

**Coralville City Council
Work Session
January 24, 2023
City Hall**

Present: Mayor Meghann Foster, Council Members Mike Knudson, Hai Huynh, Laurie Goodrich, Keith Jones, Mitch Gross

Staff Present: City Administrator Kelly Hayworth, Deputy City Administrator Ellen Habel, City Engineer Scott Larson, City Attorney Kevin Olson, Human Resource/Risk Manager Mike Funke

Others Present: Tim Oswald, Piper Sandler; citizens representing 1st Avenue neighborhoods

Mayor Foster opened the meeting at 7:40 pm.

1. February Planning and Zoning Submittals: There were no submittals for review.
2. 1st Avenue/Dubuque Street Speed Limit Discussion: City Engineer Scott Larson reviewed the current speed limits and areas of jurisdiction on 1st Avenue/North Liberty Road north of Oakdale Boulevard. Larson said Johnson County and the City of Coralville share jurisdiction for much of the roadway and a traffic study has been requested for spring 2023. Larson explained that the study will show the 85th percentile speed, which is the speed 85% of drivers feel comfortable driving, and is a good general guideline for setting speed limits. Larson added that engineering judgement can also play a part. City Administrator Kelly Hayworth commented that the Iowa DOT staff equates a roundabout to a stop sign, and they recommend warning people of its presence but not lowering the speed limit. Larson added that lowering the speed limit from 55 mph to 45 mph would require the support of Johnson County. Hayworth added that the County relies heavily on the 85th percentile for their speed limits. Larson said there are not a lot of collisions on this road and he would like to have further data from the study. The City Council and Mayor suggested that the neighbors contact the Board of Supervisors regarding their concerns and Mayor Foster said she would send a letter to the Board of Supervisors. Larson noted the City and County are pursuing grant dollars for a roundabout at Forevergreen Road, Rustic Ridge, and Dubuque Street.

At this time Larson and the citizens left the meeting.

3. Bond Refinancing Discussion: Tim Oswald of Piper Sandler reviewed property values, valuations, taxable values, and general fund valuations for the City, noting valuations on January 1, 2022, will be used as the basis for the FY24 budget and that Coralville's total valuations now exceed \$3 billion. Oswald also reviewed the debt limit and proposed selling GO bonds to pay off the arena loan and acquire the fieldhouse from the developer. Oswald noted that S and P affirmed the bond rating this week and improved the outlook to stable from negative. Oswald presented a draft schedule with a public hearing on February 28 for the bond sale. He also provided estimates of debt limits and future debt service capacity. Hayworth added that the debt service capacity is based on the yield of the \$2.12 debt service levy and

that it would be good to return to street improvements in the older part of town. Oswald reviewed the TIF obligations and cash flows for 12th Avenue, Oakdale, and Mall TIF areas. Oswald proposed using the Oakdale TIF for the acquisition of the fieldhouse and Oakdale Boulevard extension and said the 12th Avenue TIF area will pay for the 5th Street improvements.

4. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Discussion: Hayworth asked Oswald to provide the statewide perspective on the bill regarding the change to the rollback for FY24, SF 1056. Oswald said many cities are facing lower property tax revenues.

At this time Oswald left.

Hayworth reported the transit formula will result in an increase to \$722,000, which allows for extending the COVID funding into FY26 instead of FY25.

Hayworth said the Business Property Tax Credit for FY24 will result in \$282,000 from the state to the General Fund, which will close the gap in the draft budget and everything discussed could be included. However, Hayworth said that if SF 1056 passes, the FY24 budget will be short by \$400,000.

5. Human Resource/Risk Management Report: Human Resource/Risk Manager Mike Funke provided an update on recruitment strategies for several city departments. In the Police Department, Funke said there were a lot of resignations and retirements from the summer of 2020 through 2022, and the City has changed recruitment strategies and timelines and also significantly increased the diversity of the police force. Funke said there are currently two people in the police academy and three graduated in December, and interviews will be conducted again in February. Funke said the minimum age for a police officer in Coralville is 19; it was formerly 21 and in some cities is 18. Mayor Foster commented that she appreciated that the City has not lowered its testing and background standards in hiring. For the Transit Department, Funke said there had been an extreme driver shortage for a period of time, but he worked with Vicky Robrock, Transit Director, and the union to change the ways open shifts are filled. He said the City has also started offering a signing bonus, and after two new hires are trained, the department will be fully staffed. Finally, in the Water and Wastewater Departments, Funke said fewer people are entering those fields, but the department superintendents are working with Des Moines Area Community College and students can receive credit by working for the City and then potentially become a full-time employee of the City. Funke said operators in those departments make about \$50,000 annually.

6. City Administrator's Time: Hayworth had no additional updates.

Adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Notes taken by Ellen Habel, Deputy City Administrator