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*****MEDIA ALERT*****

JANUARY 5, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

(Chico, CA – January 6, 2021 –) The regular City Council meeting of January 5, 2021 was held with various agenda items of note. Below is a summary of some of the items that drew added interest from members of the community.

ITEM THAT AROSE AFTER THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

- Councilmember Morgan request – Discussion of Emergency Shelter Options
A discussion occurred regarding the Housing Crisis Declaration and the exceptions for compliance with sprinkler requirements on City owned or leased properties.

Action was taken, enabling City staff to expediently engage a qualified organization to support an emergency shelter operation. Additional direction was given for the City Attorney to research what is being done in other cities as it relates to the constraints of California State building codes, on effectively creating emergency sheltering options. Motion passed 6-1.

“Council learned – thanks to due diligence by Councilmember Huber and Assemblyman James Gallagher – that options for emergency shelter did exist and paralyzing code constraints could be circumvented with a little imagination,” said Councilmember Sean Morgan. “City staff will immediately renew their efforts to work with service providers to find temporary shelter for the unhoused in non-City owned buildings.”

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

- 5.1 CalPERS pension costs and UAL restructuring presentation – Finance Director Scott Dowell and NHA Advisors gave a presentation regarding the various cost management strategies for the City’s unfunded accrued liability (UAL) with the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS).

The City Council heard a report from staff on the actions taken to proactively mitigate the impacts of the State of California Public Employees Retirement System’s (CalPERS) cost burden on the City’s budget. Particularly, over the past seven years, a dedicated effort to place more cost burden on City employees has been achieved, in conjunction with the utilization of other financial instruments, but due to the continuing concern over CalPERS increasing costs another option was presented. Financial consultants shared details on what a Pension Obligation Bond (POB) could do to mitigate the continuing cost burdens to the City, to include the benefits and the risks involved, The item was for information only, to enable the City Council and the public to better understand the financial tool, and

any action to consider moving forward with such will be made at a future City Council meeting.

COUNCILMEMBER REQUESTS

- 5.2 Vice Mayor Reynolds request – Meeting Schedule

At the December 15, 2020 Council meeting, a request was made to discuss the Council meeting schedule and hearing only essential business items during the COVID-19 restrictions that limit public attendance.

Council acted to cancel the January 19, 2021 meeting and to resume discussing regular business at the February 2, 2021 meeting, unless a matter of essential business is requested by staff. This will allow the City Clerk's office more time to continue working on a virtual public participation platform, which will be integrated into the City's current public engagement system Motion passed 7-0.

- 5.4 Mayor Coolidge request – Behavioral Health

At the December 15, 2020 Council meeting, a request was made to discuss Butte County Behavioral Health funding allocations.

Council took action to discuss this request with the Local Government Committee and requested staff work with Butte County Behavioral Health to bring back information at a future meeting to further discuss the details of the funding and programs occurring within the City of Chico. Additionally, Council asked that clarity on the responsibility of supporting warming and cooling center operations be discussed in conjunction with this item. Motion passed 7-0.

“This study and this information are long overdue,” said Mayor Andrew Coolidge. “The citizens of Chico need to know detailed information on the services Behavioral Health offers and where those tax dollars are being spent, not in a general way, but in an in-depth manner way so that actual contacts and numbers of contacts can be examined closely.”

- 5.5 Mayor Coolidge request – Community Clean Up

At the December 15, 2020 Council meeting, a request was made to hold a community cleanup day.

Council took action to hold a community clean-up event in Spring 2021. Motion passed 7-0.

“The outpouring of support to clean our community and to make Chico shine once again is immense,” said Mayor Andrew Coolidge. “This event will start us with a true renewal of our community spirit and push to have Chico become a clean, safe and beautiful city.”

- 5.7 Consideration of additional options related to banning syringe exchange programs

Council took immediate action to implement an emergency ordinance, amending the Chico Municipal Code, to ban syringe exchange programs throughout the City. Motion passed 5-2.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.2 Councilmember requests
 - Mayor Coolidge requested a future discussion of a sales tax increase to help fund City roadway and infrastructure improvements, in addition to police and fire department services. The Council authorized the item to return at a future meeting for discussion.

To view the agenda in its entirety, or to watch the recorded meeting, please go to http://chico-ca.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2.

For media inquiries, please contact Lynda Gizzi, Public Information Officer, at (530) 896-7204.

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