

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor Deasy called the Special Work Session held October 26, 2021, to order at 3:03 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

MISSION STATEMENT

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

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Paul Deasy, Mayor
Becky Daggett, Vice Mayor
Austin Aslan, Councilmember
Jim McCarthy, Councilmember
Regina Salas, Councilmember
Adam Shimoni, Councilmember
Miranda Sweet, Councilmember

Staff 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.

Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Events Director Rebecca Sayers introduced Haley Wilstead who spoke about the Hall-o-Week Events.

5. Review of Draft Agenda for the November 2, 2021 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.

None

6. Proclamation: International Dark Sky City Month

Mayor Deasy read and presented the proclamation.

7. Public Works - Snow Operations Presentation and Discussion

Public Works Director Scott Overton, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Amy Hagin, and Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Events Division Director Rebecca Sayers provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

OBJECTIVES

STORM PREPARATIONS

STREETS FLEET AND EQUIPMENT

STREETS PERSONNEL AND PREPARATIONS

Councilmember Shimoni inquired whether on-call staff receive premium pay. Mr. Overton responded that they are paid a higher hourly rate than full-time staff but are not eligible for benefits.

Councilmember Shimoni also asked about staffing levels, and Mr. Overton noted the department is currently operating at about one-third below normal staffing.

SNOW OPERATIONS

PARKS SECTION

PARKS FLEET AND EQUIPMENT

SNOW OPERATIONS

Vice Mayor Daggett asked about the criteria for berm removal and how residents can request the service. Ms. Hagin explained that the list is intended for individuals who are disabled or unable to clear berms themselves. The form is being updated, and residents can call the Aquaplex front desk at 928-213-2300 to be added.

SNOW OPERATIONS FOR OUR PARKS SECTION

SNOW OPERATIONS

SEPARATED BIKE LANE PILOT

Councilmember Shimoni asked about the challenges of maintaining the separated bike lane pilot project as a Level 1 priority. Mr. Overton explained that Butler Avenue is a Level 1 street, and during multi-day events, some modifications may be needed, potentially causing delays. Councilmember Shimoni expressed concern that cars are being prioritized over bikes and pedestrians. Mr. Overton responded that the purpose of the pilot is to learn how to better balance the entire transportation network for all modes of travel.

POST STORM OPERATIONS

PUBLIC OPERATIONS ASSISTANCE

Vice Mayor Daggett asked about sidewalk shoveling and how the public can address impassable areas. Mr. Overton explained that property owners are responsible for keeping sidewalks clear, though ADOT corridors pose challenges due to different plowing methods. He noted enforcement has improved over time.

Mayor Deasy inquired where snow from downtown is hauled; Mr. Overton said it is taken to a stormwater area near the airport and another site near Wildcat Hill on the east side.

Councilmember Shimoni asked about snow operations, including plowing, cindering, and winter outreach for cyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Overton explained that primary routes are fully cleared, with cinders used selectively, while secondary routes are plowed after 4 inches, except in icy conditions. Councilmember Shimoni requested a work session on plowing policy and asked about public reporting, staff noted around 250 calls and hundreds of emails per storm. Mr. Clifton said Flagstaff's approach is similar to Colorado's, where bike lanes are also rarely prioritized in winter.

8. Discussion Regarding Possible Revisions to City Council Rules of Procedure and Consideration of Un-Suspension of the Rules

City Clerk Stacy Saltzburg provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

HISTORY
CURRENT SUSPENSION OF RULES
SEEKING DIRECTION

Councilmembers broadly supported continuing with a 3:00 p.m. start time for meetings. Councilmembers Aslan, McCarthy, Shimoni, Sweet, and Vice Mayor Daggett expressed openness or support for the earlier start, with suggestions for short breaks and consistent timing. Councilmember McCarthy and Councilmember Salas suggested that public participation be moved to later in the meeting to increase accessibility. Council generally agreed with this and with the understanding it could be revisited if needed.

Councilmember McCarthy proposed amending the Rules of Procedure to assign the Vice Mayor role to the Councilmember who received the most votes in the previous election, after serving two years. Mayor Deasy clarified this would include a two-year delay. While Councilmembers Shimoni, Sweet, and Vice Mayor Daggett opposed the change, citing the value of the current process and concerns about targeting individuals, Councilmember Salas was open to future discussion. Councilmember Aslan requested further discussion on Vice Mayor selection procedures.

Councilmember McCarthy also proposed reducing the motion to reconsider window from five days to three, but Deputy City Attorney Fincel clarified that the reconsideration period is already tied to the next meeting, making the change unnecessary. Councilmember McCarthy withdrew the suggestion.

Ms. Saltzburg clarified the current Vice Mayor selection rule, stating that if both the Mayor and Vice Mayor are unavailable, the next highest vote-getter would serve temporarily.

Mr. Clifton concluded by summarizing Council's consensus to modify and un-suspend the Rules of Procedure to reflect a 3:00 p.m. start time and to add a public comment section at the end of regular meetings.

Council took a break from 4:46 p.m. through 5:05 p.m.

9. Overview of the High Occupancy Housing Specific Plan and Related Implementation Programs and Amendments

Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Manager Sara Dechter, Community Development Director Dan Folke, Zoning Code Manager Daniel Symer provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

OBJECTIVES
STUDENT HOUSING ACTION PLAN
THE INITIAL SCOPE OF THE HOH PLAN
TRADE-OFFS
HIGH OCCUPANCY HOUSING PROCESS
HOW DID THE PLAN ADDRESS THE ISSUES?
DEFINITION
LOCATION

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER
BEST PRACTICES
SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY PLAN
WHAT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED SO FAR?
HOH GOAL, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED
ZONING CODE AMENDMENT TIMELINE
WHAT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED SO FAR?
HOH GOAL, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED INTO THE ZONING CODE
ADJUSTMENTS IN IMPLEMENTATION
REVIEW OF HIGH OCCUPANCY HOUSING SPECIFIC PLAN AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS

David Carpenter addressed Council as a local developer and long-time Flagstaff resident, and urged the Council to refine, not repeal, the ordinance. He noted that while the HOH plan was created with good intentions, it has produced unintended outcomes, particularly in how it treats affordable and mixed-use housing. Mr. Carpenter emphasized that the code currently limits viable housing solutions such as small units and walkable mixed-use developments. He argued for more flexibility in development types, and better alignment with current community goals around housing diversity, affordability, and climate resilience.

Carolyn Oberholtzer, speaking on behalf of Vestar, addressed Council and expressed concerns that the HOH ordinance unintentionally excludes properties like University Plaza from redevelopment opportunities. Although the site is a thriving commercial center near major corridors, it is only partially within a designated activity center, meaning that mixed-use housing is no longer permitted by-right as it was prior to the ordinance. She called on the Council to correct these boundary inconsistencies and restore development opportunities to appropriately zoned areas without requiring major General Plan amendments.

Sean Gollither addressed Council and raised questions about possible conflicts between the City's proposed zoning policies and existing state housing regulations. He also asked whether economic and environmental impact studies had been conducted and recommended slowing down the process until more analysis and public feedback could be gathered.

David Carpenter submitted written comments supporting the elimination or recalibration of the HOH ordinance.

Council discussion revealed general consensus on the need to revisit and refine the HOH ordinance, with broad agreement that full repeal (Option A) was not desirable.

Councilmember Shimoni emphasized the importance of aligning the ordinance with Flagstaff's Carbon Neutrality Goals and housing priorities. He advocated for flexibility in parking requirements, stronger bike infrastructure, and better support for unit types that promote affordability and sustainability. He also voiced concern about the high number of waiver requests coming from the Southside neighborhood, suggesting that repeated requests indicate deeper issues with the current code.

Several Councilmembers echoed the importance of refining the ordinance in collaboration with the Housing and Sustainability Commissions. Councilmember McCarthy emphasized that many aspects of the ordinance were included in response to strong community feedback, especially concerns over projects like "The Hub", and should not be discarded. However, he also acknowledged the need to support smaller, more affordable units like studios and one-bedrooms, which are in high demand and better aligned with the city's housing goals.

Sustainability Director Nicole Antonopoulos stated that while the HOH plan was not originally designed with Carbon Neutrality in mind, there is now an opportunity to update it through that lens. She recommended staff collaborate across departments, bring technical solutions to the Housing and Sustainability Commissions, and return with a more holistic policy proposal that supports both housing and climate goals.

Council directed staff to move forward with Option C: a comprehensive review and update of the HOH ordinance. This will involve coordinated work among departments, commissions, and the public to

refine parking standards, activity center boundaries, unit types, and sustainability integration. However, the Council also agreed to proceed separately with a previously discussed amendment that allows 100% affordable housing projects to be approved by-right, correcting a circular issue in the current code.

The Council emphasized the need for balance, preserving the original community intent of the HOH ordinance while adapting it to support Flagstaff's evolving housing and climate needs. The upcoming refinement process will include further staff analysis, commission input, and continued community engagement.

10. Flagstaff City Council Land Acknowledgement

Coordinator for Indigenous Initiatives Rose Toehe introduced the recommendation from the Indigenous Commission, highlighting revisions made to the language. She noted that the commission had given careful thought to the phrasing and intent behind the land acknowledgement.

Fawn Toya addressed Council in support of the land acknowledgement. Mayor Deasy asked whether she agreed with the current wording, to which Ms. Toya confirmed she did.

Jean Toner, representing the Commission on Diversity Awareness, also spoke in support of the recommendation.

Kiara Weathersby addressed Council and expressed her gratitude to the Council for considering the proposed language.

A written comment in support of the land acknowledgement was submitted by Darell Marks.

Vice Mayor Daggett and Councilmembers Shimoni, Salas, Sweet, McCarthy, and Aslan all expressed their gratitude to those involved in the process. Councilmember Shimoni voiced strong support for moving forward with the acknowledgement as written and thanked Councilmember Aslan for bringing the issue forward.

Councilmember Salas initially suggested a minor edit to begin the statement with "The City of Flagstaff," but later retracted this after Mr. Clifton explained that the wording had undergone extensive review and public engagement. Mr. Clifton emphasized the high level of input the document had received and thanked Ms. Toehe for her work.

Moved by Councilmember Regina Salas, **seconded by** Councilmember Jim McCarthy to recess into executive session for legal advice.

Vote: 6 - 1

NAY: Councilmember Austin Aslan

The Work Session reconvened at 6:52 p.m.

Councilmember Sweet stated that the land acknowledgement is long overdue. Councilmember McCarthy voiced strong support, and Councilmember Aslan expressed excitement that the effort had come to fruition. He shared that the idea was inspired by Deb Harris and the Southside Neighborhood Association, who regularly open their meetings with a land acknowledgement. He also thanked Ms. Toehe and recognized the previous Council for establishing the Indigenous Commission.

Mayor Deasy concluded the discussion by affirming his support and gratitude for everyone involved in the development of the acknowledgement.

11. Section 17 discussion with Lowell Observatory

Management Analyst Sarah Langley introduced Dr. Jeff Hall, the director of Lowell Observatory and the trustee of Lowell Observatory Mr. Lowell Putnam who spoke of a letter that was received by the Friends of Flagstaff's Future group and provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT SECTION 17

COMMUNITY CONCERNS -- WANT TO BE A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP SO IT IS TRANSPARENT WITH PUBLIC INPUT.

OBSERVATORY PURPOSES

2018-2019 EXPLORATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

2017-2021 INQUIRIES REGARDING SECTION 17 -- ALL ENTITIES HAVE APPROACHED THE OBSERVATORY

TRANSPARENCY

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT BILL

Allison Gitlin, representing the Sierra Club -- Grand Canyon Chapter, addressed Council and spoke in opposition. She noted that the U.S. Forest Service did not contribute to the proposed language regarding the land and urged the Council to oppose the bill.

Eric Whiteman addressed Council and stated he has concerns and opposes this moving forward.

Susie addressed Council in opposition to the request.

Gail Jackson, President and CEO of ECoNA addressed Council and spoke in support of Lowell's request.

Written comments with concerns about Lowell's request were submitted by the following individuals:

- Darrell Marks
- Karen Enyedy
- Cristy Zeller
- Kaity Ford

David Engelthaler submitted written comments supporting Lowell's request.

Councilmember McCarthy acknowledged Lowell Observatory as a valued part of Flagstaff but expressed concern that the proposed language from Lowell could weaken the relationship between the Federal government and the Observatory. Therefore, he does not support this item

Councilmember Shimoni inquired about the City Council's level of discretion in approving or denying Lowell Observatory's development plans. Deputy City Attorney Kevin Fincel indicated more time was needed to clarify. Mr. Putnam explained that the proposed legislation includes creating a master plan that would require review and approval through public processes, including the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council, giving the City more control than currently exists.

Mayor Deasy asked about the current zoning status, and it was confirmed that the land is defaulted to Rural Residential.

Councilmember Shimoni questioned if Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission could deny requests within the master plan; staff suggested this requires further clarification but overall supported the recommendation.

Vice Mayor Daggett asked if Council could currently rezone the land, if Lowell would commit to an immediate master planning process, and whether open space would be included. Mr. Putnam confirmed willingness to start immediately and include open space. Vice Mayor Daggett also inquired about precedent for public-private master plans; staff was unaware of any but indicated willingness to participate. Vice Mayor Daggett emphasized Lowell's longstanding positive partnership with the City and expressed willingness to collaborate.

Councilmember Aslan expressed respect for Lowell's leadership and excitement about the project's potential, but raised concerns about limited public engagement so far. He stressed the need for immediate, serious public involvement and questioned the tight legislative timeline. Mr. Putnam explained congressional deadlines require action soon or the bill would be delayed until 2023.

Councilmember Aslan advocated for forming an ad hoc committee to involve community members.

Mr. Clifton noted the need for clarity on the committee's scope and timing, emphasizing that the master planning process would take over a year and that the City's role must be well defined.

Mayor Deasy sought confirmation that the master plan would still require City Council approval. Staff noted that under Chapter 11 of the City code, the Planning Director can approve development master plans but further research is needed. The area in question is included in the City's regional plan and currently zoned Rural Residential.

Councilmembers Salas and Sweet thanked Lowell representatives for their engagement and expressed support for stronger public involvement and clear master plan language in the legislation. Mr. Fincel requested more time to clarify language, acknowledging Mr. Putnam's willingness to include master plan language but noting potential congressional concerns.

Councilmember Shimoni requested the master plan language be formally included in the legislation. Councilmember McCarthy highlighted that Congress intends to preserve Lowell's land's importance, suggesting any law changes occur after the plan is created.

Mayor Deasy recognized the expense and time required for planning but expressed willingness to support the process and an ad hoc committee once details are clearer.

Councilmember Aslan emphasized the importance of the support letter including stipulations and contingencies that bind future decisions and highlighted concerns about new road access impacting the area.

Mayor Deasy concluded that once the City receives more information, a letter of support and an ad hoc committee could be formed, with majority Council support.

Mr. Putnam and staff agreed to expedite communications and provide needed information to clarify the master planning process.

12. Public Participation

None

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

Councilmember Salas is attending the Arizona Women Leading Conference this week.

Councilmember Sweet recently attended the International Downtown Association conference in Florida, where she emphasized the importance of partnerships, evolving housing issues affecting downtowns, and initiatives to support unsheltered populations. She is developing several ideas to advance downtown and the broader community.

Councilmember McCarthy celebrated his 30th wedding anniversary.

Vice Mayor Daggett announced the final public open house for the housing plan will be held online the following day, with the Housing Commission meeting later that week. She encouraged residents to watch a video walkthrough of the housing plan prepared by Housing Project Manager Leah Bloom and housing staff.

Councilmember Shimoni noted a recent joint meeting between Mountain Line and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). He shared insights from a trip to Oregon, including tours of resources for the unsheltered and observations on bike safety in Eugene. He also mentioned the upcoming ATMP meeting tomorrow via Zoom.

Councilmember Aslan attended a Discover Flagstaff lunch featuring a presentation on tourism and

travel trends, highlighting that visitors who appreciate ecotourism and sustainability efforts like CAAP are most likely to come to Flagstaff. He reminded the Council of the Sustainability Commission meeting the following day.

14. Adjournment

The Work Session held October 26, 2021 adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK