as well.

In 2020, Arbor Day had been planned to be held at Elm School but because of COVID the events were cancelled. It is anticipated that the event can be held in 2021.

Tree Inventory

- Mr. Lippert commented that, in his opinion, the most successful project that has been done in the last 18 months was the completion of the tree inventory.
- The tree inventory will be used to make informed decisions about species selection and long-term sustainability of our urban forest.

Progress Year 1:

- 1,575 trees surveyed
- Average tree size 12 inches in diameter
- Maples made up 26%
- Elms 13%
- Oak 10%
- Pear (invasive) 7.5%

Mr. Lippert noted that since March when the PowerPoint presentation was created the entire community has since been inventoried covering over 5,000 trees surveyed, which includes street trees and park trees. The total inventory does not include trees in the Green Areas Trust properties. Long-time Commission volunteer, Todd Wales, walked an estimated 60 miles + to conduct the inventory.

Mr. Lippert stated that it would have been nice to have the inventory 10-12 years ago when the Emerald Ash Borer was beginning to surface. The new, digitalized map will benefit the city greatly especially if another pest or disease comes to be.

Awards:

- The 2019 Beautification awards were presented at the October 21, 2019 City Council meeting.
- 9 out of 11 award winners were in attendance.
- The Community Spirit Award in 2019 was presented to Brett McMichen for her work in Stearns Woods.

Mr. Lippert commented that residents love these awards and he believes it encourages people to beautify the area of town they live in. The award recipients for 2020 were recently chosen and they will be presented later this fall.

Pollinator Garden:

- The UFBC adopted plot #44 in the Community Gardens and has created a pollinator garden there.
- The UFBC Members take turns watering and maintaining their garden plot.
- UFBC Members planted fruit trees in front of the Community Gardens.

Make a Difference Day:

- Make a Difference Day is typically the fourth Saturday in October which is a great time to plant trees.
- The UFBC worked in conjunction with the regional Taking Root Program whose goal is to plant 2 million trees in the Tri-State Area.
- In 2019, volunteers helped to plant three, 7-gallon native trees along the Hike/Bike Trail.
- There were eight volunteers and two City Council Members that helped to plant the new trees for Make a Difference Day last year.
- The volunteers appreciated the Public Works crews digging the holes and providing deer guards.

Fall Festival:

- UFBC has long been involved with the annual Fall Festival. It is a great opportunity to meet with community members to discuss trees and beautification issues, and education as well. Members get a chance to work one-on-one with people that visit the booth.

Urban Forest Management Plan:

- The group has worked with Public Works in the maintenance and management of the urban forest. Many may know that trees in Wyoming are considered an asset for

obvious environmental health benefits, storm water management, and aesthetics which can improve livability.

- The UFBC began looking at trees in construction areas to determine how they can be protected during construction projects. The Members worked with Public Works to create a best management practices during construction projects and the initiative continues.

April 2020-Ohio Native Plant Month:

- Native plants are essential for our pollinators, birds, insects, and all wildlife.
- A Volunteer Day was held in Stearns Woods on April 4, to remove invasive species.
- A Wildflower Walk and demonstration was held April 18
- UFBC partnering with ESC on May 9 to clean up the garden clean up.

Mr. Lippert commented that these are some of the activities that largely go unnoticed however this group is very active in volunteering and bringing people in to help out and improve our community.

2020 Workshop:

- The workshop is still on schedule to occur on September 12, 2020 and the topic will be Native Plants and Storm Water Management. The goal will be to learn to look at green initiatives which may help localized residential storm water problems.

Lastly, Mr. Lippert commented that the Commission Members annually design the flower pots along Wyoming street corners and on the welcome signs. The members have a lot of talent including master gardeners, landscape architects, and more. The members provide great input on any of the improvement projects that he has seen and he thanked them and thanked City Council for the opportunity to present the report.

Mr. Delgado asked clarification if the September 12 workshop will be held in person or will it be presented on Zoom as a backup. Mr. Lippert stated that it is anticipated that the workshop will be able to be held in person, however it is looking doubtful so it may have to be held on Zoom or it may be delayed.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor thanked the Commission members for all the work they have done and in particular the GPS project is amazing.

Mr. Delgado moved to receive the report. Mr. LeRoy seconded the motion. There being no further comments or discussion, the motion to receive the Urban Forestry & Beautification Commission Annual Report carried with all voting yes.

B. Third Reading of the Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Reduced Density Overlay Plan for 333 Oliver Road: Mr. O'Reilly moved to adopt the Ordinance. Ms. Stankorb

Taylor seconded the motion. Mayor Hoffmeister noted that the public hearing on this item was held at the July 2020 City Council Meeting which was advertised allowing folks to comment. This is the opportunity for City Council to ask questions and provide comments. Having received no questions or comments, by roll call vote, the motion to Adopt the Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Reduced Density Overlay Plan for 333 Oliver Road carried with all voting yes.

C. Motion to Eliminate the Junk Pick-Up Day Starting in 2021: Ms. Stankorb Taylor moved to adopt the motion. Mr. LeRoy seconded the item.

Mr. Delgado commented that he is uncomfortable about moving forward with the elimination of the junk pick-up day without having a year of education about bringing the elimination forward. He remains highly concerned that our citizens have not been properly educated that the junk day is planned to be eliminated.

Mr. Green commented that he concurs with Mr. Delgado adding that he has received multiple emails, text messages, and phone calls from citizens concerned about eliminating this community tradition. Although he agrees that it is necessary to eliminate the program, he does not believe that now is the right time. His preference would be to set a goal of 18 to 24 months from now as the motion will not go into effect for some time. He would like to see Council revisit this issue after a year of education and metrics, to monitor how we are reducing the waste and eventually get to a point where an education and metric session is no longer necessary. Mr. Green expressed concern that a lot of work still needs to be done to ensure Rumpke will take large items during the non-junk pick up days.

Mr. O'Reilly concurred with Mr. Green and added that he has a concern regarding the bulky items and that he is not certain that Rumpke is prepared, on an average week, to handle more than a very few houses. If the alternative to junk day is dividing it up into 52 pick-ups he would like assurances that it will be done.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor asked the Public Works Director for clarification that the city's existing contract with Rumpke allows for one large item to be picked up per week. Mr. Huxel confirmed this is correct and added that there are some items that Rumpke is restricted from taking per EPA regulations. Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that if the September 2020 junk day were to be held and afterwards it is then cancelled, the residents who have been holding on to items for this junk day will still be able to get rid of their items. The discussion is about the 2021 junk day and beyond. People will still be able to put out one junk item a week now and into the future. Mr. Huxel confirmed this is correct. She asked how much waste is collected every year on junk day. Mr. Huxel stated that roughly 90-100 tons of waste is collected each junk day. The cost payable to Rumpke is approximately \$13,000-18,000 per year for this service.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that as Mr. Caudill reported earlier, tax receipts are on target for this year and she asked Ms. Tetley what her sense is for the 2021-2022 tax year. Ms. Tetley stated it is difficult to answer because there is no true way to measure that as we do not know yet how much income that tax payers have lost until next year's tax returns are due. The city continues to make cuts to the budget for next year however the amount of money that could be saved by eliminating the junk day from the budget is not significant enough to do much one way or the other with the budget.

Ms. Katie Lawrence, 230 Compton Ridge Drive, a member of the city's Environmental Stewardship Commission (ESC), was present and asked clarification that when residents put one large junk item to the curb each week for pick up, if the city is paying Rumpke by the ton, does this additional weight get added to the bill. Mr. Huxel explained that for weekly household trash and recycling pick up the city is charged on a per unit price rather than on the tonnage. This is the most advantageous way that we have had over the last two years. Prior to that it was based on the tonnage and it was found that it is much cheaper to be billed by the unit rather than the ton.

Ms. Averett commented to any ESC members that were present that perhaps a strong education plan is needed and that they could create one. It will always be controversial to eliminate junk day but if it is a \$13,000-18,000 savings that could be used for other things within the community, why should we pay extra when we can have the same items picked up every week. It seems like it will be a hard thing for people to understand. She would be happy to help create an education plan although Ms. Stankorb Taylor is the Council representative to the ESC.

Mr. Green commented that he has been working with EDC member, Patrick Walker, and a rough draft has been created. The draft is still very early in its creation and is not ready to be shared with all of Council. The Mayor and City Manager have seen the early draft. The goal is to get it out within the next month or two along with a corresponding video as an info graphic and some other type of plan. He stated that he is fully supportive of eliminating junk day however he does not feel that now is the time. Even to have one more junk day but to then eliminate them, will still be a shock to residents. It is such an ingrown tradition in the community and given the feedback that he has received it is pretty overwhelming in the last month about not eliminating it right away.

Ms. Averett added that if enough education is conducted within the next two years and if people plan to pare down the number of junk items at the curb now then the amount of tonnage could be reduced resulting in a smaller bill. Mr. Huxel explained that the city pays Rumpke an hourly fee for the junk day pick-up in addition to the tonnage. Rumpke generally brings in 10-13 trucks and it depends on how long it take them to get everything picked up. The cost of the Rumpke trucks and drivers combined with the amount of tonnage collected results in the cost of the junk day pick up.

Ms. Averett speculated that if the education component is increased and if two more junk days are held, the cost could be driven down some if residents buy into the fact that they are saving money for the city by putting a junk item to the curb weekly instead of storing it for junk day.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that Patrick Walker and the ESC have been placing articles on Nextdoor and the electronic newsletter for over a year trying to educate the community on this topic. She asked Mr. Huxel if he has witnessed an impact on the junk day due to the steps that have already been taken by the ESC. She expressed concern with how the process of waste removal in years to come, and although the financial savings is important, but with the emphasis in the Master Plan on sustainability she would like the city move away from the junk day pick up and move more towards promoting reuse and recycle methods. She recommended the use of Freebox and suggested a Freebox holiday to collaborate with local non-profits to host a giveaway day, a donation day, or upcycle day in advance of the junk day to determine if there is a fluctuation in the amount of tonnage collected. To make the whole process more sustainable would provide her more comfort in delaying the elimination of the junk day.

Mr. Huxel commented that because the 2020 junk day was rescheduled from April to September he will not have any numbers to compare to what we already have. In discussion with Rumpke the drivers have seen more items coming out to the curb during the week and he has been working with them to be sure the items are getting taken. There have been several occasions where the truck has become full and they have to come back after getting emptied but he does not have any tonnage details to that degree.

Mr. Delgado commented that if the goal is to phase out the junk day it needs to be well publicized and there should be an entire year devoted to education before bringing the issue back to City Council where then the metrics from that year can be brought back to Council to determine if the tonnage has been reduced. Mr. Delgado reiterated that he is in favor of phasing out and eliminating the junk day. He would like for it to be worded as a phasing out and have an educational process along with it.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor questioned if the 2020 junk day is postponed to September would the next junk day in 2021 be held in April, as is the custom, or would it be held in September. Mayor Hoffmeister commented that, in his opinion, it should be held in April as it is generally advertised as a spring cleaning event. She asked if the item should be brought back to City Council in June of 2021. Mayor Hoffmeister commented that it could be May 2021 if that is what is desired.

Mr. Delgado commented that a prime example of a successful program was with the DORA and the way the program was presented; the time and quality of the presentations, and the

length of time that was given created a successful program. That kind of model, in his opinion, is the type of model that we should be thinking about when we talk of phasing out the junk day. There needs to be an opportunity to reach the public, those that are fluent in technology and those that are not; ways that this can be advertised to the public the way that the DORA program was able to reach all households. He asked Council to recall that the way DORA started is not the way it ended up based on the feedback that the city received from residents after they had the opportunity to receive the information and provide feedback providing a buy in from the public and thereby creating a very workable program for the city; and thus far has been very successful.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor reviewed that City Council would like the ESC to find ways to do what it can to promote junk day alternatives and to help residents find more sustainable pathways to bring the tonnage rate down. Between September and February have an education plan created to hopefully reduce the rates that we see in April and then return in May with a list of outcomes to see if the education plan worked and then in May consider phasing it out. Mayor Hoffmeister commented that he believes this sounds like a workable plan.

Mr. LeRoy stated that his family has never taken part of the junk day and no one from the community has contacted him about the abolishment of it. He asked Ms. Stankorb Taylor about the item on the agenda now, and whether the ESC was in favor of it or not and she indicated that the members were unanimously in favor of the elimination of junk day.

Mr. Delgado commented that there is a motion on the floor with a second. He questioned what the procedures are, whether or not a vote is taken on the current motion. Mayor Hoffmeister referred the question to Ms. Michelle Reid, Acting City Solicitor. Ms. Reid suggested that the item should be tabled to the next meeting and if needed it can be adopted or passed on the item but she does not believe the item should carry on without action until May 2021. After a discussion regarding parliamentary procedure, Mayor Hoffmeister called for a vote and clarified that a no vote on the motion would be to vote the item down. Mayor Hoffmeister called for the yeas and nays and all Councilmembers voted nay.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Green stated that he would like to recognize Mr. Terry Huxel and the Public Works Department. Over the last couple of years Terry has taken the brunt of many arrows over ODOT's handling of the Springfield Pike work. He had done his absolute best to deal with the all of the issues throughout the construction. Mr. Green stated that when the construction first began he thought the plan would never work by having Springfield Pike reduced to two lanes but he will admit that he believes the Pike is fantastic and the two lane road diet is working exceptionally well. It is now very easy to turn left from his street onto the Pike. Terry and his team have performed an exemplary job in a very difficult situation and now every time he drives down the Pike, he gets excited and smiles.

Secondly, Mr. Green commended both Mayor Hoffmeister and the City Manager, Lynn Tetley on navigating the very challenging situations in our city over the last month or two. He commended the Mayor's leadership with the creation of the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force. He is very excited to see all the people that applied to serve on the Task Force and he believes that a very good and diverse group has been chosen. Mr. Green stated that even if one disagrees with the Task Force, having a diverse membership allows you to learn different things. He is very excited to hear about the work the Task Force comes up with and to follow the advice that they bring up from that point.

Lastly, Mr. Green acknowledged the passing of long-time school crossing guard Bob Wettengel. Bob served honorably in the Marine Corp having served in the Reconnaissance Battalion, which is like a Special Forces unit. Bob manned his corner at Wyoming Avenue and Springfield Pike even after having served in the military he continued to serve his community. He knew every child's name as they crossed Springfield Pike and he knew the parents as well; and he remembered the children even after they were out of school. Additionally, Bob was very passionate about our four-legged friends and took care of them with treats and water. In honor of his selfless service to our community and to our citizens he has begun a GoFundMe account in Bob's name. So far, almost \$4,000 has been raised and the money collected will be donated to the city and to Bob's widow to help her with living expenses. The city's portion of the donation will be combined with a grant program that will allow the City Manager and her team to install a permanent water filling station with a dog fountain next to it. There will also be an outdoor-rated large gumball type machine that will dispense dog treats for free. Moving forward, one will be able to go to the dispenser and get a treat for their dog in honor of Bob and get a drink for themselves or their pet and the students will be able to refill their water bottles on the way to school. This will be a great lasting legacy to a legend of our community. He asked that for those that have not had a chance to donate to please consider doing so.

Mr. LeRoy reported that last Thursday, he received a COVID vaccination trial. Mr. Delgado asked if Mr. Leroy knows if he was given the actual vaccine or the placebo. Mr. LeRoy stated that he does not know but that he will be in a two-year study to monitor any side effects from the vaccination.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that everyone is beginning to return to school whether it is remote or in person she believes that a lot of parents in town are cycling through a lot of anxiety this week. After this past summer, it is nice to see these signs of hope in our children. She added that there is a Town Hall Meeting that will be held on August 30 at 7pm with Wyoming City Schools Superintendent, Tim Weber. The willingness to come together to talk openly about unconscious bias and ensuring equality is very hopeful as well. The inclusion training, organized by the City Manager, and attended by some members of Council, staff, and board/commission chairs, was very helpful. What the

Mayor is putting together with the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force is very helpful as well. On social media she sees a lot of fighting and people who are very scared about going to school, she wanted to reiterate if people are feeling anxious or depressed, lonely, or stressed there is an opportunity for help through the Wyoming Kindness Connection where you can sign up to talk on the phone with a faith based leader or social worker and all conversations are confidential. With all this she believes that everyone feels the togetherness. She thanked all of the teachers who are preparing for school this fall as the kids are so ready to return.

Mr. O'Reilly stated that he would like to call out Lynn Tetley, Terry Huxel, and Rusty Herzog as exemplary leaders of our community. They have done a terrific job under great stress under the last month or two. He commended them for their professionalism, staying on course, doing the job well, and articulating the rationale for that job. His compliments to them and wished them to keep up the good work.

Mayor Hoffmeister reported that 62 residents applied to serve on the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force. He thanked everyone for applying and wished that he could select everyone. He explained the process that was taken to make the selection. The list of 62 applicants was sent to all City Council members, except for himself. City Council Members were to select four to five names and were asked to submit their selections to the City Manager who created a spreadsheet. On the spreadsheet were listed the names of the people who applied and the number of votes sent in by Council Members who recommended them. The spreadsheet was then returned to the Mayor and he then selected nine people to serve on the Task Force. He did not select anyone who was not recommended by City Council. He does not know who each Council Member recommended. He again, thanked everyone for applying as each were well qualified and he wished he could have selected all but it would simply be too cumbersome and the list had to be narrowed down as much as possible. He believed everyone would have brought value to the Task Force.

Mayor Hoffmeister explained that these people are volunteers who are giving up their time to help improve our community. The first meeting will be held on September 2 and nothing will be done in secret. The meetings are public meetings and everyone can see what is going on. The scope will be coming out soon of what they will be tasked with doing and they will have six months to complete their task. He thanked everyone who applied to serve and announced the names of those selected: Amanda Flynn, Rebecca Johnson, Nedra Ward, April Robles, Cindy Peebles, Judd Weis, Dave Ambrose, Christopher Reintz, and Lonnie Grayson. These are the individuals that have been selected to serve on the Task Force and he spoke with each person over the phone and they have all indicated they are up to the task. The City Manager will be assisting in the meetings but ultimately the members of the Task Force will be charged with reviewing city policies and practices to see if there are any disparate impacts on people. After their facts or findings are made, they

will then move into a conclusion and after drawing a conclusion they will offer recommendations. These recommendations will go to City Council. They will not make any changes themselves as ultimately City Council has to decide to vote one way or the other to adopt their recommendations.

EXCUSAL OF ABSENT MEMBERS:

All members were present, there were none to excuse.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Ms. Stankorb Taylor moved to adjourn to Executive Session under Section 121.03(b)(1) of the Codified Ordinances of Wyoming to Consider an Appointment to the Promote Wyoming Commission. By roll call vote, the motion to adjourn to Executive Session carried with all voting yes. The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 7:55 p.m. Council left Executive Session at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. LeRoy moved to appoint Liz Engel to the Promote Wyoming Commission. Ms. Stankorb Taylor seconded the motion. By voice vote, all voted yes, the motion carried.

ADJOURN:

Mr. Green moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. LeRoy seconded the motion. By voice vote, the motion to adjourn the meeting carried with all voting yes. The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debby Martin, Executive Assistant

Karen Zeilman, Clerk of Council

Thaddeus Hoffmeister, Mayor