

**MINUTES OF LAYTON CITY
COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING
WORK MEETING**

APRIL 18, 2022; 8:07 A.M.

**MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS
PRESENT:**

MAYOR JOY PETRO, ZACH BLOXHAM, CLINT MORRIS, TYSON ROBERTS, BETTINA SMITH EDMONDSON, AND DAVE THOMAS

STAFF PRESENT:

ALEX JENSEN, GARY CRANE, TRACY PROBERT, TERRY COBURN, PAUL APPLONIE, WES ADAMS, STEPHEN JACKSON, STACY MAJEWSKI, DAVID PRICE, JOELLEN GRANDY, AND KIM READ

The meeting was held in the Council Conference Room of the Layton City Center.

Mayor Petro opened the meeting and turned the time over to Staff.

UPDATE – HARMONY PARK LANDSCAPING

Alex Jensen, City Manager, reminded the Council it had requested Staff identify costs for alternative landscaping options and announced Staff was prepared to report on those cost findings. He indicated the completed analysis had been a worthwhile process.

JoEllen Grandy, Parks Planner, shared a visual illustration of the original landscaping plan, used during the bid process, which identified the areas proposed to be landscaped with seed and sod. She mentioned the corresponding proposed costs and reviewed the anticipated water usage; during the initial establishment period and annually in perpetuity.

She then reviewed Option 1 – turf grass (all sod) installation, of water wise grass, for the entire park and reviewed the additional costs, as well as the amount of water needed for both the establishment period and annually. She also presented Option 2, directed by the Council from a previous budget discussion from Thursday, April 7, 2022, to explore converting the perimeter to drip irrigation and plantings with mulch. She reviewed proposed cost estimates for the following: converting the existing sprinkler system to drip, weed barrier, rock mulch, additional shrubs and perennials for planting. She also reviewed estimated water usage for both the establishment period and annual watering. She shared a graph which illustrated the cost differences between the options and the pros and cons associated with each, and reviewed those results.

David Price, Parks and Recreation Director, pointed out in an effort to conserve water, the City had implemented a graveled edge, similar to what the Council was considering, in conjunction with Sand Ridge Park, approximately 18 years ago, and explained the challenge in keeping the gravel as an attractive amenity. He believed there were other water saving options, similar to what had been implemented at Grey Hawk Park, with the installation of a taller, water wise grass for the perimeter of the park. He explained the benefits of a water wise grass planting compared to the use of rock mulch or gravel and suggested it should be considered. A discussion followed regarding the information provided by Staff, the aesthetics of Sand Ridge Park, and options for Harmony Place Park.

Mr. Jensen pointed out the economics associated with the options and expressed his opinion there were more efficient ways for water conservation than what was proposed with option 2. Mr. Price suggested placement of educational and informational signage, similar to what is in place at the Vance Drive

Trailhead, justifying the use of the taller grass for the park perimeter.

Mr. Price shared an illustration of a park with the taller, water wise grass and explained although it reflected a tall native grass, it looked nice when mowed and a discussion specific to landscaping options for the park perimeter and xeriscape for the parking island continued.

Mr. Jensen requested the Council clarify direction for Staff to proceed and the discussion continued. The Council directed Staff to move forward with installing sod turf grass for the park interior with the inclusion of the taller water wise sod around the perimeter of the park. The Council continued to discuss and express opinions specific to the area between the parking lot and sidewalk near the park entrances. The discussion concluded with the Council expressing its support with Staff's recommendation for planting of water wise sod in the parking island with the inclusion of educational signage for the public.

Gary Crane, City Attorney, left the meeting at 8:46 a.m.

DISCUSSION – WATER RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION MEASURES

Stephen Jackson, City Engineer, shared a visual presentation with the Council, regarding the water report from Weber Basin Water Conservancy District and reviewed it with the Council. Information in the report indicated the state was in a severe drought and the water situation for the summer would be dismal; and he reviewed the restrictions being implemented by the District. He pointed out water used this year would be water committed for next year's drinking water contracts and could impact the water supply for next year. He reviewed the consequences associated with violating the restrictions and informed the Council of enforcement techniques.

Mr. Jackson shared water use data specific to the City during the previous four years and reviewed it with the Council. He pointed out the City had pumped a lot of water from its wells last year. He expressed concern about possible cross connections by residents attempting to implement a dual outdoor watering system. A discussion followed regarding the proposed restrictions and subsequent penalties associated with violations. Tracy Probert, Finance Director, suggested providing information to residents with the City's utility bill could be beneficial. He also suggested adjusting the rate tiers to encourage water conservation and the discussion continued. Mr. Probert mentioned some cities had implemented drought rates in conjunction with adopting new rates based on conclusions from a completed water study. Mr. Jackson added Weber Basin had a regional drought contingency plan the City could follow, which it implemented the year following the City's adoption of its Water Master Plan.

Councilmember Bloxham expressed his opinion the City's water rate structure had contributed to the City weathering the drought so well thus far. Councilmember Roberts also suggested providing a link to the Department of Water Resources from the City's website, where residents can report water use violations.

Mr. Jensen pointed out the City's Water Master Plan had included a conservation analysis and expressed his opinion the City was in a good position to responsibly navigate the drought and suggested future decisions required of the Council be data driven. He suggested the Council should be prepared for the pushback it could receive from residents once enforcement was implemented. A discussion followed and the Council shared suggestions with what should be implemented to encourage water users to conserve water.

Mr. Probert shared information and statistics with the Council regarding water usage and water revenue. He reminded the Council of projected revenue and expenditures to the Water Fund and suggested the City would need to adjust its water rates pointing out the importance of the Water Fund being self-supporting. He also referenced projected costs for identified water projects proposed to be completed in future years.

Mr. Probert reviewed culinary water consumption rates both before and after previous rate increases and a discussion followed specific to rate increases. He reminded the Council the last proposed 10% rate

increase hadn't been approved by the City Council during the Pandemic in 2020. Terry Coburn, Public Works Director, pointed out due to foresight of City Engineers, the City had refurbished some of its deep wells which proved to be beneficial last year.

Mr. Jensen believed there was consensus among the Council to direct Staff to consider an increase in the rate structure to encourage conservation. He continued Staff would take data from the previous rate increases and complete an analysis on what the high-end user rates should be, while at the same time consider an increase in the base rates to generate revenue, coupled with the projects schedule, and be prepared to make a recommendation on rates, as well as the timing of projects. The discussion continued and the Council requested Staff provide scenarios without a rate increase for the first two tiers, and increasing the rate for tiers three and four.

Mr. Jensen reminded the Council the Tentative Budget would be adopted during the meeting on Thursday, May 5, 2022 and suggested an additional budget meeting could take place on Thursday, May 19, 2022 for further discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Kimberly S Read, City Recorder