

**City of Buchanan Commission Work Session Minutes  
March 13, 2021**

The work session of the City Commission was held via hybrid meeting on Saturday, March 13, 2021, and was called to order at 10:09 a.m. by Mayor Sean Denison.

**Roll Call**

Present: Mayor Sean Denison, Commissioners Cameron Downey, Larry Money, Patrick Swem, Mark Weedon  
Absent: None  
City Staff: City Manager, Heather Grace; City Clerk, Barbara Pitcher; Treasurer, Stephanie Powers; Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; WWTP Supervisor, Bill Housand; Fire Chief, Mike Adams and several firefighters  
Guests: 3 online guests, representatives from Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce

**Agenda**

***The commission adopted the agenda as amended to include the Buchanan Fire Department and Economic Growth Strategy under Scheduled Matters from the Floor.***

**Public Comments (agenda items)**

- **Dan Vigansky** – Spoke in favor of budgeting for the Fire Department and B.A.R.B.

**Scheduled Matters from the Floor**

**Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce** – Proposed a dual position, sharing their Executive Director with the City of Buchanan to focus on economic development. The position would focus on providing leadership for economic growth through advocacy, relationship and visibility. The position would be 20 hours per week each entity, 40 hours in total, and reside at the City. The commission expresses concerns about redundancy and would like to see a job description.

**Buchanan Fire Department** – Chief Mike Adams spoke regarding the fire inspections program, which is stalled, and stated decisions must be made. He spoke of the need for a new fire station, how millage funds are used, and firefighter pay.

**Economic Growth Strategy** – Community Development Director, Rich Murphy, presented an outline of the strategy he has been working on since starting in January.

**New Business**

**Budget Priority Setting** – The Commissioners each outlined their top three priorities, and the City Manager summarized the key themes.

- **Commissioner Weedon** – More places to eat, more family-friendly eateries, and family-oriented activities.
- **Commissioner Swem** – Focus on vibrancy of the community/families, collaborating with the schools because people are drawn to a strong school system, infrastructure.
- **Commissioner Downey** – Lower taxes, better access to the west side of town by sidewalk and/or trail extension, a year-round synthetic ice rink versus a splash pad.

- **Commissioner Money** – Economic growth for small businesses, community cohesiveness, more activities for families and young people.
- **Mayor Denison** – Economic development, parks, lower tax burden, infrastructure
- **City Manager Grace** – Build on success and momentum, economic development, infrastructure (recommends deprioritizing for this fiscal year in anticipation of future funding opportunities from the Federal sector) building community development, recreation/sense of place is a part of economic development.

#### **Open Discussion**

- *Denison stated the success of the cannabis industry and economic growth are reciprocal.*
- *General discussion regarding replacement of lead sewer lines and the ramifications of non-compliance.*
- *Denison and Money suggested we consider what we want to offer people to be part of our team and stated the employee policies need to be revisited.*
- *General discussion regarding Thrill on the Hill. Denison feels just throwing it together is not going to work and putting together a board will take time, and that the safety of the city's essential workers must be considered. Weedon stated we cannot go another year without something and suggests alternatives be considered. Money would like to see something on a smaller scale that does not put our essential workers in jeopardy. Swem stated common sense dictates to take small bites.*

#### **Public Comment (non-agenda items)**

- **Dan Vigansky** – Stated there was no need to create a new citizen volunteer form; just take whoever volunteers.

#### **Adjourn**

***Being no further discussion, Mayor Denison adjourned the meeting at 12:29 p.m.***

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Barbara A. Pitcher, City Clerk

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Mayor Sean Denison