

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor Evans called the Work Session of the Flagstaff City Council held October 27, 2020, to order at 3:01 p.m.

NOTICE OF OPTION TO RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the City Council and to the general public that, at this work session, the City Council may vote to go into executive session, which will not be open to the public, for legal advice and discussion with the City's attorneys for legal advice on any item listed on the following agenda, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Mission Statement

The Council and attendees recited the pledge of allegiance and Councilmember McCarthy read the Mission Statement of the City of Flagstaff.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Flagstaff is to protect and enhance the quality of life for all.

3. Roll Call

NOTE: One or more Councilmembers may be in attendance through other technological means.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

MAYOR EVANS
VICE MAYOR SHIMONI
COUNCILMEMBER ASLAN
COUNCILMEMBER MCCARTHY
COUNCILMEMBER ODEGAARD
COUNCILMEMBER SALAS
COUNCILMEMBER WHELAN

Others present: City Manager Greg Clifton; City Attorney Sterling Solomon.

4. Public Participation

Public Participation enables the public to address the council about items that are not on the prepared agenda. Public Participation appears on the agenda twice, at the beginning and at the end of the work session. You may speak at one or the other, but not both. Anyone wishing to comment at the meeting is asked to fill out a speaker card and submit it to the recording clerk. When the item comes up on the agenda, your name will be called. You may address the Council up to three times throughout the meeting, including comments made during Public Participation. Please limit your remarks to three minutes per item to allow everyone to have an opportunity to speak. At the discretion of the Chair, ten or

more persons present at the meeting and wishing to speak may appoint a representative who may have no more than fifteen minutes to speak.

City Engineer Rick Barrett addressed Mayor and Council to announce that Bret Petersen had achieved his Executive Master of Public Administration from Arizona State University.

Susan Walter addressed Mayor and Council regarding relief for local Flagstaff venues due to COVID-19.

Water Resources Manager Erin Young updated Mayor and Council on the community stakeholder committee on reclaimed water.

5. Review of Draft Agenda for the November 3, 2020 City Council Meeting

Citizens wishing to speak on agenda items not specifically called out by the City Council may submit a speaker card for their items of interest to the recording clerk.

Councilmember Aslan pointed out that next Tuesday is election day and encouraged Council to be efficient with the agenda next week. Mayor Evans echoed that sentiment.

6. Public Works - Snow Operations Presentation and Discussion

Streets Section Director Scott Overton and Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Amy Hagin addressed Mayor and Council regarding the snow operations for the 2020-2021 winter season. He provided a report on winter storm readiness for streets, parks, post storm operations, and community expectations and the parking ordinance.

Slides included:

- Presentation Objectives
- Storm Preparations: Winter Storm Event
- Streets Section
- Streets Personnel Preparations
- Snow Operations -- Streets
- Parks Section -- Readiness
- Parks Fleet and Equipment
- Snow Operations -- Parks
- Snow Operations -- Parks (Map)
- Post Storm Operations
- Public Operations Assistance
- Questions

Councilmember Odegaard asked Ms. Hagin about the courtesy berm removal and asked her to speak about the program. Ms. Hagin explained the application process and the three-year term duration. They coordinate the program with the Streets department.

Councilmember Whelan asked Mr. Overton to speak about the considerations of overtime for his staff. Mr. Overton explained how the department prioritizes cleanup and how they allocate overtime and during a snow event.

Vice Mayor Shimoni asked about bicycle lanes during winter events. Mr. Overton spoke about the sweeping efforts that are run in between storms and post storms for bicycle lanes to be used. Some of the most difficult areas to sweep are the residential streets due to time constraints. Vice Mayor Shimoni also asked about the COVID-19 impact on the roads and how tele-commuting might influence the winter cleaning. Mr. Overton stated that the first two months of the pandemic had a great decrease in traffic and that he expects some of the past pressures to be lessened, especially since schools might go virtual on snow days.

Councilmember Whelan stated she wanted to remind the public that mass transit and how that reduces

traffic congestion during storm events as well.

7. Discussion of options for the expiring Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) contract

Public Works Director Andy Bertelsen introduced Sustainability Specialist Dylan Lenzen and Solid Waste Section Director Todd Hanson to speak about the Materials Recovery Facility and recycling. The consultants who worked on the study were available for questions. The presentation included the following slides:

- Outline
- Existing MRF Contract
- Limitations and Challenges
- Connection to Rethink Waste Plan
- Option 1
- Option 2
- Option 3
- Option 4
- Option 5
- Policy Issues and Other Considerations
- Future Options
- Discussion and Direction of options for staff to pursue

Councilmember McCarthy questioned the feasibility of transporting recyclables to Phoenix, expressing doubt about the need for just one truck per day. He supported Option 2, which was also backed by Vice Mayor Shimoni, Councilmembers Salas and Odegaard. Councilmember Odegaard emphasized addressing the fee structure and rejected Option 5. Councilmember Whelan sought clarification about the current system, with Mr. Hanson explaining that recyclables are being sent to Phoenix due to a lack of local markets.

Councilmember Aslan showed interest in both Options 2 and 3, questioning why outsourcing (Option 3) was rated higher than running a local Material Recovery Facility (MRF), which would require significant investment and pose risks. He ultimately supported Option 2.

Mayor Evans suggested using rail for recycling transport, but studies indicated trucking remains more cost-effective and environmentally friendly. Councilmember Whelan raised concerns about potential residential rate hikes, requesting more discussion on the matter.

In the end, the Council reached a consensus to proceed with Option 2, directing staff to refine the process and return with more details. The discussions focused on cost, logistics, environmental impact, and the need for public education about recycling changes.

8. Climate Emergency Declaration Update

Sustainability Manager Nicole Antonopoulos and Climate Analyst Ramon "DC" Alatorre presented to Mayor and Council an update on the Climate Emergency Declaration and the Climate Action and Adaption Plan (CAAP).

Slides included:

- Discussion
- The Climate Emergency Declaration
- Carbon Neutrality
- The Path to Carbon Neutrality
- Flagstaff's Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Mobilization Efforts
- Since the Climate Emergency Declaration
- Technical Analysis
- Preliminary Emission Reduction Targets Needed to achieve Carbon Neutrality
- Community Engagement
- CAAP Steering Committee

- Plan for Action
- We continue to work on CAAP actions and strategies...

Joey Bono addressed Mayor and Council about municipal fleet operations.

Councilmember Aslan encouraged public participation in the survey, discussing topics like carbon offsets, transportation emissions, and rebate programs. He was interested in donation initiatives but wanted more ideas explored. Ms. Antonopoulos provided updates on fee-based programs and findings related to new residential construction and natural gas.

Councilmember Odegaard inquired about fleet conversion in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), and Ms. Antonopoulos confirmed that staff is considering accelerating fleet conversion with funding mechanisms under review.

Vice Mayor Shimoni expressed enthusiasm for electric vehicles, solar energy, and plans to improve bicycle safety through a transportation masterplan and capital improvements. He also mentioned Proposition 419, which will fund sidewalk enhancements.

Councilmember Whelan requested updates on Red Gap Ranch, with Ms. Antonopoulos confirming that a renewable energy project, primarily solar, is planned there.

Councilmember Aslan also asked about carbon-reducing construction materials, and Ms. Antonopoulos noted the need for further exploration through a Council Communication Request (CCR).

Amanda Ormond addressed Mayor and Council with comments on electricity and the public transportation plan.

Mayor Evans stressed the importance of equitable survey representation, especially for those without internet access. Vice Mayor Shimoni supported this concern, and staff shared ongoing efforts to engage vulnerable communities.

Council took a break from 5:40 p.m. through 5:50 p.m.

9. JW Powell Specific Plan Study - Project Update

Engineering Project Manager David Pedersen, Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Manager Sara Dechter, and Julie Leid from Peak Engineering gave a presentation to Mayor and Council. Slides included:

- Context Map
- JWP Specific Plan Study
- Process
- Key Stakeholders
- Future Growth Illustration
- Future Growth Illustration with Image
- Traffic Engineering & Planning
 - Flagstaff Neighborhood Examples
- J.W. Powell LU Framework Illustrations
 - J.W. Powell Land Use Framework sketches
- JWP Land Use Framework Illustrations Continued
- Density & Intensity
- Density & Intensity by District
- J.W. Powell Specific Plan Study: Next Steps

Councilmember Aslan asked if the State Trust Parcel was sold last week. Ms. Leid stated that it was sold on Thursday. Ms. Leid stated that the only bidder was Symmetry Development. Councilmember Aslan asked what impact that sale would have on the illustrations presented. Ms. Leid stated that she is not aware of what the developers plans are for development in the area. Ms. Dechter stated that the purpose of the exercise was not to look at the developments in detail since it is a test of the Regional

Plan

Councilmember Whelan stated that she did not understand why developments were not included in the Phase One analysis. Ms. Dechter gave context on why the changes were not reflected and how many changes could occur. Staff will have conversations with property owners and developers to influence the decisions in Phase Two.

Councilmember Aslan stated that he is excited about the realignment of the Arizona Trail in that area. He expressed his desire to maintain as much forest as possible in the City, but that the growth in this area could be an asset.

Vice Mayor Shimoni spoke about density and the relationship of the area to the rest of the City. He stated that it is a great opportunity to do it right the first time and he likes the direction the plan is going in. He asked about parks, fields, and court access and if it will be integrated into the plans. Ms. Leid stated that they will be incorporated at a later phase.

Councilmember Whelan asked where the attainable workforce housing is and how does this plan relate to this. Ms. Dechter stated that some of the parcels have already been dedicated to the City for affordable housing. She added that the infrastructure in the area is very expensive.

Councilmember McCarthy added that he is concerned that the City will put a lot of money into infrastructure in a very low-density area.

Mayor Evans stated that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the City to have this much acreage and to consider the possibilities of it. She stated that Council needs to evaluate the best use of the area and to analyze and apply the Regional Plan to the area. There is no "not in my backyard" issue in the area. She added that the last ECoNA study stated that the City has a deficit of 6,000 housing units. This area could add about 7,000 housing units. She also spoke about the benefits of a traditional neighborhood layout.

Mayor Evans expressed a desire to meet with the owners and developers to discuss maximizing their investments, which could help with the housing situation, possibly by changing zoning to create more housing in smaller areas. Vice Mayor Shimoni inquired if this would be part of the community meetings on rezoning, and Mayor Evans confirmed it would be included. She emphasized the importance of proactively reaching out to property owners to assess whether the current zoning meets their needs and to collaborate on finding a better solution.

Mr. Pederson stated that staff is planning to meet with the larger property owners, and then the small parcel owners. They plan to discuss what the vision is for these properties.

10. Rio de Flag Flood Control Project Update

Capital Improvements Project Manager Trevor Henry, Real Estate Manager Bryce Doty, and Project Manager Christine Cameron gave an update on the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project.

- Project Update
- USACE
- Project Design
- Real Estate
- BNSF Railway
- Public Involvement
- Pictures

Mr. Henry introduced a new web-based meeting application, showcasing a virtual open house to the Mayor and Council. Vice Mayor Shimoni praised the virtual town hall, inquired about the creator, and cost, with Mr. Henry noting that Norris Design, a subconsultant, developed it, and the project funds cover the cost.

Councilmember Whelan thanked staff for the presentation and asked if service roads would be open to

the public. Mr. Henry clarified they would not be, but access roads for open channels will be available. She also asked about differences between the Clay Wash and Upper Reach, with Henry explaining that staff is working on access road acquisition. She expressed appreciation for the staff's collaboration on the project.

Councilmember Odegaard shared that he had spoken with community members in the upper reach about wall height concerns, and the meeting helped ease their worries.

Vice Mayor Shimoni raised concerns about the lower reach not being visually appealing and asked about ways to improve its appearance. City Manager Clifton reminded everyone that the project's primary focus is flood management, meaning all areas must remain practical. Ms. Cameron noted that the lower reach and Clay Wash areas are next to private property.

Mayor Evans thanked staff and highlighted her appreciation of the video. She also pointed out concerns about the aesthetic differences between the upper and lower reach areas, emphasizing that the City should aim for better design in the lower reach and Clay Avenue areas.

Council took a break from 8:07 p.m. through 8:17 p.m.

11. Discussion about changing the zoning code to allow required commercial areas of mixed-use developments that are vacant to be converted to dwelling units in exchange for permanent, affordable housing

Zoning Code Manager Daniel Symer gave a presentation to Mayor and Council about changing the zoning code in order to receive direction from Council.

Slides included:

- Council Discussion
- Background
- Considerations
- Council Discussion for the analysis

Tad Moore and Devonnah McLaughlin submitted written comments in support of advancing the matter to a future agenda for action.

The Council discussed a proposal to change zoning to convert unoccupied retail space into residential units. Councilmember Whelan supported the idea, citing the lack of commercial interest in retail spaces, especially during the recession. She emphasized the need for livable areas instead. However, Councilmember McCarthy expressed concerns about increasing car dependency and the long-term impacts, suggesting that parking issues might be contributing to vacant commercial spaces and recommending a broader discussion.

Vice Mayor Shimoni inquired about the feasibility of creating loft-style residential units with higher ceilings and whether they could be made affordable at 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). Mr. Symer raised concerns about the complexity of the issue, zoning code limitations, and parking shortages for additional units.

Council members discussed the challenges of changing zoning for specific parcels. While Councilmember Whelan proposed giving property owners more control, Mr. Symer expressed legal concerns. Whelan pushed for a more straightforward approach, asking for further discussion.

Councilmember Aslan was uncertain about moving forward with the proposal, preferring a "piecemeal" approach rather than an all-encompassing change. Councilmember Odegaard was opposed, while Councilmember Salas was in favor of moving the item forward.

Mr. Symer emphasized the importance of proceeding with caution and being well-informed. Mayor Evans, who had previously opposed the proposal, stated that she had sent questions to Legal about its legality and would request an executive session if the matter advanced. Aslan expressed hesitation

and leaned toward not supporting the future discussion suggesting it was premature to give up on these spaces as commercial properties. Vice Mayor Shimoni showed interest in exploring an opt-in approach.

There was not Council majority to move forward with this topic for further discussion.

12. Review of current process for all Reclaimed Water agreements and their renewal:

Regulatory Compliance Section Manager Steve Camp presented to Mayor and Council to seek direction from Council for possible revision to City Code regarding approval of all reclaimed water agreements.

Slides included:

- Discussion Highlights
- Reclaim Water History
- Reclaim Water Permit
- Why End User Agreements?
- Additional City Stipulations
- Summary of Reclaim Agreements
- Questions

Chris Jocks and Dorothy Gishie submitted written comments in support of changing the process.

JR Murray submitted a written comment in support of keeping the process as it currently is.

City Attorney Sterling Solomon clarified that all contracts are reviewed by the City Attorney and attested by the City Clerk.

Councilmember Whelan spoke about why she thinks it is imperative that Council revokes the authority for reclaimed water from the Water Services Director and that the contracts are agenized and discussed. She stated that she believes that the conversation has changed a lot since 2011 and that the drought has worsened since then. She stated that Council needs to have the discussions regarding the contracts.

Councilmember McCarthy agreed with Councilmember Whelan and added that it would be best if there was a formal, underlying policy on how to treat the contracts. He stated that the decisions should be made by Council rather than staff and that it would be a good stop-gap matter. He added that the change would not undo any existing contracts the City has.

Vice Mayor Shimoni asked about nitrogen mitigation in A+ water. He asked if there are concerns about nitrogen in the A+ water. Mr. Camp explained the regulatory requirements. City Attorney Solomon added that the question tonight is about the process and not the regulatory standards. Vice Mayor Shimoni stated that he is in favor of a water management policy. He would like to see the water management policy first since there are no reclaimed water applicants at this time. Vice Mayor Shimoni stated that he is a no at this time.

Councilmember Aslan would like for Council to take the authority back but that there needs to be a water policy in place first. He asked what the most expedient way is to get the water policy in place.

Councilmember Odegaard stated that he is a no on moving this forward without the policy.

Councilmember Salas stated that Council is a policy making authority. She added that this is moving into the administrative side of the decision making and she would like to see a policy perhaps in the reclaimed water master plan, however, she would like to see a reclaimed water policy first.

Councilmember Whelan reminded Council that it was a previous Council that set policy that the Director of Water Services make this decision. She requested that the decision to enter into contracts or renew contracts come to Council for final approval. She feels the decisions are taking too long.

Councilmember Aslan stated that there is clear direction to create a new water policy to honor the desire of the majority of Council.

City Manager Clifton stated that there is a consensus of Council to address the reclaimed water policy.

13. Public Participation

None.

14. Informational Items To/From Mayor, Council, and City Manager; future agenda item requests

Councilmember Odegaard suggested adding legislation to help entertainment venues through the pandemic to the federal lobbying list, referencing the Orpheum.

Councilmember Salas proposed adding federal lobbying for pandemic relief, the CARES Act, and the "Save Our Stages" initiative for local venues.

Councilmember Whelan advocated for lobbying on behalf of individuals applying for HUD assistance and using Head Start, specifically asking to increase federal poverty levels as rising minimum wages could limit access to services.

Vice Mayor Shimoni mentioned the upcoming Tequila Sunrise event, emphasizing the importance of communicating health concerns to mitigate COVID risks. He also expressed concern about homecoming events being virtual and recognized the County and NAU Faculty Senate for a successful town hall. He highlighted the challenges facing the unsheltered population as the weather turns colder and the need for community safety. He also looked forward to the courthouse walkthrough and upcoming efforts to divert mental health calls, with Terros dispatching as a first step. He thanked City staff for their hard work on the Rio de Flag project.

Councilmember McCarthy made a FAIR request to formulate a policy on the appropriate uses for City-generated reclaimed water. City Manager Clifton noted that a FAIR request may not be necessary as the issue had already been discussed previously.

Mayor Evans confirmed that the Council had already directed staff to write letters to the federal delegation and the governor for more relief for local businesses and art venues, making it a legislative priority.

15. Adjournment

The Work Session of the Flagstaff City Council held October 27, 2020, adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK