

**CITY OF LANDER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
LANDER COMMUNITY CENTER
950 BUENA VISTA DRIVE
LANDER, WY 82520
December 8, 2020**

THE CITY OF LANDER IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

Governing Body Present: Mayor Monte Richardson, Council President Cade Maestas, Council Members Dan Hahn, John Larsen, Missy White, Chris Hulme, Mike Kusiek (zoom)

Governing Body Absent:

City Staff Present: City Clerk Tami Hitshe, Assistant Mayor RaJean Strube Fossen, Public Works Director Lance Hopkin, Chief of Police Thomas Shroyer, City Attorney Adam Phillips, Charri Lara (zoom)

Call to Order

Mayor Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance

- I. Public Hearing – Land Water Conservation Fund Grant Park Lands Acquisition
(a) Open Public Hearing

(b) Introduce and Read - Rajean Strube Fossen gave a PowerPoint presentation to the council and the audience.

Mayor Richardson asked for comments from the council. Council President asked when the first obligation be. RaJean Strube Fossen said we would have until October 2021, to get out of the real estate contract. Cade said we the fundraising could happen between June and October. Council Member White - Thinks we should go ahead and apply for the grant. Would be nice to know how much we need from internal money from the city.

Rajean Strube Fossen said there are two private funders that are interested in donating

Council Member Hahn - Thank all the people that called him. All the complaints that people have I put together. Reality check. State funds are dropping. Uncertain times. We have no idea what revenue losses are coming. We have let employees go, we have shut programs down, we have paint falling off the police cars. Even if we get a grant, it will still cost the city lots of money in the years to come. As Mayor and Council, we have a responsibility to maintain Lander. This is a I what not something we need. Maybe in the future, but not right now. The City has four months reserve money. That is all the running money we have. If we commit to this and something happens down the road, we have very few options where we will get the money. It will affect the employees and their benefits.

Council Member Hulme - I am in support of the expansion of the park system. General fund is in a very similar situation to what it was 10 years ago. We would be missing out of opportunity in economic development. It would bring tourism, which brings in tax revenue. The new playground equipment was raised by local volunteers. The skate part \$250,000 was raised in 18 months. Addressed what was cut in the recreation department. We are moving forward with looking into other options to provide those programs to the community. The \$180,000 that

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we cut out of the budget from the rec programs, could be used to buy this property. This has been carefully looked at in the past 10 years. Great opportunity and wants to move forward with this.

Council Member Larsen - Visualize 10 years down the road from now. The School District might say they need another school and will want to build one at North Park which would get rid of North Park. We need to be forward thinking. We will be doing something for grand kids and great grandkids. It is important that we look further than the end of our nose. Plan down the road.

Council Member White - Totally understand that there is concern about the budget. Lander has always been very generous when it comes to fundraising. We are not obligated any money at this time. This is an opportunity to increase our development. We need more events in Lander is what we hear from the community and business entities. If we have more events, it helps the economy. Sometimes you must spend money to make money. This would be a great opportunity to partner with the Lander community to help raise the money.

Council President Maestas – Feels he is being called by different people that have called Councilman Hahn. Everyone he talked to was very supportive of this. Our inventory of City property is very low. We do not have a lot of options for property that the city owns. I am not a fan of committing General fund money to this. The opportunity to get pledges going through June, then they award it to us. If the funds are not there, when awarded, we can make the decision not to move forward.

(c) Ask for comments

Melissa? - I am in support of this. Get the community to fund raise for this. We really have sold off a lot of our assets. Let us bring another asset to the City of Lander. I hope you vote to approve the grant application.

Coleman Griffith. - This property is right behind my house. Realistically that field is a great asset, but it will not remain a field. If the city buys this, we will have a voice on how it will be developed. If a developer buys it, we will not have a choice. I love to have open spaces. A good park makes a town. There are concerns, and no one likes changes, but I would like to see the city move forward. This is a clear-cut opportunity.

Don Reynolds - 809 Vance Dr. -Worked 34 years with the City. I hope you all in favor of this opportunity. 120 years ago, they bought a sheep field which is now city park. My believe if we pass this up, we miss out on a great opportunity for the future of Lander. Golden opportunity to do this. Dillon Park was bought back in the 1980s and that was the last piece of property that the City purchased. I think we can raise the money to buy the property. We can sit on that property until we get the money to develop it. I encourage the council to look to approve this grant application

Scott Kane, 801 S 3rd St. – I have raised a kid in Lander. The parks in Lander form the community. Open space, public land that is connected to the River are very valuable. Wild Habitat. Plants Trees. Handicap access to fishing along the river. I hope you give this a lot of thought on your decision.

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Michelle Escudero, 801 S 3rd St. – I live by City Park. Our community is about space that we want to gather in. Having access to open space is unique. How to develop it and how to make it an asset. Keeps our options open. Why would not the city apply for the grant.

Ryan Williams, 142 Washakie St. - Food for thought. I live right next to Bloedorn Lumber. The infrastructure on that street is bad. Where is the funding going to come from for infrastructure? Last winter, we went two or three days without water because it froze up. The water lines are not deep enough. I am avid outdoor person. I am all for the development, I am all for this, but we also need to look into the infrastructure. Has had issues with his sewer line and water line and the City did not help pay at all.

Kevin Johnson - 535 S 7th Street – This property could also be used as another snow dump for the City. Believes the council should move forward on this.

John Farr - Infrastructure has gotten worse in the last 10 years. Diminishing so quickly. We live in a world of parks. Drive 6 miles you can get to parks. We should be putting money into the infrastructure instead of parks. I do not feel we need another park. Enhance what we have now. Why has this property not been sold already? Because of the floodplain. It could suck us dry over maintenance. We did not ruin the infrastructure overnight. We should have had rainy day funds. Not using it for something we want instead of what we need.

Josh Hahn, 645 Sixth St Ct- Lived here for 41 years. Has had sewer issues that the city did not want to address. We have all these ideas and all these people that move here and want to change it to be like where they came from. Spend money a little better. We need to spend more into the police. They need updated equipment for their cars. Open your eyes and look at the whole picture.

Dan Shatto, 135 Canyon St - Thanked Don Reynolds for his statements. I want to ask the mayor and council when you are going to do upgrades on the water, sewer and infrastructure. I was told two years ago, the City was going to fix streets, sewer and water and I am still waiting. Set a date to start doing maintenance and fixing what we need to fix.

Sollie Cadman - 630 Amoretti St. Lived here all my life. I am for this but the timing stinks on this project. Let us step back and look at maybe doing it at a different time.

Shawn Long - 940 N. 2nd street. I have lived here over 50 years. Same location that I live now. Believes there may be potential erosion problem. Wildlife habitat. Lots of wildlife out there. It has been my back yard over 50 years and I know it like the back of my hand. I think with the economic problems we have right now we do not need to look into another park. I feel we have enough parks for now. Down the road it might be a good idea, but for right now there are other things we need to hold on to our money for. It would break my heart to see this land developed.

Women from Amoretti street (did not get her name) - I like parks. Parks are great. Would this turn into how City park is now? It is a campground. I do not think we need more soccer fields, baseball fields. I do not

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understand why we need another park. Address the flood plain. Wildlife. I have hung out there for 30 years. Is it going to be another campground that will be free? You cannot go to City Park anymore because of the tourist at city park.

Chrissy Hernandez, 938 Amoretti St. - Parks are great. But Parks cost money. How to we maintain it. Our Parks are not in the greatest shape. The skate park cannot even be used because the kids that hang out there go there to smoke pot and they use bad words. How is this park going to benefit us? Will it benefit the local community? Wear and tear of these parks. How are we going to keep up on another park? Let us make our current parks save, clean and usable to everybody.

Rachell? 770 S 2nd Street. The way I look at it. I have lived here 8 years. I live in a wheelchair most the time and that is how I get around town. Did not realize how few curb cuts there are around town until I use my wheelchair. The streets are in horrible condition and it is dangerous because I constantly have to go up and over the curbs. We need to take the money and take care of the issues we have in town. I vote that use that money to improve the things that we need.

Ron Cleveland - 1030 N 1st. My property is bordered the property in question. The field is beautiful the way it is right now. The increase in traffic will not be good. The street is already narrow. The events that would be happening will affect the people that already live there. I do not see this is something we need.

Council Member White - said reaching out to the community for pledges would be the best way to go.

Council President Maestas - Going back to comments on the infrastructure. I totally agree that we should not use general fund to purchase this property. This property is up for sale. It can be sold to a developer and they can develop a mobile home park and be in someone's back yard.

Council Member Hulme - information on the sewer upgrades, we could come up with a list of what has been done and what is planned for the future. Handicapped accessibility, we have done a big study on that. We are currently addressing.

Council Member Hahn - People don't disagree with the land. It is a timing issue. The problem is the uncertainty and the timing. Donations are still speculations. If it does not work out, the city is still responsible, and it will come out of the general fund.

Council Member White – This is not obligating us right now. It could be contingent upon pledge money and the grant. We are not on the hook. We have a timeline of when we can backout of it. Beware of the broader picture. It could be developed into 200 homes. It will not stay an open field for long.

Janelle Hahn – I have lived here for 62 years. That property has been for sale for a long time. She believes if you cannot afford it you do not buy it.

(d) Close Public Hearing

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II. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Richardson said item c. would be removed from the agenda

MOTION: Council President Maestas moved to approve amended agenda.
Council Member White made second. Motion passed.

III. Oral Comments

a. Personal Privilege – Mayor and Council.

Cade Maestas - Said tonight will be his last voting meeting. It has been a pleasure to be on the council. Highly educational. What I thought I knew, came crashing down at my first meeting. Appreciate the opportunity to serve the community.

Missy White - Kudos with everyone involved in Light up Lander parade. It was an awesome event. The property on N. 1st street has really turned around. Great job on the new planning commission members.

John Larsen – Great job on Light up lander parade. Glad to see that happen.

Mayor Richardson said we will follow the Governor’s Mask Mandate orders.

Question was asked if the Lander Police department be enforcing the mask mandate. Chief Shroyer said the Governor has given an order. We want to use our officer to educate. It will be on case-by-case basis. We would like to have everyone comply with the orders to protect everyone.

b. Proclamation – Wreaths Across America – Taylor Romans

Taylor Romans read Proclamation

c. Communication from the floor – Citizens Comments

Joel Otto - Mask Use - Read a statement about Mask use.

Chrissy Hernandez gave the council her opinion on the Mask Mandate

d. Staff discussion items

Tom Shroyer – Wanted to clarify a rumor that was going around. Rumors were a human body was found. There was a boot with some bones. It was not a human body. It was an old military boot with animal bones.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Regular Meeting Minutes – November 10, 2020
- b. Work Session Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2020
- c. Special Session Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2020
- d. Bills and Claims
- e.

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CONSULTING LLCBUILDING MODIFICATIONS - COVID1,490.00 ADAM E PHILLIPS
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MOTION: Council White moved to approve. Council Member Larsen made second. Motion passed

IV. Resolutions

- a. Resolution 1196 Lander Water Conservation Fund Park Lands Acquisition

MOTION: Council President Maestas moved to approve. Council Member Hulme made second.

Council President Maestas said that we all spoke our preference on how you feel on this item. I do not believe general fund money should be used to purchase the land. I have talked with a lot of people and I believe that \$150,000 can be raised. I am willing to give the citizens a chance to raise the money. It will not obligate the city at this time. We can also back out of it. The floodplain was a red flag to a lot of people but that is why we are

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looking into this. It opens the doors for more grant money. Council Member White – Asked if we could amend the Resolution to say cannot be used with general fund money. Council Member Hulme does not think we should change the Resolution now. RaJean Strube Fossen – We would have 9 to 12 months to not go through with the purchase if we do not have the money. Council Member Larsen - If all we are doing tonight is saying we want to apply for the grant, we should approve it and see what comes from it. We need to pursue it as long as we can. Council Member Hahn- I was thinking another situation came up in the past and it did not go well. If we pass this tonight, it will go all the way. Council President Maestas – It is hard to say no. Council Member White - It puts pressure on the public to get those pledges in. RaJean Strube Fossen – Said the Grant application is due December 31, 2020. Motion passed with Council Member Hahn and Mayor Richardson voting no.

V. New Business

- a. Authorize Mayor to sign LWCF Grant for Park Lands Acquisition

MOTION: Council President Maestas moved to approve. Council Member Hulme made second. Motion passed

- b. Approve County Subdivision plat 20.03 In Green Pastures

MOTION: Council Member Larsen moved to approve. Council Member White made second. Motion passed

- c. Approve 2-year lease renewal with Pushroot Community Garden

MOTION: Council President Maestas moved to approve. Council Member Hulme made second. Motion passed

- d. Approve License and Service Agreement with Tyler Tech for e-ticketing

MOTION: Council Hulme moved to approve. Council Member Hahn made second. Motion passed

- e. Authorize Mayor to sign Amendment One to the contract between Wy Dept of Health and City of Lander for Covid testing at the sewer ponds

MOTION: Council White moved to approve. Council President Maestas made second. Motion passed.

- f. Authorize Mayor to sign the amendment One to the contract between WLRC and City of Lander for Covid Testing

MOTION: Council Member Larsen moved to approve. Council White made second. Motion passed

- g. Authorize Mayor to sign Water and Sewer Main Line Extension agreement with Gannett Group

MOTION: Council Member White moved to approve. Council Member Larsen made second. Motion passed.

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h. Accept Gannett Peak Subdivision

MOTION: Council President Maestas moved to approve. Council Member Hahn made second. Motion passed

- i. Authorize Mayor to sign Grant Award Agreement with Homeland Security for \$24,000 for radios for Police Department

MOTION: Council Member White moved to approve. Council Member Hulme made second. Motion passed

VI. Executive Session – Personnel issues

Council President Maestas moved to adjourn to executive session. Council Member Hulme made second. Motion passed.

Council President Maestas moved to convene to regular council meeting. Council Member Hulme made second. Motion passed.

VII. Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

The City of Lander

ATTEST:

By: _____
Monte Richardson, Mayor

Tami Hitsheew, City Clerk

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