

Special Study Session – City Council
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue
June 12, 2023

Upon adjournment of the Regular City Council Meeting, and after a short recess, the Mayor called this Special Study Session to order at 7:30 p.m.

This meeting was conducted both as a virtual meeting and hybrid, where some members of the Council or City staff were physically present at the Municipal building, and some members of the public attended in person as well.

After calling the meeting to order, Mayor Starker stated the rules and procedures necessitated by this meeting format.

Mayor Starker welcomed the Council, other elected officials, staff and interested citizens.

The Mayor also explained the virtual/hybrid meeting format, how citizens will have the opportunity to be heard, and the procedures and policies to be followed.

Council members present: Judy Hutchinson, Amanda Weaver, Scott Ohm, Janeece Hoppe, Rachel Hultin, Korey Stites, and Leah Dozeman.

Absent: Valerie Nosler Beck

Also, present: City Manager Patrick Goff; City Attorney, Gerald Dahl; Chief of Police Chris Murtha; Deputy City Manager, Allison Scheck; Associate Attorney, Nick Klein; Deputy City Clerk, Robin Eaton; Polco's Director of Survey Research, Jade Arocha, guests and interested citizens.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No one came forward to speak.

Note about Wheat Ridge Speaks:

Citizens may visit the Wheat Ridge Speaks website and enter written comments of up to 1,000 words on any Council agenda item. The deadline for citizens to submit comments is 12:00 Noon Mountain Time on the day of a Council session so that Council members, other elected officials and City Staff have time to review the comments before the meeting on Monday evening.

The City Clerk's Office transcribes those Wheat Ridge Speaks comments into these minutes, placing each comment along with the record for that agenda item, including items that include a public hearing (verbatim, if the comments do not contain lascivious language or unlawful hate speech).

There were no citizen comments entered into Wheat Ridge Speaks related to this session.

1. 2023 Resident Survey Report

Issue

The survey serves as the City's "consumer report card" and is an information tool for the City to measure its performance. The survey encompasses best practices and is a statistically valid sampling of 4,500 households in the City. The Wheat Ridge Resident Survey was last administered in 2021

Staff Report

Assistant to the City Manager, Marianne Schilling gave a detailed report on how the resident survey serves as the City's "consumer report card." The purpose of the survey is as follows:

- To assess resident satisfaction with community characteristics and amenities
- To evaluate Wheat Ridge local government and employees
- To further understand the resident's priorities regarding government services in Wheat Ridge

Ms. Schilling introduced Jade Arocha, Polco's Director of Survey Research, who presented the 2023 Resident Survey Report to City Council.

Topics discussed included:

- History of the survey
- How are the questionnaires distributed?
- The process of preparing residents to receive the survey and encouraging them to respond.
- Are the topics and questions in the packet tonight on target?

Councilmember questions and comments:

A lengthy and detailed discussion of topics and specific question wordsmithing followed among and between staff and CM Ohm, and CM Hultin.

Mayor Starker thanked staff for their hard work and good work product to date and looked forward to the next iteration of the survey questionnaire.

Mr. Goff then discussed the public opinion poll planned to gauge residents'/voters' views on the sales tax proposition Council is considering putting on the November 2023 general election ballot.

The Mayor proposed a consensus to direct staff to move forward with their suggestions on the public opinion poll.

Consensus attained.

2. Hotel Licensing Ordinance Update

Issue

On October 25, 2021, City Council passed ordinance 1723, adding a new article XIV to Chapter 11 and updating use schedules in Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws to establish a hotel licensing program.

Sec. 11-569 of the Code requires Council to review the implementation of the ordinance on or before June 30, 2023, and every 18 months thereafter. This report provides an update about the progress and current status of the hotel licensing program and includes recommendations for code amendments based on lessons learned thus far.

Staff Report

Associate Attorney, Nick Klein and Chief Murtha Chief Murtha gave detailed descriptions on the financial impacts, including staff time where a cross-departmental City staff team meets frequently and works collaboratively to develop the required standard operating procedures, forms, and processes to implement this program along with ongoing enforcement efforts, along with the decrease in the volume of calls from our hotels and motels. Overall, the hotel licensing program is having the desired effect of reducing crime in Wheat Ridge, particularly in the area surrounding I-70 and Kipling, as the rate of service calls have reduced

The subject items of the discussion included:

- Current status of hotels in Wheat Ridge,
- Licensing update,
- Public safety update,
- Status of long-term residents living in hotels and culminates with recommended code amendments based on what the team has learned thus far in the implementation the hotel licensing ordinance

Councilmember questions and comments:

A lengthy and detailed discussion of topics and specific question wordsmithing followed among and between staff and CM.

Councilmembers and staff also discussed potential connections to the homeless navigator program.

Councilmembers also asked for public information and education about this effort, both to inform residents about its impact on homelessness and impact on local lodging businesses. Have these businesses been asked for input? Chief Murtha gave a detailed reply.

CM Hoppe asked for a consensus to direct staff to move forward with their 4 suggested amendments and add a one-month time-gap for the requested time difference when they can be in the hotel.

Discussion on the consensus by CM Hultin to propose a two month and everything else would stay the same on the original consensus

Consensus attained.

3. Staff Report(s)

Nothing more.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

The Mayor noted the progress on important matters this evening and thanked the staff for their hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

The Special Study Session adjourned at 8:43pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON July 24, 2023.



Robin Eaton, Deputy City Clerk



Korey Stites, Mayor Pro Tem