Mayor Robinson opened the meeting at 6:00pm and explained that it was a special work meeting to review and discuss the proposed Comprehensive Plan and the recommendations from the Comp Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC). He expressed his great appreciation for all the volunteer efforts and for everyone involved noting the City couldn’t be a successful community without volunteers. The Mayor noted the City Council will continue to work on the Plan and there will be more meetings of this type and not everything is going to be solved tonight.

Councilmember Goode reviewed the City's funding limitations. He gave an overview of the General Fund which supports general government services including police, fire, parks, recreation, library and planning & zoning. General fund revenues come mostly from property tax and State shared revenues which would have a short fall if not for the ability to offset some of the expenses with Power Funds which is very limited. He explained the enterprise funds are like small businesses supported by user fees and intended to be self-sustaining. Some things like a water study could be supported by the enterprise fund revenues. He suggested the cost of some of the recommendations made by the CPAC would take money away from current programs or would need to be funded by another source. Councilmember Lau agreed that is the biggest challenge, due to limited and segmented funds, is finding other sources and prioritizing.

Councilmember Goode also explained the property tax cap that limits the City to a 3% annual increase. Councilmember Hart added it is general policy to take the 3% each year to help offset increased expenses. He also explained how if the City didn’t take the increase over three years it would decrease the City’s base for the 3% calculation. Home values and assessments were discussed. Councilmember Lau explained that assessed values are typically low compared to appraised value and the City only sees an increase in tax revenue
for new construction. Mr. Preston Rutter, CPAC member noted his observation that the City's General Fund is just barely breaking even and there is no way to increase the revenue flow. Councilmember Lau mentioned the only other way is to buy everything from Idaho and increase the sales tax revenue. Also discussed was the local option tax and resort tax.

The Mayor prompted the discussion to review and prioritize the CPAC’s goals & implementation concepts. Councilmember Goode stated he liked the implementation ideas especially the low or no cost options and felt in general the CPAC had touched on the same concepts as the Planning & Zoning (P & Z) had worked on with some others that could be pursued. Councilmember Lau expressed his desire to use this meeting to gain an understanding of how the groups came up with some of the recommendations and he feels it is hard to make decisions until the Council has the final document and recommendation from the P & Z including the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). He asked the P & Z members in attendance the reason behind the new types of zoning categories on the FLUM including “Airport”, “Buffer Zone” and “Public Lands”. P & Z Chairman, Charles Fryar noted that most of the designations were recommendations from the JUB Engineers that helped put together the draft FLUM. Lori Ann Lau, P & Z Member stated the new designations were meant to guide developers. Councilmember Lau mentioned he likes the idea of a simpler FLUM. Councilmember Goode reviewed the definitions included in the proposed text of the Comp Plan which does a good job of clarifying the designations. Former P & Z Secretary, JoAnna Ashley shared her understanding that the FLUM is a tool used to help avoid conflict of future development with current uses and the lack of clarity defeats that purpose. An example may be the compatibility of some commercial operations near the airport, or the expansion of residential which is designated agriculture on the FLUM but in reality is publicly owned land and the current use may not be compatible with a residential development. The “Buffer Zone” designation was discussed at length and whether it was appropriate.

The Council, Staff and those in attendance discussed at length the philosophy of the Comp Plan and whether it should be a hi-level overview type document or a more specific goal oriented working document. All agreed they wanted a document that would be used to help move the community in a positive direction and didn’t want a document that would just sit on a shelf. Most agreed a companion document (Community Improvement Plan – CIP) with specific steps to implement goals would accomplish what the P & Z and the CPAC are both wanting.

Mrs. Katy Bergholm, representing the CPAC detailed the work they did, community input received and their desire to change the status quo and hold the elected officials feet to the fire to encourage progress. She understands not everything is feasible but wants to be able to pursue what the public has expressed as important and try and find ways to make it happen. Mr. Chris Guedes also of the CPAC expressed his opinion that a hi-level Comp Plan that covers everything leaves too much room and won’t accomplish the goals & objectives the community input gathered. Mr. Rutter thanked Mrs. Bergholm for her efforts and stated how he was encouraged by the group’s valid concerns and commitment and he hopes the elected officials will also be committed to addressing the concerns and goals that have been presented. Mr. Drew Erickson who participated in the CPAC and is also a new
member of the P & Z stated the mandate was clear on the comprehensive plan but expressed his opinion that the information attained through the CPAC work was very valuable and needs to be used because it came from the community. He understands sometimes there are too many chiefs and it’s hard to accomplish anything but all the work that has been done is fantastic.

The Clerk reported that the official Planning & Zoning public hearing has been scheduled for February 11, 2020 and published in the paper including the updated future land use map. The Mayor asked about scheduling another work meeting. Councilmember Hart suggested waiting for the hearing and recommendation from the P & Z and then the City Council could review and mesh the two documents. He recommended trying to wrap it up in a few weeks. The Council agreed.

Mrs. Bergholm reiterated their desire for the Plan to retain the goals they have presented and also expressed concern about the financial constraints and not letting it be an excuse to not to push themselves to find a way to come up with funds to improve the community. She feels there are ways to find the funding needed through efficiency and grants. She also noted she thinks the new Plan is what is needed to get all the community groups working together in the same direction.

Councilmember's Hart and Goode mentioned the Council is thinking outside the box and working behind the scenes on new ideas that could be significant and it hasn’t been lost on them what the community needs and wants. Councilmember Hart added he is happy to see the younger generation getting involved. Councilmember Goode stated god bless the P & Z and the CPAC for all their efforts. The City couldn’t get along without the tremendous volunteer efforts.

Councilmember Lau, seconded by Councilmember Goode moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm. All in favor, motion carried.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THIS 5TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2020.

____________________________________
Austin W. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk-Treasurer