

**MINUTES
CITY OF LONSDALE
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 26, 2021**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rud called a meeting of the Lonsdale City Council to order in the Lonsdale City Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Steve Cherney, Kevin Kodada, Tim Rud, Cindy Furrer and Scott Pelava

Members Absent: None

City Staff Present: City Administrator Joel Erickson, City Planner Benjamin Baker, and Public Works Director Russ Vlasak

Park Board Present: Micki Ziskovsky, Lori Carpentier, and Jeanette Utecht

Council Member Cherney arrived at the meeting around 6:12 pm and sat in the audience. At 6:44 pm Cherney proceeded to the front Council Chambers table to participate in discussion.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Rud asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the Agenda. A motion was made by Pelava and seconded by Furrer to approve the agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote for: Kodada, Rud, Furrer and Pelava. 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

None

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discuss the City's 2022 Annual Budget

Erickson stated that at previous 2022 Budget Meetings, the Council directed Staff to set the tax levy at \$2.4 million, which results in a 58.078 tax rate, a 3.9% increase over the 2021 tax rate. Erickson said that revenue would increase by \$203,750. He noted that he assumed a 5% increase in property values, and the annual tax increase could range between \$84.68 – \$263.65. Erickson stated that the main focus of the meeting is parks and streets. Baker invited Layne Wilbright to come up to the podium.

Community Recreation/Education

Layne Wilbright, TCU Community Education Director, provided a 15-minute update on Tri-City United Community Recreation and Education. Wilbright provided a detailed report on activities that TCU Community Ed is involved with, including Lonsdale's summer recreation program, and youth soccer. He said that 215 kids played in the district wide soccer program with Lonsdale hosting five U4-U8 teams and practices for some of the older kids. Wilbright said that 25-30 kids have been participating in the themed summer recreation program, which runs Monday-Thursday for 6-weeks. He said that summer recreation participants go on field trips, frequent the Montgomery pool, create art, and experience nature. Wilbright also talked about partnerships with the Lonsdale Library, Kids Zone, and Lonsdale's child care needs. Wilbright stated that TCU's annual new teacher tour will be coming soon to Lonsdale. He said that long-time Community Ed employee Mary Simon will be retiring and replaced in-house by Jesse Siebsen.

Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Recreation

Rud introduced and thanked Park Board Members Ziskovsky, Carpentier, Ryan, and Utecht for their volunteerism, vision, and service to the community. Rud specifically thanked Carpentier for her planting the beautiful flowers downtown and at the welcome signs.

Parks

Baker went through a 24-slide presentation detailing maintenance items along with completed, on-going, and future projects/ideas for parks, trails, parkland, and recreation. He talked about the progress of the Trcka Park Project, including Phase I (soccer fields), Phase II (ice rink and park building), and Phase III (playground equipment). Baker said that sometime in the future, funds should be considered for new play equipment area on the north side of Trcka Park as part of Phase III. Baker said that in the distant future, the City should also consider adding a water amenity, such as: a splash/spray pad, an indoor swimming pool/water park, an outdoor swimming pool/water park, or create a natural-like swimming beach. Baker went through a list of currently paved and unpaved park parking lots. He said that the City should lead by example and pave any future park parking lots, and he encouraged the Council to think about paving its existing gravel lots. The Council discussed parking lot pavement at Trendera Mem. Park and Jaycee Park. They also talked about use of the DRS Field. Baker highlighted some maintenance repair items that need to be addressed in the near future, including new targets for the archery range. He thanked Kodada & Sons Masonry and the Public Works Department for their help on the Lions Park improvements. 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, skate park obstacles, volleyball nets, basketball hoops, play equipment updates, and park signs.

Parks & Trails Equipment

Vlasak said that Public Works will be getting a new 8 ft. wide John Deere tractor that fits on the trails. He said that they have been looking at potential parks and trails equipment, including a snow plow attachment, salt/sand spreader, seeder, aerator, and over-spreader/top dresser to help maintain the trails and sports fields. He said that priority will be given to equipment that can help improving field conditions and grass areas within the parks.

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 well 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. Rud said that a portion of the new Police Department and City Complex land in Willow Creek Commons could potentially be designated as future community center land. Furrer noted that a partnership could be formed with the I.C. Church for use of the Crusader Center gym.

Trail System

Baker said that Lonsdale has nearly 11 miles of trails in town, including paved, grass, and boardwalk. The Council reviewed an updated 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 take care of the failing trail sections labeled as poor or fair. 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. Furrer cautioned throwing good money after bad for the Willow Creek Heights Trail. The Council reviewed another trails map that showed potential new trail and crossing enhancements. Baker stated that the Park Board would like to finish three trail connections on the east side of town and improve crossings along both Co Rd 4 and TH 19. The Council reviewed the list of proposed future trail and crossing improvements.

Recreation

Baker stated that Wilbright provided an update on community education/recreation earlier in the meeting. Baker said that as the City grows, funding should be considered for: 1) expanding the Summer Rec Program, 2) purchasing equipment, 3) adding new programming, 4) creating a Lonsdale focused Recreation Director position, 5) promoting both adult and youth sport leagues/tournaments, and 6) looking into a future community/senior center.

Summary

Baker noted that the Park Board is aware of the tight budget, and he highlighted the funding priorities for 2022, including: 1) archery targets, 2) landscaping/trees, 3) dog waste stations, 4) landscaping maintenance work, 5) trail maintenance, and 6) summer recreation programming.

Park Board Members Zikovsky, Carpeniter, and Utecht all agreed that more needs to be done for the pre-teen and teen age groups in town. Ziskovsky recommended getting cameras installed at the parks to help reduce vandalism. Ziskovsky said that the trail system is heavily used, and she said that maintenance of the walkways should be a top priority. She also said that disc golf and pickle-ball should be considered. Carpentier suggested that the Council consider funding outdoor fitness equipment and a water amenity, similar to the Shades of Sherwood Campground natural swimming pond.

Rud said that the Council may consider not pursuing a street reconstruction project for 1-2 years to address critical parks/trail priorities and Public Works items. He also suggested partnering with other entities to accomplish some of these larger goals. Baker stated that Lonsdale’s Bond Counsel did run a 10-year parks improvement bond scenario, which could help address expensive items such as trail maintenance and the DRS Field lights for \$50,000 - \$100,000/year.

Rud suggested hosting a similar joint meeting with the Planning Commission to discuss future development.

Streets

Vlasak used the remaining meeting time to go through a 12-page slide presentation concerning street maintenance. He addressed: 1) potential edge mill and overall projects - \$321,000.00; 2) crack filling - \$8,500.00; routine maintenance; and, seal coating - \$78,000. The Council reviewed the associated numbers and maps, while Vlasak provided more details on the proposed street maintenance items. Vlasak said that the plan for 2022, would be to complete: 1) the Industrial Drive SE Mill & Overlay - \$135,700; 2) crack filling -\$8,500; and 3) routine maintenance - \$37,300. He also provided budget numbers for projects in 2023, 2024, and 2025. Kodada encouraged Public Works to prioritize the items to fit within the 2022 budget.

Rud thanked everyone for the good discussion, and he said that future discussion can be had a future budget meetings.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

None

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Kodada and seconded by Pelava to adjourn the meeting. Vote for: Cherney, Kodada, Rud, Furrer and Pelava. Roll Call Vote against: None. Abstained: None. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joel A. Erickson, City Administrator