

City of Greeley, Colorado  
**COUNCIL WORKSESSION REPORT**  
January 22, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Gates, in Council's Chambers at City Center South, 1001 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Those present were Mayor John Gates and Councilmembers Robb Casseday, Dale Hall, Brett Payton, Jon Smail, and Stacy Suniga. Councilmember Michael Fitzsimmons arrived late.

## **1. BROADBAND UPDATE**

Brian Sullivan, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager, reported that in an effort to compete in today's economy, communities across the State have become increasingly dependent on internet access, especially high-capacity, broadband, access. He noted that it is becoming a critical component for most cities to improve population retention and as a means of offering business incentives, and residents have multiple devices that need the significant capacity for video and other capabilities.

He stated that the availability of broadband has also become a necessity for quality of life and desirability of a community, providing residents access to things like online education and distance learning opportunities, telemedicine, and entertainment. In the 21st-century economy, it is critical everyone have broadband access. In fact, it is beginning to be a dialogue that broadband access is as important as our roads and utilities to be economically competitive as noted by the Colorado Municipal League.

Councilmember Fitzsimmons arrived at 5:05 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan went on to offer a timeline of the work that has been done by the City regarding broadband investigation noting that in 2016 the City began the initiative to examine Broadband generally; in 2017 the City initiated 1) a feasibility study with NEO Connect to look broadly at the issues and options related to Broadband; 2) a ballot initiative in which the voters opted out of the prohibitions of SB 17-152 which prohibited most uses of municipal funds for infrastructure to improve local broadband service or from providing those services should the City desire to do so at some point; and in 2018 a feasibility study was completed and next steps were identified; and in May 2018 City staff and a consultant provided the Council with a strategic direction concerning broadband. He noted that the study had many components, including a survey of providers and "download" speeds, discussion of the future options (4G and 5G cellular wireless, as examples), price comparisons, existing infrastructure assets, a survey of providers, best practices analysis, and recommendations.

From this report, Mr. Sullivan advised that the Council appropriated an additional \$250,000 to continue to study and analyze the next steps for the City of Greeley to ensure Greeley remains a technologically competitive City in Northern Colorado.

He went on to review the work plan elements and next steps and noted that staff's plans are to establish an Advisory Citizen Committee sometime between March 2019 and June 2020 that would be a mix of businesses and residents. The Committee's task will be to analyze any information gathered and review any and all future recommendations. Next would be a survey and focus groups between February 2019 and June 2019 through a consulting firm that would conduct statistically valid outreach to residents and businesses. He added that there will be a deliberate effort to solicit feedback from underserved populations in our community with bilingual options available. Third, staff plans strategic discussions with various broadband providers to discuss Phase 3 interest between February 2019 and May 2019 since there are so

many alternatives to providing fast internet service. Next would come adoption of a “Fiber Conduit Connectivity and Co-locate” Ordinance sometime between February and March 2019, and continued discussions with other agencies such as CDOT, Northern Colorado cities, and the Chamber of Commerce; and then finally, appropriate monies to continue the effort, \$250,000 annually for 2019 and 2020, and set aside \$500,000 for fiber optic cable expansion efforts, and set aside \$600,000 for further development of broadband model and design.

Mr. Sullivan advised that the plan is to return to City Council in July 2019 with an update and action plans for the remainder of 2019 and 2020.

Roy Otto, City Manager, reported that the single most important thing going forward is the regional water issue, but emphasized that broadband is close behind that. He stated that it is critically important for the City’s future and that it will be a city-wide initiative in the 2019 City Manager Work Program.

In response to a question from Councilmember Suniga, Mr. Sullivan advised that there are several partners out there as well as communities where Greeley can learn from.

Councilmember Casseday stated that this must move forward, and what he is seeing here is setting the backbone for it. He expressed that the development community taking the lead with neighborhoods is the right approach.

Councilmember Smail inquired about the stage at which we just start putting in conduit without waiting for that middle section, and Mr. Sullivan stated that that’s what we are doing now where it makes sense and budgeting for it which will allow it to happen at an even quicker pace.

Councilmember Fitzsimmons reported that the ordinance ensures several outcomes – that the City will begin looking at high areas where this will start, but the challenge will be building enough money in.

Mayor Gates reported that he recently attended a Regional Mayors meeting and was surprised that only two there had opted out of SB 17-152. He noted that we seem to be right on track at the right pace. It was noted that some elected officials in some communities are split on this issue, so some may not be at the stage we are at.

Vik Runkle, Assistant City Manager, emphasized the need for some names of people in the community that staff can reach out to for input and inclusion into these conversations, especially those residents and businesses with language or cultural barriers, but who may have important and diverse input to offer on this issue. She noted that she would like to have names within the next couple of weeks.

## **2. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

Robert Miller, Budget Manager, provided the December 2018 monthly financial report. He noted that an end-of-the-year report will be provided in early February. He stated that overall, staff is seeing significant increases in revenues.

Mr. Miller went on to provide a General Fund revenue and expenditure overview and then reviewed sales tax by major categories, which is seeing significant growth; retail sales tax by location; property tax; franchise fees and telephone tax; general use tax; auto use tax; building use tax; building permit revenue; water funds; sewer funds; and lodging tax revenue.

Council thanked Mr. Miller for the report and the great news it provided.

### 3. SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS

Mr. Otto reminded Council of the annual Board and Commission Reception set for Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30 p.m. on the Monfort Concert Hall Stage.

No additional meetings or other events were scheduled.

Councilmember Payton moved, seconded by Councilmember Casseday to move into Executive Session for purposes discussing personnel who report to the City Council, the City Manager's Annual Performance Review, as provided for under C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f) and Greeley Municipal Code Section 2.04.020(6)a. The motion carried: 7-0

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting and moved into Executive Session at 5:59 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at 8:13 p.m.



*Cheryl Aragon*  
Cheryl Aragon, Deputy City Clerk