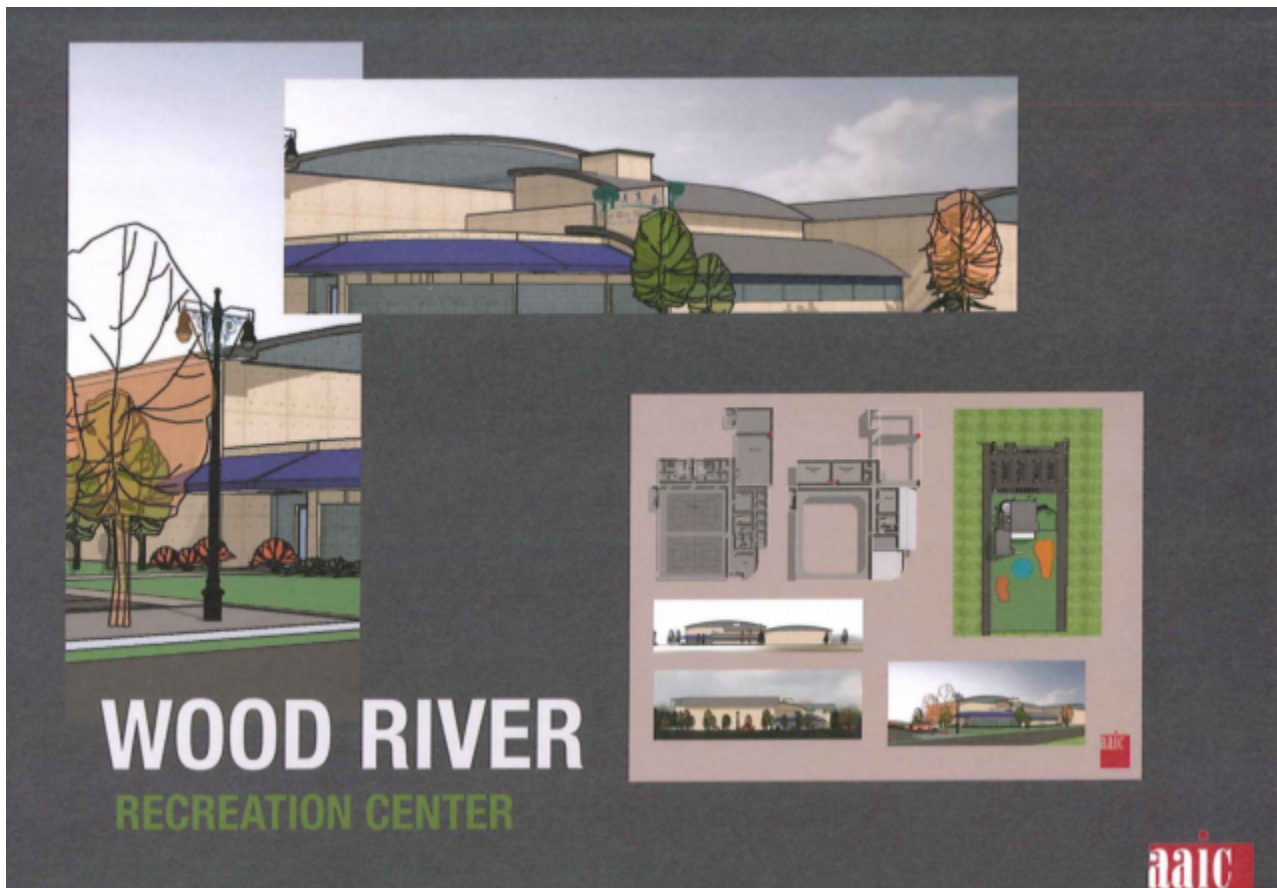


# Budget, Capital Projects High on Wood River City Council Half-Day Work Session Discussion

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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WOOD RIVER - Budget expenses and capital projects were tops on the Wood River City Council during a half-day work session on Dec. 10.

On the agenda were Rec Center, Cannabis Zoning, TIF Development and Incentive Plan, Special Liquor License Classification, Radio Reads and Fire Truck. Both the Rec Center and Radio Reads had been discussed at a special work session in August and the council members wanted to review finances and developments on these topics.

Representatives from AAIC Construction and Gonzales Engineering presented at length a conceptual design for a year-round recreational center and the construction materials for such a facility. Park & Rec Director Jason Wood presented information on a future rec center, plans for outdoor recreational features and grants that he could apply for. Financial projections for this and other projects were given by Finance Director Tracy Kennett.

“While this was a work session,” said city manager Jim Schneider, “the majority of the council members decided to move forward with the rec center, once the cost estimates were presented.”

The two most pressing items on the work session were the Rec Center and the Cannabis Zoning. Mayor Cheryl Maguire said that the rec center would be built with revenue brought in with the 1 percent sales tax that was approved by voters in April.

“The people voted for a new rec center, as well as other capital projects that are not covered financially by the regular budget,” Maguire said. “The city has begun the engineering phase on a detention pond near Illinois 143 and Illinois 255. The first-quarter report on the sales tax supports the council moving on these projects, as they are financially doable.”

Council members also discussed proposed zoning for the new cannabis law that is approaching. The Envirotech Park is being zoned to include Cannabis Cultivation, Processing, Infusing, Testing, Craft Grower and Dispensary. This industrial park is bordered by highways Illinois 3, Illinois 143 and other industrial property.

“There have already been inquiries about the Envirotech Park for a cultivation center,” Mayor Maguire said. “This property is an ideal and secure location for these types of operations. These will all be legal businesses that would provide jobs, improve the property, use city services and are regulated through the Department of Agriculture. While I’m not a personal proponent of adult-use marijuana, this is another avenue to bring revenue to the city which benefits all the citizens.”

Other topics covered in the work session were the purchase of a used fire truck, putting into place a formal redevelopment and incentive plan for TIF III, creating a special liquor license classification, with the majority of the council agreeing to initiate the Radio Read water meter system.