

**MINUTES
CITY OF LONSDALE
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 25, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rud called a special meeting of the Lonsdale City Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 415 Central Street West.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present: David Webb, Kevin Kodada, Tim Rud and Cindy Furrer

Members Absent: Scott Pelava

City Staff Present: City Administrator Joel Erickson, City Planner Benjamin Baker, Public Works Director Russ Vlasak, City Treasurer Tami Brokl, and Police Chief Jason Schmitz

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Rud asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda.

A motion was made by Kodada and seconded by Furrer to approve the agenda as presented. Vote for: Webb, Kodada, Rud and Furrer. Vote against: None. Abstained: None. Vote: 4-0. Motion carried.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

7. PRESENTATION OF CITIZEN PETITIONS AND COMMENTS

None

8. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

None

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discuss the City's 2023 Budget

Erickson said that this is the 4th meeting for the 2023 Budget. He stated the main topics proposed to be focused on.

Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Recreation

Rud thanked Park Board Members Laura Carpentier and Maria Kowalski for attending the meeting.

Parks

Baker went through a 34-slide presentation detailing maintenance items along with completed, on-going, and future projects/ideas for parks, trails, parkland, and recreation. He talked about the Trcka Park Project, including Phase I (soccer fields), Phase II (ice rink and park building), and Phase III (play equipment, splash pad, fitness equipment). Baker encouraged the City to keep applying for DNR grants to help fund larger park projects. The Council, Staff, and Carpentier discussed water amenity options, including a splash/spray pad, an indoor swimming pool/water park, an outdoor swimming pool/water park, and a natural swimming pond. Carpentier stated that a natural swimming pool would serve all generations. She suggested having an expert on natural ponds come to Lonsdale. The group agreed that a splashpad and/or natural swimming pond would be the most cost-effective ways to provide a swimming amenity in town. Baker went through a list of currently paved and unpaved park parking lots. He said that the City has lead by example by paving both of the Trcka Park parking lots, and he encouraged the Council to think about paving the existing gravel lots in the future, when the timing makes sense. The Council reviewed pictures of the new archery targets and new pet waste station boxes installed by Collin Boyda. Baker provided an update on the Lonsdale Area Vets Memorial. Baker highlighted some maintenance repair items that need to be addressed in the near future, including landscaping repairs at the DRS Field, fence removal at Bastyr Park, and bench rehab at multiple parks. He said that some landscaping work needs to be completed at the welcome signs. Baker went through a list of other park items that the Park Board would like to see accomplished in the future, including dog park amenities, outdoor fitness equipment, DRS Field lights, disc golf, historical markers, volleyball nets, basketball hoops, play equipment updates, park signs, and pickleball. Baker stated that the Park Board will need to determine a location for the recently acquired skate park equipment. Vlasak and the Council briefly discussed pad design. Baker said that a 9-hole disc golf course could be added at Kalina Park to bring another destination amenity to town. He said that the location is very scenic and seldom used. Rud provided an update on the Lonsdale Lions recycling bench program.

Parks & Trails Equipment

The Council reviewed a list of parks and trails equipment needs requested by Public Works, including a snow plow, salt/sand spreader seeder, and over spreader/top dresser. Baker said that the Public Works Director is in the process of ranking priorities.

Land

Baker noted that the City is still interested in the Rice County Highway Department Shop land/building, located next to Jaycee Park. Erickson said that Rice County is aware that Lonsdale is interested in purchasing the land when the Country is ready to sell. Baker said that consideration should also be given to a future sports complex and community center, which would help bring tournaments and visitors to town and drive traffic to local businesses.

Trail System

Baker said that Lonsdale has nearly 13 miles of trails in town, including paved, grass, and boardwalk. The Council reviewed the Trails Condition Map, created by the Public Works Director and City Engineer, showing Lonsdale's extensive trail system and the pavement condition rating of the various trail sections. Baker stated that it could take up to \$135,000/year for the next 10 years to repair the failing trail sections labeled as poor or fair. Erickson said that 700 ft. of new pavement was recently installed along Fig Street NE for approximately \$50,000. The Council reviewed pictures of existing trails in need of maintenance, and they discussed potential options for the Willow Creek Heights Trail that has been damaged due its location next to a wetland and burrowing rodents. Vlasak stated that the Willow Creek Trail pavement has been removed and is currently being replaced with asphalt millings. He talked about adding drain tile and a trench to help preserve the trail section. Furrer cautioned spending a lot of money on that section of trail. The group reviewed a map and list of potential new trail and crossing improvements. Baker stated that some of the improvements may get included in Rice County's 2023 Co Rd 4 Project. The Council reviewed pictures of the recently completed Birch Street NE Ped/Bike Lane Project. Kodada said that the new on-street pathway is being used a lot. Baker said that the project will help demonstrate a true need for a future permanent off-street solution to be located along the north side of the vacant Bastyr Point parcel. He said that if justified, a sidewalk could be added prior to development of the property. The Council and Vlasak discussed increased design standard specifications for future trails.

Recreation

Baker explained that Lonsdale currently partners with TCU Community Education to provide programming and summer recreation. Erickson provided a summary of opportunities that the summer rec kids get to experience. Due to its increasing popularity, Rud encouraged the Park Board to figure out a location pickleball courts. Furrer wondered if a partnership could be formed with the I.C. Church for use of the Crusader Center gym. Erickson said that in the past, TCU Community Education did try to create a time for pickleball at the elementary school gym, but no one attended. The Council and Staff discussed how community organizers and leaders are needed to step up to champion pickleball, volleyball, and softball leagues in town. Baker went through a list of future recreational needs, including a potential Lonsdale specific recreation director to manage recreation opportunities focused on Lonsdale.

Summary and Request

Baker said that the Park Board had discussed the following priorities for 2023: 1) disc golf, 2) trees/landscaping, 3) skate park, 4) trail maintenance, and 5) summer recreation and outdoor programming. Carpentier said that a swimming amenity and trail maintenance were huge priorities for the community. The Council agreed that the trail system is heavily used and should be a priority. Baker noted that the Public Works Director is in the process of prioritizing maintenance and equipment needs.

After considering various funding options, the Council agreed and directed City Staff to investigate the impact of a \$750,000 bond, where at least \$500,000 or more was dedicated to trail maintenance and the remaining amount for equipment and other capital improvements.

Economic Development Authority (EDA)

Erickson went through the revenues and expenditures for the EDA. He said that the EDA is requesting \$40,000 for marketing, loans, professional services, legal, and BR&E initiatives. Furrer recommended funding the EDA at \$40,000 in 2023. Kodada asked where the land sale revenue for the Willow Creek Commons parcel goes to. Erickson said that money will be used offset the Police Department facility debt. The Council agreed to honor the EDA's funding request.

City Council

Erickson reviewed City Council wages. Erickson noted that money is budgeted for all the Council members to attend the annual Chamber dinner. He asked if any Council members wanted to attend the annual LMC Conference. No one accepted the invitation. Erickson said that the LMC Conference is expensive, but valuable.

Administration

Erickson summarized revenues and expenses in the Administration Department. He said that accounting software, in the amount of \$83,821 is being budgeted for with ARPA funds. He stated that the water and sewer funds will also fund a portion of the software. Rud said that new windows and parking lot improvements have been talked about for many years, and should be added to the 2023 Budget. Furrer and Webb asked about the status of the old water meter reader at City Hall. Vlasak said that Public Works is trying to use designated funds to replace as many MXUs as possible, prior to getting a new meter reader.

Police

Schmitz went through the Police Department’s revenue and expense line items. He said that fuel costs have increased to around \$1,500/month. Schmitz explained that the FBI will be requiring that current radios will need to be replaced with encryption capabilities within the next 5-7 years. Erickson said that the Police Department’s budget is going up 12.5% and the associated levy is going up 20%. He noted that 60% of the Police Department’s Budget goes to wages. Schmitz provided a brief update on the new facility, and he said that he is working on scheduling an open house. The Council discussed selling the current building and using the proceeds to offset the new facility’s debt. Schmitz discussed his plan for moving over to the new facility on August 3rd.

Human Resources

Erickson briefly talked about wages and the 40-year high inflation. He said that a 7% and 4.5% wage increase had previously been discussed by the Council.

Health Insurance

Erickson said that United Health Care recently bought Preferred Once. The Council reviewed a comparison of the two insurance carrier’s plans. Erickson said that AT Group will be coming to City Hall soon to meet with City Staff. Furrer stated that the annual insurance broker meeting has been helpful to City Staff in the past.

American Rescue Plan Act

The Council reviewed the current balance for Lonsdale designated ARPA funds. Kodada asked about recent business applications for the funds. Erickson explained that the Council decided that no more funding would be provided to businesses and residents in response to financial hardship due to COVID.

Short/Long Term Goals

The Council briefly reviewed the short and long terms goals for each City Department. Webb stated that the Library Board has not yet received a proposed 2023 Library Budget from the Director to review. Rud stated that the Council is open to a bonding package that considers the needs of all departments.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. None

11. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. None

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Kodada and seconded by Furrer to adjourn the meeting. Vote for: Webb, Kodada, Rud and Furrer. Vote against: None. Abstained: None. Vote: 4-0. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joel A. Erickson, City Administrator