

City of Elko)
County of Elko)
State of Nevada)

SS September 9, 2021

The City Council of the City of Elko, State of Nevada met for a special meeting beginning at 3:00 p.m., Thursday, September 9, 2021. The meeting was held at the Elko City Hall, 1751 College Avenue, Elko and via GoTo Meeting.

This meeting was called to order by Mayor Reece Keener. The public can participate in person, by phone, tablet, laptop, or computer by registering with the GoTo Meeting link provided in the agenda. Questions can be sent to cityclerk@elkocitynv.gov.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Council Present: Mayor Reece Keener
Councilwoman Mandy Simons
Councilman Chip Stone
Councilman Clair Morris
Councilman Giovanni Puccinelli

City Staff Present: Curtis Calder, City Manager
Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager
Kelly Wooldridge, City Clerk
Jan Baum, Financial Services Director
Dennis Strickland, Public Works Director
Cathy Laughlin, City Planner
Ty Trouten, Police Chief
Dale Johnson, Utilities Director
DJ Smith, Computer Information Systems Coordinator
Diann Byington, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Pursuant to N.R.S. 241, this time is devoted to comments by the public, if any, and discussion of those comments. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item on the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified as an item for possible action. **ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN**

Sheldon Hetzel, Bailey Homes, thanked Council for the opportunity to speak about the ARPA funding. There are lots of worthy causes that the money could be spent on but he hoped it would be used for something that can be used for generations to come. We may not have this opportunity for a long time, if ever. He came to speak about the housing industry. The corona virus has significantly impacted the housing industry. They have difficulty getting products and it nearly impossible to sign a contract to sell a home. The public is frustrated because of the time lead and

the pricing jumps. He felt there may be more of a housing issue than there is now. The long term consequences of COVID will be felt for a long while, with more people coming to Council asking for help long after this money has been spent. He would be in support of improving the infrastructure. They find it difficult to find property within the City that they can develop. That usually has to do with the availability of infrastructure. Right now there is a low cap on the infrastructure that only allows them to build to a certain elevation. We have talked about that for about a decade. The City just doesn't have the resources to provide that infrastructure. He encouraged the City looking at those kinds of investments. That will provide long-term connectivity. We need to get tanks and water lines in for that. It is beyond a housing issue. The hospital has run out of water more than once in the last year. The whole community would benefit from those types of infrastructure projects. Long-term planning of roadways can help with some of the congestion in town. There are Master Plan ideas that have been out there for a long time such as the Errecart roadway. These are all big number projects and he realizes this money will not take care of all of them but he is in support with that type of futuristic planning.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Brief presentation regarding the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and matters related thereto. **INFORMATION ONLY – ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN**

Jan Baum, Financial Director, gave a presentation. We will likely have grant applications and based on this meeting, we will start putting those together.

Mayor Keener asked when the applications are received and projects selected, will it go to the state for approval?

Ms. Baum answered no.

Mayor Keener asked if it would be up to us to make sure it was a qualifying project.

Ms. Baum answered yes. We need to remember that this is in response to the pandemic.

Curtis Calder, City Manager, said we need to be careful not to conflate the various government programs that are out there. As we discuss some of these infrastructure projects, some of these may qualify for speculative federal program dollars through the infrastructure legislation that is being discussed in Washington, D.C. Nothing is finalized on that but folks are speculating the State of Nevada is going to receive a large chunk of money specific to infrastructure. We want to be careful when we are prioritizing ARPA funds that we don't put something in the ARPA bucket when it could be paid for through the infrastructure bucket. We need to make sure we are in compliance with the federal funds because if we are not the Federal Government can come back on the backside of this project and say the project wasn't eligible and we have to pay them back. We don't want to be in that position. He gave a presentation. That will open up the discussion of other spending ideas. We will take notes as people bring up other ideas. As we have our second public hearing, we will refine and add to the ideas and put everything down that we can. Then it is a matter of people applying for funding and making sure it is eligible under ARPA.

Ester Quilici asked about when the application process will begin.

Mr. Calder answered they envision the application process beginning sometime after the second public hearing. We are looking at what the application process should look like, starting with what should the form look like. He anticipated there will be a draft application in the next 30 days for Council to approve. After that we will be ready to start taking applications.

- B. Review, discussion, and possible action to prioritize eligible spending ideas, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury, eligible spending must fall into four (4) categories:

1. *To respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts;*
2. *To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to such eligible workers of the recipient, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who performed essential work;*
3. *For the provision of government services, to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such recipient due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the recipient prior to the emergency; and*
4. *To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.*

Mr. Calder wanted to take public comments and get as many ideas as possible.

Sherman Hawkes and Tom Tipton, representing the Tipton Family Trust, stated they are the owner of 305 acres just west of the Hospital. They have been in conversation with the City for many years regarding a Right-of-Way easement going through the property. We have agreed to provide the ROW easement for Errecart Blvd. Recently they received a request from Mr. Wilkinson about providing an additional easement from the 5200 to the 5400 water zones. He has communicated back to him that they are in agreement of that as well. They are going to work with the City in the hopes that they will get that infrastructure in that property. They appreciate the opportunity to work with the City to prepare the easement. There was a sewer line that was necessary that may require another easement.

Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager, answered yes, the 9th Street sewer line that was shown on the drawings he sent to them, but there was another private party that needed to be contacted. If the Council were to select this area as a possible project, there would be an agreement between the parties that would come back to Council for approval. All of the water projects that are presented require engineering and we are probably looking at \$1.5 million in engineering. We would have to get that done before we move out to bid the projects. That could take a year and another 2 years to complete the projects.

Mayor Keener asked if the engineering costs would be recoverable through the ARPA funding.

Mr. Wilkinson answered they thought it would be a necessary component of the project, and if the project is eligible then the engineering should be too.

Sheldon Hetzel, Bailey Homes, said there is an opportunity here. It is amazing to see how many neighbors have come together, prior to the ARPA funding happening. There have been a lot of ROW discussions and they have come together without knowing if there would ever be funding to make anything happen. It just so happens that they have all fallen in place right now at the same time the funding is coming together. He felt it would be a great time to seize the moment. There are multiple projects that would benefit the City. We have talked about the 5200 and 5400 elevations. Right now we are cut off at the 5200 elevation but there is a lot of ground that is above the 5200 elevation. Getting the water up there is huge. The hospital does need a second source of water. This could be a cost savings if we can invest right now and do these projects at the same time in the same trench.

Mayor Keener asked the new tank that is going in to the east of Lamoille Highway and will open up around 600 acres, is that sufficient to feed the property he has just south of NNRH.

Mr. Hetzel answered yes, he would get benefit there. The location of the tank falls outside the City on a piece of property they were struggling to get ROW access to. That recently became available now. All these roadblocks have opened up recently. This is a great opportunity. It is not just about us today but what can we do to help in to the future.

Mr. Wilkinson said our Utility Director put together a white paper that could be beneficial on this subject on that area of town to hear about how he has evaluated the 5400 and 5200 zones and how an extension to the 5600 zone helps tie and reinforce all the water infrastructure in that entire area. He felt that information would be beneficial. In 2012 the Council adopted a long-range planning document that is referenced and incorporated into our Master Plan by reference. This area was one of the priority areas that was identified in that plan, along with Exit 298. We have made substantial progress in implementing projects in those areas.

Mayor Keener agreed it would be great to hear that information at an upcoming meeting. After asking for public comments, he moved on to the next item.

NO ACTION

- C. Presentation by Nevada Health Centers regarding a Community Behavioral Health Program Proposal, including a possible \$2,000,000 commitment of SLFRF to provide necessary funding through December 2024, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

Walter Davis, CEO Nevada Health Centers, gave a presentation.

Steven Brotman, Director Behavioral Health Operations, Nevada Health Centers, continued with the presentation when the stream froze.

Christi Gunn, Clinical Director, Nevada Health Centers, continued with the presentation regarding behavioral health.

Mayor Keener thanked them for the presentation. He hears concerns frequently about behavioral health. Their group is trying to rise to the challenge. There is a big need in our community. This is listed as “For Possible Action” but he felt it was too preliminary right now to start prioritizing the projects.

Mr. Calder said this was put down as a starting point. We have been concerned about behavioral health in our community for quite some time, especially from a law enforcement standpoint. We wanted to get that number out there. We don’t have the application process figured out yet. He suggested talking to the hospital about inpatient needs and see if they are willing to provide that service.

Councilman Stone stated mental health is huge, especially with COVID. It has exploded because of COVID and having to stay home. He agreed with talking to the hospital about mental health care.

Councilman Morris agreed that we need to get the hospital on board with this.

Councilwoman Simons said Nevada Health Centers charges on a sliding scale and the hospital charges a lot of money for their services. We need the services and the folks that need it don’t have the money to spend at the hospital. We need to be careful there and look closer at it.

NO ACTION

- D. Review, discussion, and consideration of a proposal from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elko for a \$400,000 commitment of SLFRF towards a Childcare Center Renovation Project, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

A copy of the proposal has been included in the agenda packet for review. CC

Mr. Calder said the request was received over a month ago but we weren’t ready to discuss it. He invited Rusty to come and speak about this.

Rusty Bahr, Boys and Girls Club, spoke about his request. They are looking to expand their services to include childcare by adding to their facility. We are in a state of childcare crisis. They do qualify for the assistance. They hope to open their new centers by May 2022. They will have infants all the way up to 18 years old. They are asking for \$400,000 to complete the City facility. When the application process is out they will be the first to bring their application in and be ready to go.

NO ACTION

- E. Review, discussion, and consideration of various requests from various local non-profit organizations, including possible determinations regarding funding eligibility, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

Several non-profit organizations have inquired about possible ARPA funding, including:

- Western Folklife Center
- Friends In Service Helping (FISH)
- Local Area Shelter Support Organization (LASSO)
- Family Resource Center
- Igloo
- Elko Institute for Academic Achievement (EIAA)

Staff is requesting direction with regard to eligibility and funding amounts. CC

Ashlyn Greener, Family Resource Center, handed out some paperwork (Exhibit “A”) and spoke about what their application request will include.

Jon Griggs, Western Folklife Center, stated they were not able to hold the gathering this year. It has been tough on all of us and the center. They have been able to keep the doors open and the staff employed by dipping into our endowment. That is supposed to be investment income. They suffered a significant loss that will be included in their application, north of \$364,576 (approx.). We are right in the middle of planning the 38th National Cowboy Poetry Gathering for January 24th through 29th.

Matt Burwell, Igloo Recreation Center, said they are in the process of building a refrigerated ice rink so we can grow the sport of hockey and all the other sporting events that go on in their facility. The pandemic has slowed their progress. They have suffered some lost revenue due to COVID. He hoped the City would consider their request and deem it eligible. He also wondered if the water and sewer upgrades they are required to do at their facility would be eligible for the funding. He estimated they lost about \$10,000 from cancelling fund raisers. The water/sewer infrastructure would cost another \$40,000. He felt it would be easy to justify the numbers for the application.

Mr. Calder explained LASSO lost the ability to fund raise over the last year or so. Their application will include a loss number of roughly \$20,000. LASSO could always use more money and if they could qualify for more it would be put right back into the Animal Shelter to pay for the spay and neuters.

Councilman Stone asked about opening up the grants to more than just non-profit organizations, such as local small businesses.

Mr. Calder answered there are programs we can work with through ARPA for private businesses but they are probably a bit different. The County had a program through CARES Act funding. ARPA highlights grants to businesses to provide for folks that were essential workers and could be eligible for premium pay. It will be hard to determine who would be eligible for premium pay.

Jan Baum, Financial Director, said it is not limited to just non-profits. Businesses and households as well. There is a lot of literature in there about tourism and restaurants.

Councilman Stone didn’t want to make the application so rigorous that it is too difficult for people to apply. We need to keep it simple.

Mayor Keener wanted to see a question on the application asking if any funds were received by that organization and from who.

Councilwoman Simons discussed her options for project priorities.

Councilmen Stone and Morris wanted to see the applications before they define priorities.

Councilman Puccinelli said there are a lot of things to look at. He has his ideas of where the money should go first but everything deserves to be looked at.

Mr. Calder offered everyone a chance to look at the large list of rules. There is a theme as to what the money should be spent on. Elko has survived the pandemic a lot better than other communities. These rules were written for communities that had huge economic shutdowns and had a lot of fallout from it. We were impacted, there is no question, but we didn't have the same impact as many other communities. Since we have this money, let's do some go with it. He felt we should invest in legacy projects.

Scott Gavorsky, Gavorsky Consulting Nevada Recovers, said he is working with the state team of the Nevada Recovers Project, which is dealing with the state local funds. They have a survey and website in progress, NevadaRecovers.com. One of the goals of that is the State level funding to collect both ideas from communities about prioritization of funds, and ideas from citizens. The City can submit their ideas to the website. The idea is that as the state projects go forward, we will start identifying some synergies between communities.

NO ACTION

COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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There were no public comments.

There being no further business, Mayor Reece Keener adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Reece Keener

Kelly Wooldridge, City Clerk