

April 20, 2020

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Council Work Session, Monday, April 20, 2020, in the Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, Idaho at 3:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

There were present:

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

Also present:

Pamela Alexander, Municipal Services Director
Ed Morgan, Civic Center for the Performing Arts Manager
Duane Nelson, Fire Chief (by WebEx)
Brad Cramer, Community Development Services Director
Lisa Farris, Grants Administrator
Randy Fife, City Attorney (by WebEx)
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

Mayor Casper called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. with the following items:

Acceptance and/or Receipt of Minutes:

It was moved by Councilmember Francis, seconded by Councilmember Smede, to receive the April 7, 2020 recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to the Local Land Use Planning Act (LLUPA). Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Smede, Radford, Hally, Freeman, Dingman, Francis. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Calendars, Announcements and Reports:

April 21 and April 22, Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) webinars by Zoom platform
April 22, Governor Brad Little will speak at Idaho Falls Luncheon (coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Civitan's Club, and, City Club); and, Governor Brad Little Q&A from AARP
April 23, Idaho Falls Power (IFP) Board Meeting; City Council Meeting; Governor Brad Little Press Conference; weekly call with Government officials; and, City Club Forum for District 33, Seat B candidates
April 25, 50th anniversary of Earth Day

Mayor Casper noted the back-to-back Council Meeting weeks in May due to Memorial Day.

Liaison Reports and Council Concerns:

Councilmember Dingman believes it's time to make a modification to the City's current anti-discrimination ordinance to codify the prohibition of discrimination in places open to the general public for resort, accommodation, assemblage, and amusement. She stated, due to Idaho House Bills (HB) 500 and 509, Council had the opportunity to hear from several individuals regarding discrimination. She indicated Legal staff has created a proposed ordinance which she believes is a good fit for the City. Councilmember Dingman also believes this is needed for the local youth. She indicated, per a recent survey sponsored by the Idaho Governor's Office of Drug Policy, suicide was the 2nd leading cause of death among youth aged 10 to 19 in Idaho in 2017. She wants to ensure City ordinances include anti-discrimination language. Councilmember Dingman requested this item be included on the May 14 Council Meeting agenda. Following brief comments, all Councilmembers were also in favor of including this item on the May 14 Council Meeting agenda. Mayor Casper encouraged the Council to be open for receiving public comments. She will explore options for distribution to the public.

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Councilmember Dingman had no liaison items to report.

Councilmember Francis stated, per discussion with the Police Chief, crime has decreased and the number of calls have increased.

Councilmember Hally reminded those of the importance to participate with mail-in ballots for the May election.

Councilmember Smede expressed her appreciation to Director Alexander for the efficiency in the Municipal Services Department during COVID-19.

Councilmember Freeman stated National Linemen Appreciation Day recently occurred with IFP. He commended IFP and Public Works Departments.

Councilmember Radford stated the Board survey will be reviewed at the April 23 IFP Board Meeting.

Mayor Casper stated several employees have been reassigned during the COVID-19 crisis. She expressed her appreciation to Mason Handke and Joelyn Hansen for their assistance with the weekly employee newsletter. She also expressed her appreciation to Mr. Morgan for his assistance with the WebEx meetings.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update:

Mayor Casper stated Support Local Gems will be occurring on April 24 through the effort of Senator Jim Risch's office. She also stated the State is approaching 1600 COVID-19 cases and Bonneville County has 24 COVID-19 cases which includes positive tests and presumed cases. She indicated Economic Development Coordinator Dana Briggs has been trying to obtain guidance for an 'appropriate plan' to open on May 1. Mayor Casper stated payroll protection monies for businesses have been exhausted. Loan monies are available although they can be a comfort and not a comfort. Mayor Casper believes Congress is trying to come up with more money for the small businesses. She stated the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is offering \$5000 micro-grants for those businesses with a small number of employees. Mayor Casper stated discussion will be occurring on April 22 with all department directors for the City to re-open on May 4. This will be contingent on the Governor's order. To the response of Councilmember Francis, Mayor Casper does not believe the City will need to file a re-opening plan. Chief Nelson stated the Unified Command (UC) is also waiting for criteria and modeling for businesses as this will be important information to be distributed to other counties. To the response of Mayor Casper, Chief Nelson stated due to the State not electing to put out a model, the UC is looking at data from EIPH including information from the number of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls, illness-type calls, Emergency Room (ER) visits, and, admissions from all hospitals across the region. This information has been included on the EIPH website and will help with the business and community re-opening. Chief Nelson stated there cannot be a light-switch approach, this needs to be a rolling approach. This will be at the forefront of UC messaging. Mayor Casper indicated the three (3) local hospitals are seeing very little traffic at this point as the majority of the COVID-19 cases are being home-monitored. Chief Nelson stated there is also a reduced number of EMS calls, immediate-care calls, ER visits, admissions, etc. which impacts revenue. Discussion is occurring at the UC with the messaging that it's okay to seek medical help when needed. Chief Nelson stated the big increase of COVID-19 did not occur which created a negative impact for revenues in the health care industry. He believes the Country is feeling this impact in different ways.

Potential Changes to the Fire Service in the County:

Chief Nelson reviewed the history of the contract between the City and the Bonneville County Fire Protection District since 1991 stating a 10-year agreement eventually resulted that would create a fee-for-service agreement between the City and the County. The agreement stated the City would take their individuals, payroll, and, some maintenance costs and would fight fire in the County under contract. At the end of the 10-year agreement, discussion occurred regarding breaking the contract and that the County would go back to status quo. Chief Nelson believes that negotiation caused an anxiety of individuals losing their jobs. Therefore, negotiations were worked out with contracts for 1-2 years at a time. In 2007-2008 the fire district in Ammon had discussion (similar to the current discussion) that Ammon would join the fire district. However, in 2008, following public hearings, the City of Ammon elected not to join the district. Then in 2018, the fire chiefs from Ammon and Idaho Falls reviewed the best way to provide fire protection for the community at large. Chief Nelson stated it was determined if Ammon and the fire district would maintain their contracts with Idaho Falls this would create a metro-type fire department with negotiated fee-for-service contracts. This would not increase costs to any residents and it would provide additional protection to whole community. Chief Nelson stated the City of Ammon decided in 2019 that was not the direction they wanted to take. Ammon then approached the Bonneville County Commissioners to re-present Ammon joining the district. Chief

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Nelson stated as the contract is negotiated year-to-year there are some advantageous benefits/reasons to the fire district for Ammon to join although a fire district shrinks when a City grows/annexes property which makes the revenues off-balance. He also stated, per recent meetings, the fire district does not want to change the contract with Idaho Falls regardless of whether Ammon joins the fire district this year or not. The current contract of \$1.68M with Idaho Falls provides fire protection into the fire district with personnel. In turn, the fire district provides apparatus and Station 2. If Ammon does join the fire district, the fire district would stand up the Bonneville County Fire Protection District personnel and department and would run that within the City of Ammon. Chief Nelson suggested the City of Idaho Falls work through a negotiated contract with a similar amount and a slight increase for inflation. The contract will provide the same current coverage with the verbiage that there would be no fire protection in the City of Ammon. Fire protection in Ammon would be provided with the new district inside those limits. Chief Nelson indicated the fire district is in favor of this. This contract would allow Idaho Falls to plan for the future including providing fire protection in the County. Chief Nelson stated the decision between the City of Ammon and the fire district does not directly affect Idaho Falls as the Idaho Falls Fire Department's (IFFD) responsibility is to protect the City of Idaho Falls patrons and taxpayers. The IFFD will protect those in the County by contract. To the response of Councilmember Freeman, Chief Nelson stated the tax dollars in Ammon would be paid to Fire Protection District 1 although a portion of the district would not be protected by Idaho Falls. To the response of Councilmember Francis, Chief Nelson stated negotiations have begun with May 1 as the deadline for both entities to allow budget planning. He also confirmed the current contract is in effect until September 30, 2020. To the clarification of Mayor Casper, Chief Nelson confirmed the City of Idaho Falls does not have an official position at this time.

Extension of Local Disaster Emergency Declaration:

Per Mayor Casper's request, it was moved by Councilmember Dingman, seconded by Councilmember Smede, to memorialize, by formal Resolution, Council's vote on April 16, 2020, to further extend Mayor's March 18, 2020, Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Freeman, Francis, Hally, Radford, Smede, Dingman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-08

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO, EXTENDING THE MAYOR'S MARCH 18, 2020, DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY TO APRIL 30, 2020, AND THROUGHOUT THE EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE ORDER TO SELF-ISOLATE OF MARCH 25, 2020, AS AMENDED ON APRIL 16, 2020, AND ANY EXTENSION OF SUCH ORDER; AND PROVIDING THAT THIS RESOLUTION BE EFFECTIVE UPON ITS PASSAGE AND APPROVAL ACCORDING TO LAW.

Discussion and recommendation of funding requests for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan (AAP):

Director Cramer stated the public hearing for the CDBG Program Year requests was held on April 9. He also stated there is a shortened window for public comment and approval due to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This will allow money to be distributed to the community as quickly as possible. Director Cramer stated, due to the CARES Act, the 15% funding requirements have been adjusted on Public Service category projects although the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has not adjusted the 70% minimum requirement that benefit Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) individuals. Therefore, he recommended full funding of all Public Service projects and full funding plus additional money for LMI projects. He also recommended a reduction in Slum and Blight. He noted the additional \$250K is not included in these recommendations as the current process would have stalled. HUD provided an option to utilize the \$250k in an amended plan for the 2019 plan. That amended plan will be presented in the future. Ms. Farris stated there will be more flexibility with the \$250K. Brief discussion followed regarding the amended funds for 2019. Ms. Farris stated more funds were received for the CDBG AAP than requested. She briefly reviewed the adjusted amounts including a reduction in Slum and Blight and an increase to Habitat for Humanity (H4H) and Public Works. Director Cramer stated these recommendations will be included on the April 23 Council Meeting agenda.

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Targhee Regional Public Transit Authority (TRPTA) Update:

Mayor Casper stated Councilmember Dingman has been the liaison to TRPTA. She noted TRPTA has been continuing to work through their closure over the course of the previous year with assistance from a State-paid consultant. Councilmember Dingman stated the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) is currently in their process of research and development of a plan for TRPTA with recommendation from the TRPTA board, Ms. Briggs, and, additional organizations within the community that utilize public transportation. The TRPTA board is currently going through disclosure statements for bankruptcy filing, including the recent addition of the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) as a creditor. The amount ITD is seeking is being debated with the legal counsels. The TRPTA board is also currently in negotiations with a buyer for the TRPTA property although COVID-19 is causing a delay of the purchase. Councilmember Dingman stated CTAA has submitted a proposed timeline for completing the research and development project and, CTAA will identify available resources to support the transit program to the TRPTA board by month end. She stated Idaho Falls is only local entity that has dedicated funds for public transit service. CTAA is reviewing transit service (using TPRTA as the old model, using a third-party service with a private contract, or using City service), locations, target audience, and, operating parameters. This information is anticipated by the end of May; an implementation plan is anticipated to be submitted by the end of June; and, in-person CTAA for solicitation of bids/proposals of interested parties will occur at the beginning of July with proposals due by early September. The contract selection, or service model, would be executed by October 1 which would allow the launch of service to begin in November. To the response of Mayor Casper, Councilmember Dingman stated the TRPTA board will be meeting in the near future to reconfigure the bylaws with those who have plans to financially contribute to TRPTA. The new bylaws may allow additional entities although ITD will disseminate this information. Councilmember Dingman noted Bonneville County Commissioner Dave Radford has requested to be removed from the board. Mayor Casper stated \$140K of City funds have been set aside to contribute to TRPTA. She also stated the Council will need to determine if this money will be utilized for public transportation or if the money may be needed for COVID-19 expenses. Councilmember Hally prefers to use the money for public transportation. To the response of Councilmember Freeman, Councilmember Dingman stated CTAA is reviewing the extent of the City running the service as this may require additional full-time employees. She believes it makes more sense for a third-party provider and contract for service. Councilmember Francis believes it would be difficult to find public transit money if the current funds are not held. Brief discussion followed regarding the official legal name of TRPTA and using a Doing Business As (DBA) name. To the response of Mayor Casper, Councilmember Dingman stated the current TRPTA board must adopt any new bylaws although the bylaws can be amended in the future with a new board.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton
CITY CLERK

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper
MAYOR