STUDY SESSION NOTES

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

City Council Chambers   7500 W. 29th Avenue

August 21, 2017

Mayor Joyce Jay called the Study Session to order at 6:30p.m.

Council members present: Monica Duran, Janeece Hoppe, Zachary Urban, George Pond, Kristi Davis, Tim Fitzgerald, Larry Mathews, Genevieve Wooden

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Administrative Services Director, Heather Geyer; Purchasing Agent, Jennifer Nellis; guests and interested citizens

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

1. Staff Report(s)   none

2. Cultural Commission's Cultural Vision – Diane Robb

The Wheat Ridge Cultural Commission (WRCC) is charged primarily with promoting and fostering cultural arts in the City. The Commission conducted a community survey in March and April to determine the level of support for and awareness of cultural activity in Wheat Ridge. 159 people responded. The Commission held two special work sessions in May and June to begin developing a cultural vision for the City.

Cultural Commission Chair Diane Robb was present, along with Commission members Jareth Gronski, Sandy Nance, and Carol Mathews

Commissioner Robb highlighted the elements of their research and discussions:
- They identified elements of Wheat Ridge that make it unique (rural vibe, urban farming, big gardens, big yards, trees, wildlife, generational arc, community heritage, independence, variety of house styles, mom-and-pop businesses – not big boxes, proximity to cultural scene in Denver, Arvada and Lakewood, gateway to the mountains, rolling topography, Clear Creek, mountain views, great parks, historic buildings).
- Stakeholders who would benefit from a Cultural Vision are all who live, work or visit in Wheat Ridge.
- Cultural arts includes more than Public Art.
- The current art scene in Wheat Ridge is segmented, volunteer driven, often amateur, ad hoc and not well promoted or recognized.
- The WRCC supports independent creativity, but envisions a cultural arts community that is unified, professional, supported by Council, businesses and the community, and recognized as relevant to the community.

- The WRCC drew up the first steps needed to achieve unity, professionalism, support and recognition include:
  - Develop a cultural arts resource inventory
  - Create partnerships with existing art and cultural groups, local business owners and other stakeholders
  - Educate the community and stakeholders
  - Identify cultural arts opportunities in the community, promote the arts and foster cultural growth
- The City already has a public art management plan; a cultural vision would take it to the next level.
- The WRCC has discussed a cultural loop on 38th Avenue

Commissioner Robb noted that developers have asked her what the City's cultural vision is - to provide some direction, but we don't have one. The WRCC doesn't see the cultural vision as giving specific directions/requirements or telling them what to do – just encouraging them.

The Commission is working to complete this vision in the next 60 days and will then present a resolution to Council for adoption. They welcome all input and comments.

Commissioners mentioned some of the many ideas they have talked about.
- Commissioner Robb: A cultural loop on 38th Avenue and how to encourage developers without telling them what to do
- Commissioner Nance: Interviewing some of the cultural groups in the City (the WR Historical Society, the Carnation Festival, Localworks) to find ways to integrate arts and culture; working with all entities
- Commissioner Robb: Include the parks and the City. For Anderson Park they want to make sure artistic elements are part of the design, and we want to work with Localworks, the Historical Society, and the Art League – anyone we can.

Council questions and comments followed.
- Councilmember Davis asked about the chalk festival. Ms. Robb said the winner of the Denver Chalk Art Festival lives in WR. She was contacted and is bringing in other professional chalk artists to Ridgefest this year.
- Councilmember Mathews asked if the WRCC is currently working with any developers that have projects in the City. Ms. Robb shared being contacted by the developer for WR Corners. He asked to be notified of the cultural vision when it happens.
- Councilmember Fitzgerald expressed a desire to see history incorporated.
- Councilmember Urban encouraged including individuals that may not be involved in those groups - graffiti artists and other young people on the fringe. Commissioner Robb said the vision is wide based; we are too diverse to pidgeonhole. She read a survey response that saw the Commission as a closed community and out of touch with young people and non-traditional formats. The Commission takes all comments seriously and they want to include everyone. She thinks a graffiti festival could be very fun. Councilmember Urban added that there is a role to play in bringing people into the fold from the fringes.
- Councilmember Hoppe listed a number of things she appreciates that the WRCC has also included - music, dance, studio tours, and Meet the Artists.

- Councilmember Duran likes that they want to create a sense of place and are inclusive of all types of art.

Mayor Jay asked if the WRCC would be willing to be like a referring agency when development plans come to the Council. Ms. Robb said they could, but urged caution in implying that we require public art. She suggested only offering services, welcoming and assisting.

- Councilmember Wooden advised the City and Council need to think about where we want to go with this. It will take money. There has to be will behind it.

Mr. Goff explained to Council how the public art fund works. It is growing. When there are private development projects over $100,000, the City puts 1% of those fees into the public art fund. Additionally, any City or state project in an urban renewal area has to include 1% for the public art fund.

Councilmember Hoppe received unanimous consent to have the Cultural Commission continue with their creation of a cultural vision for the City.

<u>3.</u>   Proposed Purchasing Amendments – Heather Geyer and Jennifer Nellis

Heather Geyer noted the six key reasons why these policy changes are being proposed for purchasing and contracting.
- Streamline the award notification process and payment process
- Increase the revenue share in the purchasing card program
- Provide quicker payment to vendors
- Eliminate redundancy in approval processes
- Increase accountability at management and staff levels
- Shorten formal procurement time from preparation to award of contract

She reported we have a high volume of purchasing and only 1½ FTE is devoted to purchasing, so they are looking for ways to be more efficient. She also noted the chart in the packet that compares our policy limits with some other cities.

Jennifer Nellis, the City's purchasing agent, went through the recommended changes to the purchasing guidelines and approval limits and the reasoning behind them.

#1 *Purchasing Card Single-Purchase Limit*
Staff recommends increasing the standard limit from $3,000 to $5,000.
- Not all 175 users are active users. Their spending limits is $5K, but P-card policy is restricted to $3K.
- The $3K limit is restricting. Improvements in technology continually increase the opportunities for P-card use (on-line purchases, phone payments), instead of checks.
- The increased limit may also increase our volume rebate from Commerce Bank.

#2 *Signature Approval Levels*
Staff recommends signature approval levels be increased to allow department directors more discretionary approval.
- Director approval limit would raise from $15,000 to $25,000

- City manager approval limit would raise from $35K to $100K
- City Council approval would only be required for expenditures over $100K
- These changes would eliminate the re-approval of goods, services and CIP projects that are already budgeted. She noted the cities/counties that use the $100K limit.

#3 *Purchasing Acquisition Limits*
Staff recommends amending the purchasing acquisition limits as outlined:
1. Combine goods and services purchasing types to simplify purchasing processes for staff city-wide
    a. Allow discretionary purchases up to $5K
    b. Allow informal quotes (written) over $5K up to $25K
    c. Formal bids and proposals over $25K
2. Establish a specific category for professional services (architects, engineers, landscape architects, and surveyors), with qualifications based on the Brooks Act
    a. Allow discretionary selection among on-call consultants for tasks up to $25K
    b. Raise the limit for informal quotes or Requests for Proposal (RFP's) for on-call consultants for tasks from $25K up to $50K
    c. New, formal Requests for Qualifications (RFQ's) for consultant selection would be required for anything over $50K.
    d. The current limit of $25K on informal bids causes projects to be broken into small pieces, and is inefficient for the City and the vendors.
3. Specific to CIP and construction
    a. Informal quotes over $25 raise to $100K
    b. Formal solicitations over $100K
    c. The current discretionary limit of $25K for construction will remain
    d. Raising the informal quote limit to $100K reflects current construction supply and demand issues and will allow departments to make recommendations (with Director and City Manager approval) to speed up project completion.
    e. Having formal solicitations and the Council approval level both at $100K will ensure that Council will be aware of those procurements over $100K.

Mr. Goff added that this applies to budgeted items only. Anything not budgeted comes to Council for approval.

Questions from the Council followed.

Councilmember Davis asked how P-cards are handled. Ms. Nellis explained that P-cards are reconciled monthly; department supervisors approve purchases and they are reviewed by Accounts Payable. With the changes, purchases below $100K would not come to Council.

Councilmember Fitzgerald asked for an example of something large that would be paid for with a P-card. Ms. Nellis explained that *approval of purchase* is different from *payment*. Payment of large bills (ex: $90K) would not be done with a P-card. She contributed other details/restrictions/safeguards about the use of P-cards.

Councilmember Urban inquired about the separation of informal and formal and the potential for unfairness. Ms. Nellis expounded on specifications vs. brands. It's important to be able to work with the vendors. Councilmember Urban said the

processes should be air tight, so fairness is maintained and unfair advantage isn't given to certain vendors.

Ms. Nellis explained that purchase orders are created at $15K. She gave examples of safeguards in the purchase order and bidding processes that prevent any unfair advantage. The City uses Rocky Mountain Procurement System to post its bids.

Councilmember Urban asked about multiple projects adding up to $100K. Ms. Nellis said they watch for that. Mr. Goff said the auditors check that too.

Councilmember Mathews asked about routine and ordinary purchases, such as fuel. Ms. Nellis said fuel is purchased in bulk through a local group with cooperative bids. Mr. Mathews noted since most of our purchases are routine and ordinary, why is it necessary to raise the limits? Ms. Nellis said it would be helpful for special projects, year-to-year renewals, projects for Parks and Public Works, and equipment purchases.

Mr. Goff agreed that 75%+ of purchases are routine and regular; we use the bidding processes that are out there.

Councilmember Pond thinks the changes make sense. He noted that purchases between $35K and $100K will no longer be seen by Council. He's ok with that, as it will save staff and Council time.

Councilmember Duran asked for a consensus to increase purchasing limits and approval levels, with the addition of a monthly report to Council on purchases between $35K and $100K. Mr. Goff said they could do that.

The consensus passed 6-2.

Councilmember Mathews asked that when this comes to Council for approval that there be some information included to show justification why these limits need to be so high. They are more than just an adjustment for inflation since 2011. Ms. Nellis spoke to the time involved in these purchases. After approval, a number of things have to happen before a project can actually move forward. These changes will help those constraints and greatly improve efficiency and work flow.

    4.   Elected Officials' Report(s)

Kristi Davis reported that Urban Renewal will be meeting on September 5.

Tim Fitzgerald announced there will be a District 3 Listening Meeting at the Rec Center this Saturday at 9:00am.

Janeece Hoppe announced that she and Ms. Wooden attended a meeting of Jeffco Public Health's CTC (Communities That Care) -- a group that works to prevent problems before they develop by decreasing risk factors and increasing protective factors. It is funded with marijuana tax money; they have received $1.3M. The community board meets monthly and she will bring updates. ~ She also reported that the Façade Plus Program was approved by the Wheat Ridge Business District. Details can be found on the WRBD website; applications will be taken until October 1. There

are different funding levels. If anyone knows a business that needs financial assistance with a project, let them know about this.

Mayor Jay reported that RTD money for the Gold Line that was unused this year will pass on to next year. ~ She also noted that when making transportation funding choices DRCOG strongly favors projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Janelle Shaver reported that the State Liquor Enforcement Division is undergoing rule-making reviews. One of the proposed new rules would no longer allow local government entities, special districts or educational based nonprofits to hold Special Event Liquor permits. Deputy Clerk Robin Eaton is participating in the working group. This is a dramatic change in ideology. Some questions and discussion followed. Mr. Goff will follow up with the Deputy Clerk.

ADJOURNMENT   The Study Session adjourned at 8:56 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON September 11, 2017

Janelle Shaver
_____   _____
Janelle Shaver, City Clerk   George Pond, Mayor Pro Tem