City of Greeley, Colorado
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 15, 2025

1. **Call to Order**
   Mayor 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 Heid Leatherwood called the roll.
   The following were present:

   Councilmember Tommy Butler
   Councilmember Deb DeBoutez
   Mayor Pro Tem Dale Hall
   Councilmember Brett Payton
   Councilmember Johnny Olson
   Councilmember Melissa McDonald
   Mayor John Gates

4. **Approval of the Agenda**
   City Manager Raymond Lee requested Items 10 and 11 be pulled from tonight’s agenda and return to Council at a future meeting.

5. **Recognitions and Proclamation**
   Mayor Gates read the National Youth Service Day Award proclamation at 6:01 p.m.
   Youth Commission Chair McKenzie Franks was present to accept.

   Mayor Gates read the Child Abuse Awareness Month proclamation at 6:07 p.m.
   Verniece Thomas, Jason Edwards, Karen Zack, Michelle Brown, Payge Nichols, and Lisa Drake were present to accept.

   Mayor Gates read the National Library Week proclamation at 6:10 p.m.
   High Plains Library District Executive Director, Matthew Hortt was present to accept.

   Mayor Gates read the Arbor Day proclamation at 6:13 p.m.
   Forestry Manager Shiloh Hatcher, Parks and Forestry Division Manager Eric Bloomer, and Administrative Assistant III Alexa Schubin were present to accept.

Mayor Gates read the Law Enforcement Property & Evidence proclamation at 6:17 p.m. Blake Lee, Leeann Bocanegra, Gail Medhurst, and Mario Gonzales were present to accept.

Councilmember Payton presented What's Great about Greeley? report at 6:21 p.m.

6. Citizen Input

1. Pamela Shaddock spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
2. Bill Gillard spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
3. Mike Dickerson spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
4. Stephen Foster spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
5. Nate Kuamme asked council to vote for what would move Greeley forward.
6. Daniel Nies spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
7. Anthony Lehnert spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
8. Pam Bricker spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
9. Erik Knudsen spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
10. Rick Coleman spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
11. Jake Martell spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
12. Ethan Miles spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
13. Shannon Blesener spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
14. Rachel Burton spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
15. Connie Garcia spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
16. Sandi Cummings spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
17. Cynthia Shlaer spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
18. Lauren Prior spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
19. Tom Donkle spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
20. Rose Cunningham spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
21. Steve Teets spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
22. Karen Jarman spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
23. Kathy Ensz spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
24. Ezekiel Hake spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
25. Marissa Hake spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
26. Mary Monohan spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
27. Michael Duncan spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
28. Richard Dean spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
29. Matthew Casey spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
30. Cris SoRelle spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
31. Jeri Shepherd spoke in opposition of the West Greeley project.
32. Valerie Whitehead spoke in opposition of the West Greeley project.
33. Don Fulton spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
34. Eric Reinsvold spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
35. Brandon Wark spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
36. Bernie Kendall spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.

37. John Mattoney spoke about the 16th street project with a roundabout. He owns property on 10th Ave. and was in favor of what is reasonable and practical.
38. Andy Overmann spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
39. Andrea Kendall spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project,
40. Marcus Pachner read three letters. The first letter was from UNC President Andy Feinstein in support of the West Greeley project. The second letter was from President and CEO of JBS Wesley Batista Filho in support of the West Greeley project. The last letter was from Kenny Monfort of Monfort Companies in support of the West Greeley project.
41. Patricia Garcia-Nelson spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project and asked for materials in Spanish.
42. Lynette Sanchez spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
43. Ron Redfern spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
44. Antonio Molina spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
45. Stacey Suniga spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
46. Craig Billington spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
47. Jay Hardy spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
48. Kenneth Puncarelli spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
49. Tiffany Helton spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
50. Gracie Loux spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
51. Suzie Mewtelle spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
52. Nancy Sullivan spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.
53. Tom Hart spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
54. Darci Hata spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
55. Kody Wilson spoke in support of the West Greeley project.
56. Bethany Bolling spoke in opposition to the West Greeley project.

7. **Reports from Mayor and Councilmembers**

Councilmember McDonald thanked Culture, Parks, and Recreation, for the current care of the parks and noted the “soft opening” for the new Wing Shack location.

Councilmember DeBoutez attended the Colorado Downtown Association Conference honoring recognized two citizens. The Best Project for a Community was awarded to the Weld Walls Mural, and “Downtowner of the Year” was awarded to Bianca Fischer.

Councilmember DeBoutez explained she would be tracking federal grants that were rescinded, and noted that so the Gold Hill Pipeline and Tree Canopy grants had been affected.

8. **Initiatives from Mayor and Councilmembers**

Councilmember Butler asked for consensus to have staff research funding mechanisms for the Downtown Civic Campus Project. Consensus was reached to move forward with this initiative.

Consent Agenda

9. **Motion to approve the City Council Work Proceedings of March 18, 2025, Special Meeting Proceedings of March 24, 2025, and City Council Work Session Proceedings of March 25, 2025**

10. **Introduction and first reading regarding an ordinance providing for the issuance by the City of Greeley, Colorado, acting by and through its water enterprise, of its water revenue bonds, series 2025, in a principal amount not to exceed $98,500,000, for the purpose of financing improvements, betterments, extensions and expansions of the city's water system; providing for the delegation to city officers of authority in connection with the competitive sale of the Series 2025 Bonds; providing for the payment of the Series 2025 Bonds from net revenues of the City's water system and pledging such net revenues therefore; providing for the form and terms of such Series 2025 Bonds, setting forth covenants and provisions concerning such Series 2025 Bonds, net revenues, and water system, and providing for other details in connection therewith; and ratifying prior actions relating to the foregoing (Water Revenue Improvement Bonds, Series 2025)**

11. **Introduction and first reading of an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale by the City of Greeley, Colorado, acting by and through its sanitary water enterprise, of First-Lien Sewer Improvement Revenue Bonds, Series 2025, in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed $90,500,000, for the purpose of financing, in whole or in part, the cost of additions and improvements to the sewer system operated by the sanitary water enterprise, pledging certain funds and revenues of the enterprise to the payment of such bonds, prescribing the form of such bonds, and providing other details in connection therewith (First-Lien Sewer Improvement Revenue Bonds, Series 2025)**

12. **Introduction and first reading of an ordinance changing the official zoning map of the City of Greeley, Colorado, from H-A (Holding Agriculture) to R-E (Residential Estate) zoning for 14.41 acres of property located north of County Road 56 and east of 95th Avenue, known as the Two Rivers Garden Rezone**

End of Consent Agenda

<u>Councilmember Butler moved to approve the Consent Agenda Items 9 and 12. Councilmember Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 at 8:54 p.m with Councilmember DeBoutez temporarily out of the session.</u>

13. **Pulled Consent Agenda Items**
None.

14. Resolution of the City Council of the City of Greeley approving a Pre-development Services Agreement with Trollco, Inc. d/b/the Water Valley Company related to providing master development services for the West Greeley "Catalyst Project" to include the design and construction of a new arena, ice center, hotel, water park, and supporting public improvements, with such master developer services to be compensated through a fee-for-services arrangement

Economic Development and Urban Revitalization Director, John Hall, introduced the item at 8:55 p.m. There was one presentation for Items 14-17. Dalton Kelley and Dawn Bookhardt with Butler Snow and Jason Simmons with Hilltop Securities were present for questions.

Mr. Hall reviewed the project purpose and vision to catalyze development and long-term community, economic, and quality of life benefits. He summarized the community benefits and strategic alignment anticipated and emphasized the extensive due diligence, including market and financial feasibility studies that have been conducted.

A brief overview of the PDSA was provided to Council, as an in-depth presentation had been given at the April 8, 2025, Council Work Session.

Mr. Hall reviewed the Certificates of Participation (COP's) as an interim financing tool to fund pre-development costs and enable infrastructure and design to begin for the entertainment district.

Councilmember Olson asked the consultants to provide highlights on the risk mitigations with the PDSA. Mr. Kelley spoke on the PDSA and how it was a guiding document through the construction phase. The City would own the building plans and have decision input during the schematic design and construction document phases.

Councilmember McDonald asked how long the city's credit rating would be affected. Mr. Simmons said at least five to seven years during the ramp up phase of the project.

Councilmember Butler asked why the due diligence period for the land purchase was just seven days. Mr. Kelley explained that the property was on a closing schedule with a Water Valley subsidiary and the City has already received due diligence materials.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked how the interchange was being funded. Mr. Simmons and Mr. Trombino confirmed the GID would be funding the infrastructure for the entertainment district. Mr. Trombino explained that they were moving forward on the design process and would include the County and neighboring communities.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked how tariff changes, labor shortages, inflation and a possible recession would affect the project. Mr. Simmons explained how the project costs could be adjusted for the bond issuance. Mr. Kelley also noted that with the different types of financing there were worst case scenarios, and the interim financing could be extended for longer terms if needed.

Mr. Lind spoke and addressed Council questions.

Councilmember McDonald asked if there were any contracts in place with Northern Colorado Youth Hockey. Mr. Lind explained they had tendered a commitment letter to the City, moving all youth hockey operations to the new facility and closing the old one. Mr. Lind noted that the City could offer possible discounts for Greeley residents to make events more affordable.

Councilmember Butler asked about the current Larimer County Sports LLC and if Mr. Lind intended to change the name when they moved. Mr. Lind said they had already changed it.

Mayor Gates noted that they received many emails with questions suggesting Larimer County, Loveland, or Windsor rejected the project. Mr. Lind said he didn’t want to be disrespectful to Larimer County, and he explained that Greeley had committed staff and worked with consultants to analyze the feasibility of the project, whereas Larimer County hadn’t. He stated that Water Valley was awarded an RFP for only part of the project in Larimer County for the youth ice hockey arena. When partnering with Greeley, they offered the water park and hotel to create the revenue needed to augment the operating costs of the arena. He added that with the success of the Colorado Eagles and population growth in Northern Colorado there was need for a larger venue after 25 years.

Mayor Gates also referenced some of the failed sports parks in Broomfield and Windsor and asked how this project would be different. Mr. Lind spoke about the Eagles as an anchor tenant and the potential for concerts and other events making the difference.

Councilmember Butler told Mr. Lind that the City had spent $2.3 million on consultants for the project. Mr. Lind responded by saying it was an investment in a paradigm shift that would reposition Greeley.

Councilmember Olson stated that to protect the citizens, the City had used the consultants to make sure they were doing their due diligence. He said he would rather spend a little money up front rather than make a bad decision. He asked Mr. Lind for some assurance on how the project would be built out to become a revenue stream. Mr. Lind thought that the hotel and waterpark was the additional, proven entity that would help draw other hotels and development to the GID, as well as his company’s proven record for amenity-based development.

Councilmember DeBoutez stated she was not opposed to development in West Greeley, she just didn't think the City needed to finance it. She spoke about having limited capacity to develop downtown and taking out bonds to cover $800 million instead of asking voters for a dedicated source to cover the financing the largest moral obligation ever taken by a municipality in Colorado. She felt that they were betting on local residents and tourists revenues to pay the debt and did not think the City could meet the obligation. Councilmember DeBoutez said they needed to slow down and investigate more and use the COP's for downtown and find a different way to finance the development in West Greeley.

Councilmember Payton noted this had been a long process, with a lot of conversations and negotiations. He thanked the entire team from the City Manager's Office and consultants, and Mr. Lind for sticking with them. He stated that as an attorney he looked at how this would benefit Greeley and felt owning 100 acres and the design was a benefit and asset as growth would be coming to that area. He mentioned the dichotomy of investing on one side of the city and neglecting the other and said Loveland has been a good example of investing in both. He did not feel that investing in one area meant they were giving up on downtown. Councilmember Payton felt the risks were mitigated on closing on the property and expressed his support for the agreement.

Councilmember Olson stated this was not something any of the Councilmembers thought they would be dealing with when they were elected. He thanked the consultants and staff, especially for answering questions at 2 a.m. in the morning. He thought they had asked tough questions and understood there were many questions, concerns, hopes and healthy skepticism. He said he respected everyone's views, but felt the project was about more than one area of town, it was about Greeley's future. He emphasized it would be an economic engine that would help fund what the City had been needing for years, such as a new City Hall, a modern recreation center and cultural space, a vibrant, walkable downtown, and better roads and parks, which all required sustainable revenue. Councilmember Olson pointed out that 30% of Greeley's tax dollars were spent in other places and the City was losing money. He felt this project would keep dollars local and strengthen Greeley's tax base. He also spoke about the built-in "off ramps" for the project that would give them the opportunity to reassess and pivot if needed and felt there was a lot of accountabilities baked into the project. He stated he had taken this job to be good for Greeley and felt fear should not hold them back. He wanted to make sure the project was done right and said he would be in support.

Councilmember Butler spoke about how he had grown up on a small farm with parents that worked hard, and when they couldn't afford something, they didn't buy it. He felt the project was not fiscally responsible. While there was a possibility it could pay for itself, he mentioned other failed arena projects in the state. He stated that with taxpayers footing the bill the risks were unacceptable to him. He referenced funding gaps and the 5%

margin in under performance as well as concerns about hotel occupancy and rates. He stated he did not think it would fail but would underperform to a reasonable degree. Councilmember Butler said he understood the City budget well and they did not even have the funding for a homeless shelter. He questioned the City's ability to make up the economic development payments in the likely event of project shortfalls. He spoke about the financing and how it would cost the City $72 million for over 20 years to finance $45 million. He said there were many red flags he saw in the project and expressed concerns that any shortfall would cause the city to see deep cuts in already underfunded services such as roads and emergency response times, resulting in a lower quality of life for residents. He also felt that they were really spending taxpayer money to do economic development work for neighboring municipalities due to the proximity of the project to other downtowns. Councilmember Butler said if they moved forward on the project, the water and sewer bonds would result in a 2.8% increase in water rates on top of already planned increases. He was concerned about lower income family's ability to afford those increases, as well as the impact to City's credit rating and how that might impact the ability to finance other projects. Councilmember Butler said he was not interested in putting it to a vote of the people or delaying the project, he felt it was not a good fit for the City and they should look for other opportunities.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall noted they had heard a lot this evening and had put in hundreds of hours of study with staff. He explained that Greeley is a representative democracy where every voice mattered. He felt Council had listened but had also looked at the facts and tried to keep emotion out of it. He thought West Greeley was a clear path to economic development and believed it would be a self-sustaining, revenue producing project. He stated it was a mixed-use vision and the revenue would go back to the City to fund other projects. He was in support of the project as he thought it would be a missed opportunity if they did not pursue it.

Councilmember McDonald thanked all the residents for their input and expressed her appreciation to staff and the consultants. She said Council had made a lot of sacrifices to attend daytime meetings. She also spoke about what she felt were past missed opportunities for Greely, such as opting out of I-25 and now only having Highway 85, as well as creating bypasses on Highway 34 and giving up a growth boundary that went all the way to I-25. She stated that Greeley's forefathers had planned well with enough water to sustain a population of 450,000. She wanted to see better connectivity. She expressed her enjoyment of downtown and said there were gems there with many good things to showcase. She agreed that all of Council felt downtown was a priority. She also remembered when Crytal Rapids was a huge regional draw for Loveland and said it was a vacation destination for her. She explained it had been a risk for Grand Prairie and the had heard from the former city manager what the water park had done for that city. Councilmember McDonald was committed to ensuring that local residents would have a discounted rate, and said the plaza would be a benefit to families who could not afford to attend hockey games. She understood that there was grief that comes with change, but stated the thing she loved most about Greeley were the people. She was looking forward to the project.

Mayor Gates stated this was the biggest decision the Greeley City Council has ever made. He emphasized the many hours of meetings and said he was willing to pledge his support for the project. He felt the creative funding structure would prevent a tax increase. He understood those who opposed the project due to fear it would fail, but said he did not see that happening. He thought it would be very successful and a deal changer for the City. He challenged those who had concerns to go west and look at Mr. Lind's' other projects and emphasized failure is not an option. He spoke about the reality there would be people upset with the decision no matter what decision was made. Mayor Gates noted the project did not revolve around a tax increase and therefore did not require a vote. He also noted that this was not an either-or project and recognized the importance of the Civic Center project.

Councilmember Payton moved to approve the motion. Mayor Pro Tem Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-2 at 10:26 p.m., with Councilmembers Butler and DeBoutez voting "nay".

15. Introduction and first reading of an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Greeley concerning the financing of pre-development services for the design and construction of a new arena, ice center, hotel, and water park, and the supporting public improvements needed in connection therewith, and approving the execution and delivery by the city of a site lease agreement, and amendments thereto, and a lease purchase agreement, and amendments thereto, and related documents (West Greeley Certificates of Participation Series 2025a)

Councilmember Butler asked that the 920 Public Works building be removed from the list of assets before the second reading.

Councilmember Payton moved to approve the ordinance on first reading and publish in full. Councilmember Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-2 at 10:28 p.m. with Councilmembers Butler and DeBoutez voting "nay".

16. Resolution of the City Council of the City of Greeley expressing the intent of the city to be reimbursed for certain expenses relating to pre-development services for the design and construction of a new arena, ice center, hotel, and water park, and the supporting public improvements needed in connection therewith (West Greeley Certificates of Participation Series 2025a Reimbursement)

Councilmember McDonald moved to adopt the resolution. Mayor Pro Tem Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 10:29 p.m.

17. Introduction and first reading of an Ordinance appropriating additional sums to defray the expenses and liabilities of the City of Greeley for the balance of the fiscal year of 2025 Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer Allena Portis introduced the item at 10:30 p.m. She explained the appropriation would allow the City to make payments to the consultants and purchase the land for the West Greeley project. Ms. Portis noted that the appropriation for water and sewer were included and could be removed before the second reading.

Councilmember Olson moved to approve the ordinance on first reading and publish in full. Councilmember Payton seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-1 at 10:32 p.m. with Councilmember Butler voting "nay".

18. Public hearing and second reading of an ordinance authorizing a salary and certain benefits for the City Attorney

Human Resources Director, Martha Lanaghen, introduced the item at 10:38 p.m. and noted that her presentation would include Items 18, 19 and 20, but each item would still have a public hearing.

Mayor Gates opened the public hearing at 10:37 p.m.
With no public comment, the hearing closed at 10:38 p.m.

Councilmember Olson moved to adopt the ordinance and publish with reference to title only. Mayor Pro Tem Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 10:38 p.m.

19. Public hearing and second reading of an ordinance authorizing a salary and certain benefits for the City Manager

Mayor Gates opened the public hearing at 10:39 p.m.
With no public comment, the hearing was closed at 10:40 p.m.

Councilmember McDonald thanked Mr. Lee for his vision, dedication and team of excellent staff.

Councilmember Olson moved to adopt the ordinance and publish with reference to title only. Councilmember Butler seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 10:41 p.m.

20. Public hearing and second reading of an ordinance authorizing a salary and certain benefits for the Municipal Judge

Ms. Lanaghen noted in the presentation that the ordinance had been updated to reflect some additional duties the judge performed that had been erroneously left out. The Clerk's Office would publish the updated ordinance in full if adopted.

Mayor Gates opened the public hearing at 10:41 p.m.
With no public comment, the hearing was closed at 10:41 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall moved to adopt the ordinance and publish in full. Councilmember Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 10:41 p.m.

Mayor Gates thanked all three direct reports for their contributions.

21. Appointments to Boards and Commissions
City Clerk Heidi Leatherwood announced the appointments for the following boards and commissions:

- Citizen Budget Advisory Committee – recruit for additional applicants
- Greeley Art Commission –Perry Bell – 3-Year Term
- Housing for All Advisory Board- Jaymi L Anderson – 1-Year term, Kendall R Boots – 2-Year Term
- Rodarte Community Center Advisory Board – Alice Nava, Darren Dunn, and Daniel Reyez – 3-Year Terms

22. A motion authorizing the City Attorney to prepare any required resolutions, agreements, and ordinances to reflect action taken by the City Council at this meeting and any previous meetings, and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to sign all such resolutions, agreements, and ordinances

Councilmember Butler moved to approve the motion. Mayor Pro Tem Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 10:43 p.m.

23. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events
None.

24. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 10:44 p.m.

Approved

X

John Gates
Mayor

Attest

X

Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk