

Special City Council Meeting Minutes

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
7500 WEST 29TH AVENUE, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

November 23, 2020

Note: This meeting was held virtually, using Zoom video-teleconferencing technology. As duly announced and publicly noticed, Council previously approved this format in order to continue with normal business and respond to the CoVid-19 Pandemic and the related public emergency orders promulgated by the President of the United States, the Governor of Colorado, and the Wheat Ridge City Council. Before calling the meeting to order, Mayor Starker stated the rules and procedures necessitated by this meeting format.

Mayor Starker called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Janece Hoppe Judy Hutchinson Zachary Urban Rachel Hultin
Amanda Weaver Korey Stites Leah Dozeman Valerie Nosler Beck

Also present: City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Attorney, Gerald Dahl; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Administrative Services Director, Allison Scheck; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Steve Art, Business Development Director; City Attorney, Jerry Dahl; City Treasurer Chris Miller.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda is limited to the item specified in the Mayor's call for this Special Meeting.

Citizens' Right to Speak

The item began at 7:02 pm.

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, so long as the comments do not contain lascivious language or unlawful hate speech).

No one came forward to comment on the agenda item for this Special Meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

There were none of these items for this meeting.

DECISIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

1. A motion approving funding in the amount of \$250,000 for the purpose of funding phase three of the Business Stabilization Program.

Discussion began at approximately 7:03 pm.

Mayor Starker introduced item 1.

Staff Presentation

Mr. Goff reported that the impact of COVID-19 on American businesses continues as state and local governments order mandatory shut-downs further complicating operations for businesses already impacted by COVID-19. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) moved Jefferson County to “Level Red – Severe Risk” in the COVID-19 Dial Framework, effective November 20, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. This move to Level Red imposes new restrictions including, but not limited to, prohibiting indoor dining at restaurants, limiting capacity at gyms to 10 percent and continuing to limit capacity at critical and non-critical retail to 50%.

The City distributed \$500,000 in grants to 161 Wheat Ridge businesses through the Business Stabilization Program earlier this year. The City has received federal funding from the CARES Act, through Jefferson County, which is authorized to be used for business recovery grant programs.

Councilmembers Hultin and Stites requested a special meeting to discuss authorizing \$250,000 for local business grants to restaurants and retailers under the same guidelines and grant committee process used previously including:

1. No chain or franchises
2. 25 or fewer employees
3. Brick and mortar location in Wheat Ridge
4. Current Wheat Ridge business license

Public Comment

No one came forward to speak.

Council had comments

Councilmember Hultin further explained why she and Councilmember Stites asked for this special meeting to act quickly.

Councilmembers asked whether businesses that received previous grants may apply for this round of funding. Mr. Goff recommended that we open the program to all businesses that qualify, regardless of their previous grants. Councilmembers Urban and Hoppe agreed with Mr. Goff's recommendations.

Council also discussed prioritizing restaurants and retailers, and whether to include franchises. Councilmembers Stites and Hultin favored allowing grants to locally owned franchisees but not chain restaurants operated by large corporations. Councilmember Hultin also asked that multiple businesses owned by the same local individuals or partners should be allowed to apply for grants for each of their separate locations. Councilmember Urban asked that in these cases each different operation file a separate application. Councilmember Hultin asked that whatever communication goes to local businesses make clear the procedures.

Council asked whether CARES Act funds could be available. Mr. Goff answered affirmatively and explained how, and the ultimate impact on the City budget.

Councilmember Hultin asked that the application process require business to swear under oath that they are current with all city taxes, city regulations and adhering to the public health orders now in place.

Councilmember Hultin also thanked the staff for their urgent and responsive action to get this Council meeting together and move this quickly.

Councilmember Urban asked what date is the deadline for expending these funds. Mr. Goff and Ms. Scheck explained the details; December 30, 2020. Mr. Art agreed to create a schedule for everyone's information.

Motion by Councilmember Hultin to approve funding in the amount of \$250,000 for the purpose of funding phase three of the Business Stabilization Program, seconded by Councilmember Stites; motion carried 8-0.

CITY MANAGER'S MATTERS

Happy Thanksgiving everyone.

CITY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS

Enjoy a safe Thanksgiving.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' MATTERS

Councilmember Stites recounted an idea sent by Robin Eaton, Deputy City Clerk and Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk to forgive, rebate or credit back Liquor License Fees, Liquor Occupancy Tax, or both to support local businesses during the pandemic.

Consensus to address this issue at a future Study Session attained.

Several Councilmembers and the Mayor wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm



Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON December 14, 2020



Janece Hoppe, Mayor Pro Tem

The preceding Minutes were prepared according to §47 of Robert's Rules of Order, i.e. they contain a record of what was *done* at the meeting, not what was *said* by the members. Recordings and DVD's of the meetings are available for listening or viewing by contacting the City Clerk's Office, as well as copies of Ordinances and Resolutions.