

**EDGEWATER CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING & WORK SESSION
MINUTES
March 19, 2024**

ITEM 1. BUSINESS MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Conklin called the Business Meeting to order at 6:30pm

ITEM 2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor, Steve Conklin, Council Member Bill Berg, Council Member Joie Iten, Council Member, John Thomsen, Council Member, Lilly Stierer, Council Member, Kali Janda, Council Member, Hannah Gay Keao, and Council Member, Mercedes Valdez.

Also Present: City Manager, Dan Maples, Deputy City Manager/Community Development Director, Jocelyn Mills, Police Chief, Eric Sonstegard, and City Attorney, Carmen Beery.

ITEM 3. Pledge of Allegiance

ITEM 4. Consent Agenda

1. Agenda
2. Minutes – March 19, 2024

Mayor Conklin suggested moving Item #16(3) to Item #16(1), to allow our City Attorney the ability to be present for that conversation.

Council Member Gay Keao made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended, moving Item #16(3) to Item #16(1). Seconded by Council Member Valdez and passed unanimously.

ITEM 5. Public Comment

Karen Lipfert, resident, with the continued increase of the cost of living in Edgewater, Karen proposed the City of Edgewater stop the collection of Sales Tax on grocery purchases to help those struggling to make ends meet.

Larry Welshon, resident and Kathy Haden, resident, support the idea of removing Sales Tax on grocery purchases.

ITEM 6. Communications from the City Manager, and Staff

Police Chief, Sonstegard, informed Council that Officer Sandy Santi passed her field training this past weekend and will be working her first shift tomorrow night as a solo Police Officer. Completing field training is always a huge accomplishment, what was unknown is Sandy's background and upbringing and she has overcome to be a Police Officer is also a great celebration. Right in the middle of field training, Sandy had a very serious personal medical issue that stopped her field training for about two months, but she wanted this job so badly that she came back from that and did even better when she came back. We are all excited for that and will put something on Facebook, Thursday, or Friday to celebrate her accomplishments.

City Manager, Maples mentioned that Kit is attending an ADA Inspector Certification program in Minnesota. Colorado does not offer the program, so he went to Minnesota to get certified. An email was sent to Council asking if any member wanted to assist with the City survey. We have to move quickly, so if interested please let Dan know. Also reached out to Council to see what type of information they would like in their monthly reports from staff. We want to make sure what we are providing is helpful. Please send an email with your report information preferences.

Deputy City Manager and Community Development Director, Mills gave an update from the Communications and Events team. Monique Berchard has done an amazing job on the City's first ever Spring/Summer City Brochure. It will be arriving the end of this week or beginning of next week.

ITEM 7. Communication from Boards, Commissions and Membership Organizations

Mayor Conklin gave updates on the Jeffco Housing Advocacy Steering Committee, working on a plan to help with housing issues for "middle". DRCOG, meets tomorrow and later in the month has their retreat, that he will be participating in. Metro Mayor's Caucus meets tomorrow at 7:30 a.m. CC4CA and the Metro Mayor's Legislative Committees met last week to talk about a number of issues coming up, many of which are housing. Mayor Conklin read a little bit of the email from DRCOG asking for support regarding the Long Bill, as far as priorities of the State. Funding for Sr. Programs is seriously lacking and has not been increased since 2019, so DRCOG is trying to get that into the Long Bill.

ITEM 8. Presentations

1. Housing Homelessness Navigator Update

Deputy City Manager and Community Development Director, Mills, gave a brief overview of Edgewater's partnership with the City of Wheat Ridge for our Homeless navigation program and our two representatives who operate that program are here tonight to give an update on that program.

Kory Kolar, the Housing Navigator and Maddy Horgan, the Homeless Navigator for Wheat Ridge and Edgewater introduced themselves to Council and gave a presentation on the Program Overview and how it operates specifically for Edgewater, and went over some Grants & Partnerships they have been working on, and offered a list of ways to help.

ITEM 9. Ordinance 2024-03

Council Member Berg made a motion to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2024-03, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2447 BENTON STREET, EDGEWATER, COLORADO, as presented. Seconded by Council Member Thomsen and passed unanimously.

Prior to the vote, Karen Hing, resident, presented the question, "Why is the City purchasing this property?" City Manager Maples responded that the purchase would provide space for future development in line with the Community Vision, as addressed in the forthcoming Edgewater Comprehensive plan. Mayor Conklin added the State is working to impose some mandates on Local Municipalities in terms of housing. As we look at Proposition 123, having a parcel that we are able to work with developers on, can help and be more workable for the community.

Larry Welshon, resident, stated he understood and appreciates the Mayor talking around the possibility of the State changes, and appreciates the Mayor advocating for the City of Edgewater. From his perspective as a citizen of Edgewater, there is still a cloud of mystery over it, and that is troubling. If there is more information that could be provided, it would be greatly appreciated. Mayor Conklin responded there is no specific plan at this time but when a parcel of land becomes available for a reasonable price, next to adjoining parcel that the City already owns, it creates opportunities that are very rare.

Council Member Valdez stated she is happy to see the resident so engaged on this topic. Mention she was concerned as well and had a lot of questions and after learning more about it, she realized that it is a unique opportunity for the City. If at

a later date, the City doesn't do anything with it, they can always benefit by reselling to get the investment back.

Council Member Iten agreed and stated it is a low risk purchase, especially if the current tenant is staying for at least a year, hopefully longer, until we decide what to do with it. Overall, the way the market is going, selling in the future would be profitable.

Council Member Gay Keao stated community control of land and community acquisition of land is important for a multitude of reasons. It is inline with the City's values. It is going to give the City more control with everything that is happening with housing and land use coming from the State

ITEM 10. General Business

None

ITEM 11. Public Comment

None

ITEM 12. Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Valdez - Thanked Kory and Madde for their Housing and Homeless Navigator presentation. It is a great program. Thanked Karen for putting together the article in the Echo. She will be doing research on this topic and understands the finance struggle people are going through.

Council Member Gay Keao – Welcomed Council Member Berg back, It is great seeing him here tonight. He looks well and healthy. Happy Belated Easter. Asked if other Council Members received inquiries on the Edgewater Easter Egg Hunt. People love that event, and it was missed this year. Happy Trans Day of Visibility to everyone because Trans rights are human rights. Had the opportunity to visit Gold Crown's Field House in Lakewood and stated some young people in that program might be coming to speak next week. They are doing a lot of work around food equity and a project called Equitable on Friday, April 26, 2024, from 4pm – 7pm and a block party around Memorial Park. We've had important conversations and comments from everyone, including the public, and thinks that is important. Looking forward to the workshop surrounding housing tonight. Anything that mitigates displacement is something that is super critical and important to her. HB 241098 is a new eviction bill that just passed both chambers and is on the way to the Governor's desk. Thanked Karen Lipfert for attending tonight and mentioned she did read the article in the Echo and does not disagree with her statements. Thanked Larry and Kathy for their comments as well. Mentioned the City is heavily dependent on Sales Tax

collections in the City. It really puts a disproportionate way, when we think about the two major retailers in Edgewater and the necessary items they sell on lower income people. Thinks it is worth Council keeping that in mind with follow up conversations. Has been listening to Beyonce's new album a lot lately and mentioned the backlash she is receiving for making a country album and for various reasons, does not belong in the Country genre. It is a well thought out album with Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson and Linda Martell all make an appearance on the album. Seeing the narratives of what belongs and what doesn't belong is really gate capped by the people who have the most power. Recommends everyone in elected office listen to this album as it relates to items that come before us.

Council Member Janda – Is also listening to the album non-stop. Hopes everyone is having a nice start to the spring season and hopes those who celebrate Easter had a nice time over the weekend. Appreciated the Homeless Navigation presentation tonight and looks forward to working together and learning more about the program. She had the opportunity to observe Edgewater's Municipal Court this morning and it was great to have seen Judge Cahn's presentations to Council in the past but to watch him interact with people reaffirmed everything he's ever said in his presentations. Also mentioned Transgender Day Visibility. It is important to celebrate and take action for trans members of the community. Earth Day is coming up in April, would like to organize a casual, street trash pickup event.

Council Member Steirer – This Saturday is the sticks-to-chips and compost pickup day. Spoke on the executive session dynamics surrounding purchasing a property within the City. The discussions are confidential and they are unable to share discussions with the community. Appreciates the trust of the community, and appreciates the comments and engagement about next best steps. Is excited to hear what the community wants to see in both newly purchased properties on Benton St.

Council Member Thomsen – Welcomed Council Member Berg back, in person. Circled back to the conversations from the last Council meeting on Land Use bills and shared that after reading the Bills, he did sign the CML letter. Mentioned that he has been taking the RTD bus the past few weeks and the frequency on most bus lines is only once an hour. Talked about reducing car traffic on the streets and making public transportation more convenient.

Council Member Iten – Spoke on the acquisition of the Benton St. property and that it would be nice to get community input on the property. Welcomed back Council Member Berg.

Council Member Berg – Thanked everyone for their well wishes, thoughts and prayers. It's been a rough few months. Does not have cancer and has a strong outlook on things. Asked Chief Sonstegard to send his congratulations and well wishes to Officer Santi. What a cool milestone for her.

Mayor Conklin – Express how wonderful it was having all of Council present in person tonight and thanked everyone for being present. Mentioned Gold Crown and what an amazing resource they are for the community. Has been in communication with Fran at Gold Crown, trying to get another tour of the facility scheduled for Council. He is a member of the Mayor’s Alliance and Hunger, a nationwide initiative of mayors working together. Will have his first meeting in a month or so and is anxious to see what comes from that meeting. Thanked Karen and Kathy for being here tonight to talk about the collection of grocery tax. Many Council members are, in spirit, supportive, but must see how things play out with the States unfunded mandate proposals. If some pass, the City’s infrastructure will have challenges. Will have to see what it all looks like when its time to go through the budgeting process. Wanted to let them know that they are heard by all Council Members. He and City Manager Maples had a great conversation with the school Superintendent and a member of her staff. Thanked Dan for setting up that meeting. Mentioned, he too, was trying to figure out where the Easter Egg Hunt was this year. The City has had some amazing events in the past and it is important to think about how those events connect with the community and how important they can be. Spoke about the businesses along 25th Ave., and what their businesses are going through during the construction phase. Appreciates Dan and Kit communication with the businesses and thanked the businesses for patience and understanding. As a radio historian, he spoke about the retirement of Harry Smith. He was with NBC for 10 years, CBS for 25 years and hosted the morning show on CBS for 17 years. He actually worked in Edgewater in 1975 as a disc jockey for KIMN radio. He will be teaching at his alma mater in Iowa, focusing on curiosity.

ITEM 13. Discussion of Upcoming Agendas 7:45 pm

ITEM 14. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Conklin adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm

ITEM 15. WORK SESSION CALL TO ORDER 8:01pm

ITEM 16. General Business

1. Housing Assistance Discussion 8:04 pm
2. Emergency Operation Plan 8:44 pm
3. Proactive Personnel Management 8:56 pm

ITEM 17. Mayor and Council Comments 9:00 pm

ITEM 18. WORK SESSION ADJOURNMENT 9:00 pm