

NORTH OGDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 4, 2021

The North Ogden City Council convened on May 4, 2021, at 6:05 p.m. at the North Ogden City Office at 505 East 2600 North. And also available electronically at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84198534135> ID: 841 9853 4135 Or Telephone Dial: 1 253 215 8982 or 1 346 248 7799 or 1 669 900 9128

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCriqbePBxTucXEzRr6felhQ/videos>. Notice of time, place, and agenda of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the municipal office and posted to the Utah State Website on April 30, 2021. Notice of the annual meeting schedule was published in the Standard-Examiner on December 13, 2020.

PRESENT:	S. Neal Berube	Mayor	
	Ryan Barker	Council Member	
	Blake Cevering	Council Member	
	Charlotte Ekstrom	Council Member	
	Cheryl Stoker	Council Member	
	Phillip Swanson	Council Member	
STAFF PRESENT:	Jon Call	City Manager/Attorney	
	Dave Espinoza	Public Works Director	
	Brian Galvez	Asst. Public Works Director	
	Lorin Gardner	City Engineer	
	Katie Gerard	City Recorder	
	Jami Jones	HR/Treasurer	
	Evan Nelson	Finance Director	
	Crystal Polson	Administrative Assistant	
	Tiffany Staheli	Parks and Recreation Director	
	Dirk Quinney	Police Chief	
	Shalyse Simpson	Administrative Assistant	
VISITORS:	Brent Chugg	Krista PoVey	Dallin Barker
	Susan Killborn	Stefanie Casey	Jillian Wilhite
	Susan Clements	Mary Wright	Brenda Ashdown
	Diane	Kevin Burns	Nolan Nelson

Mayor Berube called the meeting to order. Council Member Ekstrom offered the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. CALL FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE.

Mayor Berube asked if any Councilmember had any conflict of interest to disclose. There were no disclosures made.

ACTIVE AGENDA

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dallin Barker, North Ogden resident, stated he noticed an agenda item to allocate \$125,000 to the Lomond View playground; he thought that had already been replaced and the structure was brand new. He added that he is also concerned about funding for the community pond; one funding source identified is park impact fees, but that fund already is \$3,000,000 in the red. He stated he would like to know the City's plans for repaying that fund as this was an issue that was identified in the recent audit report. He also wondered if this project would set a precedent for developers to come to the City in the future with an offer to dedicate property to the City to avoid paying park impact fees.

Randall Winn, North Ogden resident, stated he knows there are many budget priorities for the City Council to consider, but he noted that when he was campaigning to be elected to the City Council in the last election, he talked to many residents who would like to see pickleball courts built in North Ogden. Many North Ogden residents are travelling to neighboring cities to take advantage of their parks amenities and he believes it would help the City to be more well rounded to add a pickleball project to the budget priority list.

Stefanie Casey, North Ogden resident, stated that she listened to the Weber County Commission meeting today and they reviewed RAMP grant applications they have received. She noted North Ogden applied for a grant for the "Movies in the Park" program. The application was for \$2,000 and she asked what the money will be used for? She stated her husband has offered to help the City with audio equipment free of charge and she hopes that this funding is not intended to cover that aspect of the program. She stated she would like to see City resources dedicated to addressing safety issues in parks throughout the City. She then noted that the Arts Guild recently asked for a list of City-owned equipment that can be utilized in arts performances and the list included equipment that could cover "Movies in the Park" and "Music in the Park", and she stated she hopes the City is not applying for grants when it already owns equipment that could be used for these programs.

Mayor Berube thanked those who spoke tonight. He stated that he has been asked why he and the Council do not respond to public comments made in each meeting. He stated he avoids responding because of the concern of a debate arising, but he has encouraged the

Council to respond later in the meeting during their reports if they have the facts to answer any questions raised. He stated he wants the public to know that he and the Council hear and respect their input, but he wants to be professional and respectful by addressing the comments during the appropriate time.

3. **DISCUSSION ON FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 BUDGET**

Finance Director Nelson reported on the proposed budgets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 for the Capital Improvement Fund, Water Fund, Sewer Fund, Storm Water Fund, and Solid Waste Fund. These proposed budgets have been prepared with input from staff, the Mayor, and City Council. The Tentative Budget adoption is scheduled for May 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Nelson then discussed the following expenditures programmed in the Capital Improvement Fund:

- \$13,557 for new carpet at the Parks and Recreation Office. Source of revenue is fund balance.
- \$80,000 for a new playground at McGriff Park. This project is budgeted in the current year, but may be bumped to FY 2022, depending on the availability of concrete. This is funded 50% through a RAMP grant and 50% through fund balance.
- \$120,000 for a new playground at Lomond View Park. Source of revenue is fund balance.
- \$1,651,278 for the park portion of the Community Pond project. 50% of this amount is grant-funded. The remaining part would be paid with fund balance and Park Impact Fee revenue.
- \$5,800 for a welding fume extractor in the Parks Department. Source of revenue is fund balance.
- \$500,000 of Class C Road revenue to be expended on road maintenance projects.
- \$284,000 to be spent on the 2600 North Intersection project. Source of revenue is transportation sales tax.
- \$4,486,000 on the 400/450 East Widening Project. Sources of revenue include grants, transportation impact fees, and transportation sales tax.
- \$12,000,000 is proposed to be expended on the new Public Safety Building. The sources of revenue include \$10,000,000 in sales tax revenue bonds and \$2,000,000 in fund balance. Total fund balance in the General Fund and Capital Improvement Funds combined is estimated to be \$5.6 million. Staff seeks direction on desired funding for this project.

Council Member Swanson asked City Manager/Attorney Call to address Mr. Barker's comments about the expense for the new playground at Lomond View Park. Mr. Call stated that Lomond View Park's playground is the second oldest in the City and it has not

been replaced recently. He stated there may be some confusion about where Lomond View Park is actually located; it is on Elberta Drive and there was a bathroom project completed there last year, but the playground has not been replaced. He noted, in fact, that the slide on the playground is blocked off due to damage and other components of the playground are closed due to safety concerns. Mayor Berube added he would like for the City to identify a long-term strategy and plan for park improvements before proceeding with any major expenditures such as the new playground at Lomond View Park. This led to high-level discussion regarding strategic capital planning for park improvements and opportunities for securing grants or other funding sources for park projects.

There was then brief discussion about the Community Pond project and the cost sharing between the City and grant programs. Mr. Call stated that he plans to provide a presentation next week to provide greater detail regarding the project and funding plans.

There was then high-level discussion regarding the expenditure for the Parks Department to purchase a welding fume extractor and whether the Parks Department could use welding equipment located at the Public Works Facility. Mayor Berube stated he would prefer for major welding projects to be done at Public Works because that Department employs a certified welder. The Council discussed this idea and after hearing no opposition from Parks and Recreation Director Staheli, concluded to remove the \$5,800 expenditure for the welding fume extractor from the budget.

Mayor Berube indicated that negotiations have been on going with WACOG regarding the 400/450 East project. Mr. Call also mentioned that Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) initially provided grants associated with this same project.

The Council then discussed the final bullet point under the Capital Improvement Fund; there was philosophical discussion about a long-term rainy-day fund policy and whether to reduce the reserve fund to 15 percent of the total budget for the time being in order to increase the allocation of fund balance to the Public Safety Building project. The Council concluded they are comfortable reducing the general fund reserve to \$1.4 million, or 15 percent. Mr. Call stated that Administration will continue to work towards developing a policy that provides clear direction to the Council and the public regarding the instances when the Council will consider reducing the balance in the City's rainy-day fund. Mr. Nelson suggested removing the \$12 million estimate for the Public Safety project from the Tentative Budget and noted the budget can be amended after the City receives formal cost estimates for the project. He stated that when the Council decides to proceed with consideration of the bond issuance, they will be presented with a bond parameters resolution that will include a project cost that cannot be exceeded; the Council can discuss the matter further when the parameters resolution is pending.

Mr. Nelson then discussed the City's water fund, noting there is no proposal to increase utility rates this year; he reviewed the major expenditures programmed for the City's water fund:

- \$25,000 for surveillance cameras at pump houses.
- \$100,000 for PRV maintenance.
- \$2 million for a two-million-gallon reservoir, including a land purchase.
- \$650,000 for the Fruitland Drive water main line.
- \$220,000 water line from 1700 N. to 1500 N.
- \$50,000 Woodfield Farms water line up-size.
- \$50,000 meter station with Pleasant View.
- \$50,000 Northview pump line.
- \$85,000 pressure relieve valve (PRV) at 600 E. 2300 N.

Council Member Swanson recommended that the expenditure for cameras at pump houses be increased to \$40,000 to increase security of additional pump houses. The Council discussed this concept with Public Works Director Espinoza and ultimately agreed to increase that line-item expenditure to \$40,000. Mr. Espinoza then briefly expounded on each of the additional major expenditures in the water fund.

Mr. Nelson reviewed the major expenditures programmed in the sewer fund; he noted that a sewer utility rate increase has been proposed:

- \$60,179 for a new full-time position. Revenue source is existing utility fees.
- \$87,980 increase in fees paid to the Central Weber Sewer District. A \$1.10 increase to the Sewer rate is proposed to offset this increase.
- \$377,000 for the ongoing sewer pipe lining project. Revenue source is fund balance.

Mr. Nelson added no utility rate increase has been planned for the storm water fund; the major expenditures in that fund are as follows:

- \$44,022 to move one part-time employee to full-time.
- \$235,000 for a vactor truck. Revenue source is fund balance.
- \$3,031,304 for the Storm Water portion of the Community Pond project. This is mostly grant funded.
- \$70,000 for a bubble-up box at 3100 N. 1080 E.

Finally, there is a proposal to increase the City's garbage utility rates; the major expenditures in the solid waste fund are as follows:

- \$60,825 for a new position due to employee promotion to Assistant Public Works Director.
- \$535,707 for waste hauling. This is a reduction from the previous year as a result of bidding out the service.
- The current year experienced an operational loss. An increase to the garbage fee is proposed at \$0.83 per month which is expected to eliminate the operational loss.

It was discussed that the \$0.83 per month would not be increased at this time.

Mr. Espinoza facilitated review of the expenditures in the sewer storm water, and solid waste fund; there was a focus on the factors that contribute to an increase in the solid waste fund even though the City has completed a request for proposal (RFP) process for garbage hauling and costs for that service have decreased. Council Member Swanson stated he feels it would be appropriate to have a more detailed discussion at a future meeting about the solid waste fund and the factors – such as depreciation of assets – that are included in the fund. Mayor Berube added that it is important to clarify that most of the major expenditures in each of the utility funds are directly related to growth and/or a pass through of fee increases from special service districts that serve properties in the City?

In conclusion, Mr. Nelson then provided a list of items that could be reduced or eliminated from the budget in order to further reduce the total budget; these items can be discussed in greater detail at the next budget meeting. Mr. Call added that he has not had a chance to discuss the details of the list in great detail with Department Heads, but he will do that prior to the next Council discussion regarding the items.

Mayor Berube then asked Council Member Swanson to facilitate discussion among the Council regarding two outstanding budget issues; the first matter deals with the property tax rate to be adopted along with the budget. Council Member Swanson asked the Council if they want to maintain the current tax rate, which will be advertised as a tax increase and will result in residents paying more in taxes due to increased valuations. The Council engaged in philosophical debate regarding the appropriate action to take relative to property taxes; Council Member Barker stated he is in favor of maintaining the current rate. Council Members Cevering, Stoker, and Ekstrom agreed.

Council Member Cevering stated he has encountered people who were not aware that the City does not receive the entire amount of property taxes paid by residents; it would be good for the City to launch an educational campaign to inform residents of the portion of total taxes paid that are actually given to the City. Mayor Berube agreed and added that it is important for the City to provide a clear and transparent explanation of how increased property tax revenues will be used to benefit the City. Mr. Nelson added that the Council has the ability to set any property tax rate they choose; there is no requirement to either accept the certified tax rate or maintain the current tax rate. He briefly reviewed the schedule of additional meetings to be held in order to adopt the budget.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dallin Barker, North Ogden resident, stated he drove to Lomond View Park during tonight's meeting and did not see that any slides have been blocked off or any of the structures that are closed; the park appears to be very new to him, maybe five years old at the most. It is one of the best looking parks in the City. He double-checked the name of the park on the sign, and he is confident he was visiting the right park on Elberta Drive.

He stated he really wants to know why the City needs to spend \$120,000 on a new playground structure at the park. He stated he knows he is not a park expert, but the playground is visually one of the best, most vibrant playgrounds aside from the structure at North Ogden Park. He stated he sent pictures of the structure to Council Members Barker and Cevering as well as the Mayor.

Randall Winn, North Ogden resident, addressed tonight's budget discussion. As a resident, he prefers to hear the logic behind consideration of increasing property taxes associated with an increase in cost of living. He can handle a two to three percent increase in tax rates each year, but it seems that the City has avoided annual tax increases and, instead, has considered larger increase every few years. He suggested the City adjust its management of taxation by considering small increases each year that are intended to keep pace with growth and general cost of living increases.

Susan Kilborn, North Ogden resident, stated she has a couple of observations, first being that it is difficult to hear each of the Council Members speak during these types of meetings. She suggested that everyone speaking get closer to their microphones. Additionally, the view for those participating via Zoom may be different from those attending in person as the camera is aimed at the Council's backs. She then thanked the Council and Mayor for their thoughtful consideration of the budget. She reported yesterday was Council Member Cevering's birthday and today is Council Member Swanson's birthday and she wished them both a happy birthday.

Mayor Berube added that Monday is Council Member Stoker's birthday as well.

5. COUNCIL/MAYOR/STAFF COMMENTS

Mayor Berube stated that Council Member Cevering requested an opportunity to discuss the Cherry Days parade further with Parks and Recreation Director Staheli. He facilitated discussion among the Council regarding whether they want to reconsider the decisions they made regarding the parade given that many COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. Council Member Stoker stated that many people have volunteered to help organize the parade and she feels the Council's previous decision is now void given that it was based on protocol that has since been eliminated. Mayor Berube stated he agrees, but the planning process for the parade is quite intense and the citizens need to understand that the parade may be scaled down given that the amount of time the City has to plan the parade is much shorter than in a normal year. Council Member Swanson stated he feels there is too much work to do to organize a parade and the normal events with vendor booths; he would like to uphold the previous decisions made to cancel the parade and vendor booths, but perhaps hold a celebration on the afternoon of July 3 and hold the Cherry Days fireworks. Council Member Cevering stated that if the City can secure the special event permit for the parade, he would like to hold it. Council Member Swanson emphasized that it is not possible to plan the parade in such a short period of time. Ms.

Staheli stated that she has done some planning for the parade prior to the Council's decision to cancel it. Mayor Berube stated that it may be that the parade would be much different than in past years, but he is concerned about upholding the decision to cancel because the reason for the cancellation is no longer in effect. Council Member Cevering agreed and stated that he supports the parade. Council Member Barker stated that he can also support the parade if the City is able to secure enough volunteers to organize the event; he does not want to put the burden on staff to plan the parade in a month and a half. Council Members Cevering and Swanson both indicated that some staff involvement would be necessary; it will not be possible for volunteers to plan and manage the event without support from staff. Council Member Barker stated that he would be fine with the City securing the permit and providing police safety/support for the parade, but volunteers need to organize and produce the entire event in order for him to support it. Council Member Stoker stated that is a great deal of work for volunteers to do with such short notice and she is worried it will be possible; for that reason, she will vote no regarding holding the parade. Council Member Ekstrom agreed and stated that she does not feel it will be possible to organize the parade in such a short time without major support from staff. Mayor Berube stated he wanted to give citizens who have volunteered the opportunity to organize and produce the event; however, he understands the concerns expressed by a majority of the Council and supports the decision to cancel the parade.

6. CLOSED MEETING

Council Member Swanson moved to convene in a closed meeting pursuant to Section 52-4-205(1)(a) of the Open and Public Meetings Law to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual. Council Member Ekstrom seconded the motion.

Voting on the motion:

Council Member Barker	aye
Council Member Cevering	aye
Council Member Ekstrom	aye
Council Member Stoker	aye
Council Member Swanson	aye

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 9:33 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 10:55 p.m.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

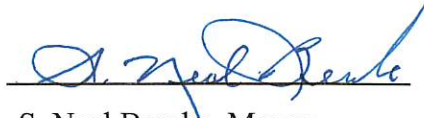
Council Member Stoker motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Cevering seconded the motion.

Voting on the motion:

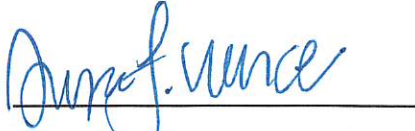
Council Member Barker	aye
Council Member Cevering	aye
Council Member Ekstrom	aye
Council Member Stoker	aye
Council Member Swanson	aye

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:56 p.m.



S. Neal Berube, Mayor



Susan L. Nance, CMC, City Recorder



Date Approved