

City of Greeley, Colorado
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION REPORT
March 26, 2024

1. Call to Order

Mayor John Gates called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 1001 11th Ave, Greeley, Colorado, with hybrid participation available via the City's Zoom platform.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gates led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

City Clerk Heidi Leatherwood called the roll.

The following members of Council were present:

Councilmember Tommy Butler

Councilmember Deb DeBoutez

Mayor Pro Tem Dale Hall

Councilmember Brett Payton

Councilmember Melissa McDonald

Mayor John Gates

Councilmember Johnny Olson - excused

4. Reports from Mayor and Council Members

None

5. 2024 Ballot Measure Planning Follow-Up

Chief of Staff Kelli Johnson, Interim Deputy Budget Director Kalen Myers, and Budget Director Caleb Weitz introduced the item at 6:01 p.m.

Ms. Myers provided the City Council with follow-up information on two potential ballot measure options for the November 2024 election.

During the March 14 Work Session, the Council heard details about four proposals: the planned food tax renewal, a proposed debt issuance, and two potential tax increase measures for public safety and open space. Staff provided additional information on public safety and open space measures.

The Public Safety Tax consideration (0.25% sales tax increase) would generate an estimated \$7M in annual revenue. The funding would allow for retention and

compensation increases for existing staff. Without separate funding, these growing costs will be paid from the General Fund. Currently, 70% of the ongoing general fund budget is dedicated to salaries and benefits. The remaining 30% covers all supplies, services, and operating costs.

Open Space Tax consideration (a 0.25% sales tax increase) would generate an estimated \$7M in annual revenue. The funding would allow for activation of current city services, and significant expansion of open space amenities for residents, potential economic and tourism benefits, and flexibility for costs currently in the City's budget.

Staff requested guidance on whether to continue exploring an increase to the Public Safety Tax and/or continue exploring a new dedicated Open Space Tax. A timeline was shared with tentative dates for council input and consideration.

The mayor thanked staff for the data and felt that Council has the information needed to provide guidance. He confirmed that there was still consensus on submitting the Food Tax measure to the Focus Group. Council confirmed. He reiterated staff's concern that if all three measures were sent to the focus group that results could be skewed and noted that all these potential measures were important.

Ms. Johnson clarified that TIFIA would be a separate measure on the ballot. Mr. Lee added that TIFIA and the Food Tax are tied together but are separate measures listed on the ballot. The mayor added that TIFIA is not asking the voters for a tax but the ability to accumulate debt to use for larger projects.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about the savings from the Public Safety Tax that is to be used for the Real Time Information Center and wanted clarification on why there would be an ask for increasing the tax instead of spending that money on hiring additional officers. Ms. Myers clarified that those fund savings came from stronger than expected revenues from one-time sources and therefore cannot be used for ongoing expenditures like personnel salaries but can be used for technology and other resources.

Councilmember Butler asked about the possibility of hiring 25 police officers and 9 firefighters. Chief Turk and Deputy Chief Stranahan responded that it is not only hiring that is needed but training infrastructure that is important. Councilmember Butler suggested that both items go to the focus group but offered that if both cannot go, then to add them over the next two years.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall asked for information on the focus group and timeline. Ms. Meyer explained that consultants go out and recruit a diverse group of residents to respond to a series of questions. The results contain qualitative data, although not statistically significant, but shows how the group reacts to the idea of potential ballot items. This can help determine the best type of messaging for the public. Then a follow up poll is conducted which is statistically significant.

Ms. Meyers then presented the schedule of when the Council would see the item at a meeting to approve for the ballot.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall added that he wants the residents to chime in to determine what should be on the ballot and spreading them out seems appropriate.

Councilmember McDonald agreed and supported the public safety tax with the hope of adding personnel to both Fire and Police.

Councilmember Payton did not support the idea of the Open Space tax and restated his belief that Police and Fire do not belong on a ballot. He added that keeping public safety in the budget allows for proper accountability and if additional personnel is needed then it should come from the remaining budget. Furthermore, he did not want public safety on the ballot with the risk of that funding being withdrawn in the future.

Councilmember DeBoutez shared her concern with all the recent development going on that open space is important and it has been passed up getting on the ballot since 2010. She believes it should go to the focus group and then the data can come back to give direction.

The mayor suggested that the council come to consensus about what should go to the focus group taking into consideration that if measures are to be spread over the next number of years, then only send relevant items to the focus group now.

The council could not come to consensus on a measure to add to the focus group.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked again to have all three items go to the focus group to let the group give direction. The mayor asked for clarification on the make up of the focus group. Ms. Meyers and Ms. Johnson replied that the consultants aim to find a group that is neutral and diverse with the main goal of finding objective participants.

The mayor asked for consensus to decide what topics would go to the focus group. There was consensus to send both the Public Safety tax and the Open Space tax to the focus group.

6. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events

None.

7. A motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of receiving feedback pertaining to completing the annual performance review of the Municipal Judge

Recommended Motion:

A motion to go into an Executive Session to discuss the following matter as provided under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(f) and Greeley Municipal Code Section 2.151(6)(a): To discuss personnel reporting to the City Council.

Councilmember Payton moved to approve the motion. Councilmember McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 at 6:51 p.m. with Councilmember Olson absent.

The mayor added that the Council will not return to the meeting after the adjournment of the Executive Session.

8. Adjournment

Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

7. Executive Session for the purpose of receiving feedback pertaining to completing the annual performance review of the Municipal Judge

The Greeley City Council went into Executive Session at 6:56 p.m. Mayor John Gates began the record as required by Open Meetings Law. The session was electronically recorded.

Present for participation in the executive session, which is convened in person in the Executive Session room of Council Chambers are all members of Council (except Councilmember Olson) plus the following persons:
Municipal Judge, Mark Gonzales.

This executive session was for the following purpose:

- to discuss the following matter as provided under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(f) and Greeley Municipal Code Section 2.151(6)(a). To discuss personnel reporting to the City Council.
- This is the annual review of Municipal Judge, Mark Gonzales.

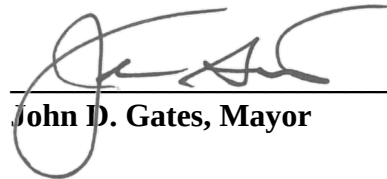
Judge Gonzales has not requested that this discussion be held in open session.

The mayor cautioned each participant in the executive session to confine discussion to these stated purposes and reminded them that no formal action may occur in executive session. If at any point in the executive session any participant believed that the discussion was going outside the proper scope of the executive session, then participants were encouraged to interrupt the discussion and raise objections.

The time was 7:27 p.m. when the executive session concluded.

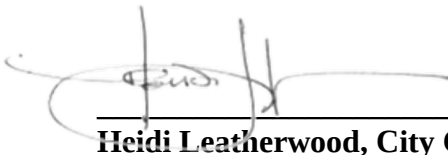
The recording of the executive session will be retained as provided in the City's records retention policy and in conformity with Colorado Open Meetings Law for a period of 90 days.

Approved:



John D. Gates, Mayor

Attest:



Heidi Leatherwood, City Clerk