

City of Greeley, Colorado
COUNCIL WORKSESSION REPORT
September 22, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

The virtual meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Gates via the City's Zoom platform.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Gates led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. ROLL CALL

Cheryl Aragon, Interim City Clerk, called the roll. Those present were Mayor John Gates and Councilmembers Tommy Butler, Ed Clark, Michael Fitzsimmons, Dale Hall, Brett Payton and Kristin Zasada.

4. REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

No reports were offered from Councilmembers.

5. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES – ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS REPORT REVIEW

Dale Lyman, Fire Chief, reported that pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding entered into by the City and Greeley Firefighters Local 888 as a part of a past collective bargaining process, an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Task Force was formed to review and to present to City Council the findings of the assessment. He noted that the task force consists of representatives of the City's Fire Department Management and Local 888 members.

Chief Lyman stated that a third party consultant, Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), was retained by the City to complete a comprehensive analysis and assessment on the feasibility of the current EMS delivery model and to provide an evaluation of alternative models with a goal of identifying options to maximize service delivery.

He shared that general observations include that the current EMS system is providing high quality pre-hospital care; sustainability with a private provider is not predictable; the City should consider EMS response models that continue to focus on the Community Paramedic Program and look at basic life support transport for low acuity patient care; and ESCI has provided numerous short-term and long-term recommendations for improvement that are currently being addressed by Greeley Fire Department staff.

He went on to review the options and details of each option for moving forward – Option 1A, maintain the status quo with no change; Option 1B, maintain current EMS model/separate Banner Health (BHP) staffing; Option 1C, maintain current EMS model/GFD staffs one ambulance; Option 2, establish Fire-based system/private transport contract; Option 3, establish complete fire-based system; and Option 4, re-establish regional EMS system.

Chief Lyman introduced Division Chief Brian Kuznick, representing the Task Force, who reported that the purpose of this group was to address firefighter safety issues, out of district response issues, and to evaluate the EMS transport model.

He stated that the task force takes into consideration current economic conditions. He reviewed options for Council as being options to pursue related to the City or to pursue contract negotiations with a third-party provider for EMS. He then reviewed the evaluation criteria.

Chief Lyman went on to provide an update on the current model and noted that staff is addressing some of the short-term recommendations found within the EMS analysis through collaborative efforts with Banner leadership.

He asked for Council direction about pursuing options related to the City of Greeley Fire Department assuming the sole responsibility as the EMS transport provider for those who live, learn, work, and play within the city; or pursue contract negotiations with a third-party provider for EMS transport within the City.

Hoyt Skabelund, Banner CEO, shared that they want the same things the Council and City do for the residents of Greeley.

Councilmember Hall expressed a preference for Option 1B, and Councilmember Butler agreed with the opportunity to keep talking about this.

It was noted that fire-based EMS is still a long process, about 18-24 months.

Councilmember Zasada noted that this will come down to numbers and those financial figures will be needed to make the best decision.

Chief Lyman concurred and noted that it is difficult to ascertain those numbers but staff can certainly dig into that further and could start exploring what it would take to provide a subsidy if that is what is needed.

In response to a question from Councilmember Clark, Chief Lyman stated that staff could look more at response times and survival rates to see what is gleaned about the community being safer with Fire staff providing these services.

Councilmember Payton stated that he would be comfortable going with Option 1B with the opportunity to come back and talk more.

The consensus of Council was to move forward with Option 1B and provide updates in 2021 after the first quarter and asked staff to dig deeper into some of the things that would move toward fire-based EMS in the future, including comparative analysis of similar communities, funding mechanisms, etc.

6. 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Robert Miller, Budget Manager, reported that the Fiscal Year 2021 budget presentations will focus on the differences from 2020 to 2021; and identify the funding gap, areas of strategic investment, reductions, and excellence in operational re-alignment. The budget transmittal letter which has been made a part of Council's packet, provides an overview of the factors driving and highlights of the Fiscal Year 2021 proposed budget.

He noted that utilities will be the focus here and proceeded to review the 2020 year to date financial projects; projected 2020 end of year resources and projected totals based on economic conditions. He shared that if we hold with current trends, the City should be able to move forward without dipping into reserves.

Sean Chambers, Water & Sewer Director, provided a review of the Water & Sewer Operating Budget and 2021 Proposed Rate Adjustments.

Joel Hemesath, Public Works Director, reported on the stormwater budget and its increases being proposed for 2021.

7. 2021 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT OVERVIEW

Ben Snow, Economic Health and Housing Director, reported that the City is entitled to receive federal grants from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, namely the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) grant. HUD requires that recipients implement a new strategic plan every five years that details how they will prioritize federal grants during those five years. The strategic plan is part of the consolidated planning process, which serves as the framework for a community-wide dialogue that aligns housing and community development priorities with the noted federal formula grant programs.

He went on to note that annual funding requests considered by the GURA Board and recommended to Council are specific to the CDBG program. Throughout the year, the Board measures and manages HOME fund applications on behalf of the City, prioritizing projects that are consistent with the Council's priorities. HOME funds can only be used for housing programs; historically, these funds have supported new housing development with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Accessible Space, etc. Approval of the 2021 Action Plan does include approval of the HOME budget, as well.

He advised that specific to the 2021 Action Plan applications, the Citizen's Committee for Community Development, a volunteer advisory group to the Greeley Urban Renewal Authority, reviewed applications and submitted comments/recommendations via email. On August 12, 2020, the GURA Board met to review applications and formulate its budget recommendation for Council, which included a public hearing. Council's October 6, 2020, meeting also includes a public hearing. A 30-day public comment period on the 2021 Action Plan was held August 13, 2020-September 15, 2020.

Mr. Snow stated that while the City is required to develop its proposed annual action plan by November of each year, the exact amount of 2021 CDBG funding will not be known until congressional action in 2021. Based upon experience, the funding will be confirmed and available by approximately June 2021, so as has been the practice, staff projected a level of funding that is an average of the funding received during the previous five years (\$840,000 for CDBG; \$300,000 for HOME). Program income and any prior years' unused grant funds are also a part of the proposed budget. If the 2021 allocation is more or less than expected, the GURA Board recommends that adjustments occur within the Redevelopment District Infrastructure budget line item, which has the greatest flexibility in project scope.

Finally, Mr. Snow advised that the GURA Board recommended funding at some level for all applications received. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased work our area non-profits have taken on to help Greeley's low-moderate-income residents, the Board approved staff's recommendation to continue

support of the public service applications (rather than starting to reduce the number/amount of funding to move toward brick-and-mortar type activities) for the 2021 year. The Board's funding recommendation reflect those activities that they felt best met federal CDBG criteria and local priorities, carefully weighing each request against the adopted priorities, the merits of the applicant's requests, and input from its citizen advisory group. Applicants were available on the Board's Zoom meeting to address Board questions and/or concerns. He provided a brief overview of the applications received and recommendations for the 2021 CDBG budget.

8. SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS

No additional meetings or events were scheduled.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.



Cheryl Aragon, Interim City Clerk