

Council seeks federal funds for water, sewer, buses

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The Casper City Council will consider several resolutions at its 6 p.m. meeting today about accepting more than \$5 million of federal stimulus package funds for water and sewer improvements, the city's bus system, and a walkway under Beverly Street.

The water-related resolutions involve the largest amounts, according to the meeting agenda at www.casperwy.gov.

Council will vote whether to accept \$5 million -- \$2,283,350 in ARRA funds and a \$2,716,650 20-year loan at 2.5 percent from the state revolving loan fund -- from the State Loan and Investment Board to replace drinking water main lines.

The SLIB awarded the money to the city on May 12, and required acceptance in the form of a resolution.

The SLIB also awarded the city a \$3 million loan for rehabilitating sanitary sewer lines. Of that amount, \$1,412,243 is a 2.5 percent, 20 year loan from the state revolving loan fund, and \$1,587,757 from the ARRA, according to the agenda.

The city will repay the non-ARRA loans from water and sewer user fees. The ARRA loans are forgiven.

The city also will consider whether to accept additional ARRA funding through the Wyoming Department of Transportation for the \$750,000 "rails to trails" Beverly Street underpass project between East Yellowstone Highway and East A Street.

The city already has received \$250,000 of federal highway funds allocated through WYDOT. The rest of the money will come from the Optional 1 Percent Sales Tax No. 13 revenues allocated to the Platte River Parkway, according to the meeting agenda.

The city council also will consider a resolution to apply for federal stimulus funds for local public transportation.

The Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is eligible for \$1,089,586 of ARRA funds through the Federal Transit Administration for capital purchases for the city's bus service.

The city intends to apply the money to replace a 16-passenger hybrid bus, three 26-passenger buses, and one 12-passenger bus. The money also would be applied to bus shelters, bus stops, bus benches, security cameras, and computer equipment.

Pete Meyer of the city manager's office said bids have not been let for the buses and other items.

The city does not need to provide matching funding for the transportation money, Meyer added.

In unrelated stimulus package matters, Meyer said the council will sign a contract with CNIC Health Services to administer the city's self-funded health insurance program.

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