

**Item 25-0020: Request to approve the following 2025 Budget amendment: CEA Capital Projects Federal Grants +\$134,180 Vehicles +\$134,180 To record EECGB grant award and associated expense (2/3 vote of council required)**

Finance Committee

Mon, Jan 20, 2025 5:30PM

**Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 00:54**

We have no public hearings or appearances tonight, so we'll move on to action items, starting with 25-0020, request to approve the following 2025, budget amendment, which is adding \$134,180 in federal grants to the vehicles portion of the CEA capital projects.

**Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 01:10**

Move to approve.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 01:10**

Second.

**Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 01:11**

All right. Motion and a second. Okay, is there—well, first—all right. What number did you grab there? Director Three, all right. All right, we'll get, let you give a go first, and maybe they'll answer some of the questions up here, and then we'll move on to questions from up here. So go ahead, Director Gazza.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 01:27**

Absolutely. If you recall, approximately a year ago or so, we had a grant that we brought through, and the intent was to designate that to help with the solar for the library project. We submitted that and got it rejected from the standpoint that the project was already in in works, in bid, and also was part of a larger system.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 01:53**

So, we kept—well, we asked, what could we do with that money that would be feasible and not linked to have to deal with all the requirements of historical checks and things with contamination, and all the things that are required by the grant that you have to check. And they came back and said, a lot of the municipalities that are getting this money are using it for electrical vehicles. So, what we decided, talking to CEA and talking to our group, is that we would like to get introduced to an electric vehicle to see how that would work for the city of Appleton, using it in a in a pool, where multiple people would be able to use that, to use it for local trips, maybe even going down to Madison.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 02:51**

So, when we priced out a vehicle and a charger, it would be approx—you know, it be a little bit under that. We're still getting some numbers on the charger and then running the electrical requirement to the panel and things like that that go above and beyond just the equipment itself. So that's what we're asking today, to designate that to an electrical vehicle with a charger, because that they said they'll approve.

**Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 03:18**

All right. Thank you. So then back up here, Alder Hartzheim.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 03:24**

Thank you, Chair. Director Gazza, is that then earmarked within the CEA budget for this specific project because of the requirements of the grant?

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 03:32**

What it is it's there are vehicles up for replacement for this year. So rather than having to use that replacement money, this money would basically allow us not to use the money that saved up for the replacement of the vehicles already. So, there's vehicles ready for replacement. Say, for example, so rather than buying a, you know, regular fuel vehicle with the money that's in the CEA budget, now that CEA budget does not have to be spent, because this grant money will cover the cost of the vehicle.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 04:11**

But somewhere along the line, this \$134,180 has to be, essentially, for an electric vehicle and all the information that—er or all the pieces/parts that go along with that.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 04:22**

So, it'd be put into the CEA—

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 04:24**

It'd come into a rolling fund, but it's somewhere along the line has to go to electrical vehicles.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 04:30**

Yes.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 04:30**

Okay. Okay. Thank you.

**Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 04:34**

Alder Fenton.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 04:35**

Thank you, Chair. Um, can I direct to Director Gazza? Director Gazza, um, so on the charging—we're talking about doing a charging station. Is it feasible that we might be able to do that at Municipal Services using the solar power from there, or do we have any—now that we're leasing back to WE Energies, would we have the ability to put a solar charger in that facility?

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 05:04**

So, we were looking at the Municipal Services building as one location, and I was talking to Bruce Brazee, and we, we start looking at all the different locations. We looked at Fire Station One, Municipal Services building, and then downtown, and we're looking at downtown just because there's a greater pool of vehicles that employees that do not have designated vehicles to themselves, so many people would be able to access that vehicle, versus in some of the other locations, people already have that. And there's a vehicles down here that are up for replacement. So based on the recommendations from, you know, our group, Bruce and the group, we thought that we would do it down here first, and then, if successful, we'll look to branch out to other, you know, satellite locations.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 05:59**

So, follow up, so, so we'd probably be putting the charging station in the yellow ramp, or it would be a traditional powered charging station like that?

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 06:11**

Yep, yeah, it would be, versus the residential, would be, end up being a commercial charger, you know, more of a commercial charger, but yeah, definitely would be—and we were over at the yellow ramp today. It was with one contractor, just trying to get a general idea of cost and where we could run electrical. And that has a lot to do with it—how far you got to run the electrical and so forth.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 06:34**

We also, you know, thought about the idea of trying to do a solar charger, just that the solar charger itself takes quite a bit of time, and it's dependent on light and things like that. So went back to something that'd be more reliable, that could charge every night and the vehicle would be ready for the to go, regardless of who was using it the next day.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 06:56**

And I assume there's some scalability there. So, if we acquired more of these vehicles, this that charging station would be available for—

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 07:04**

One of the recommendations that we got is doing a dual charger right away versus a single even though we wouldn't have a second vehicle, possibly for out of the get go. That way you don't have to have, you know, go buy an entirely new charger. The other thing is, with the way the technology is changing, to make sure we don't buy what I'd consider residential grade. That might get us by for a year or so. Get something that would be, you know, commercially reliable and dependable so, and also be—I don't know enough about them, but some of them, with the technology changing, basically saying, yeah, this will be good for, you know, you'll be good for years with this one, where this, this older technology one that you still can buy, it could be outdated next year for whatever reason, because lot these vehicles—say, for example, you buy a charger to charge a certain vehicle, but then the next vehicle has a higher requirement or battery size, then that charger might be too small, so getting one that is that can handle the larger batteries also.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 08:20**

Thank you.

**Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 08:22**

Alder Hartzheim.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 08:23**

Thank you, Chair. Director Gazza, as a follow up to those questions, is the expectation that this charge is going to have, like a Lockout Tag out, so that only city vehicles are using that particular charger, so that it's not just drive on up and use city's electricity in order to keep your electric vehicle powered?

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 08:41**

Absolutely. In the basement of the yellow ramp, there's actually a card access gate that you have to open, and that's all the city vehicles are stored.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 08:49**

Okay, thank you.

**Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 08:51**

Alder Croatt.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 08:52**

Thank you, Chair. Director Gazza, is—this is a pretty large amount of money for one vehicle, a charger, and some electrical work. Is there a breakdown of how this—like, how much of this is the vehicle and how much of it is the electrical needed to charge it every night?

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 09:07**

Yeah. So right now, what we what we did is we asked, we said—we had asked one or two vehicles and one or two chargers. We had the flexibility of that. So that's what we're looking into right now. Bruce has been shopping around for different vehicles. So, there is a chance that we could end up with, say, if we, a regular, say, electric vehicle, then something much smaller, like say, for example, a Ford Maverick is all electric. That if that, if we had the possibility to get that, then that could replace another vehicle in the system. But right now it would be one vehicle, one charger, and an installation. But I expect then there would be money left, but it might not be enough for, yeah.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 10:03**

That's what I was thinking, is it's probably not enough for two with the double charger, but it's definitely enough for one.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 10:09**

Yep, we had thought about, you know, things like, say, for example, you put chargers in a couple locations, so if the vehicle ends up going to another vehicle or another location, and say wanted to be tested by some employees at that location, then you would have some multiple, multiple locations, but until we have a breakdown on the budget, but the intent would be not to let any of the free money go, um, by the wayside.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 10:37**

Okay,

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 10:38**

Nothing's free.

**Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 10:41**

Anyone else, or any follow ups? All right, yeah. I mean, I think this does, at least, moving this money into for—putting it in a position for this purpose definitely opens up a number of options. I know we're just voting on this budget amendment and not how many vehicles were buying, how many charges. But this is a good, helpful discussion to help understand how this is actually going to be applied. And I think—yeah, it—I as owning a plug-in hybrid, I've got my experiences with only electric vehicle is it's a lot less maintenance than any the gas-powered vehicles I've ever owned. There's always that risk when things break, they're more expensive. But I'm driving a 13-year-old Chevy Volt right now that's—I've had in the shop once, just because coolant and got too low in the battery pack. That was like the worst thing that's happened since I've had this thing. So, oh, go ahead.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 11:35**

One other comment I was gonna say, just to meet some of our sustainability goals that are outlined, you know, in regards to getting rid of emissions and saving money on utilities, you know, definitely saving the money is always, you know, a huge factor there. But this at least gives us a—I don't want to say the word free—but a way to introduce the city to electric without us having to put out a big outlay, you know, using taxpayer money, so to speak, took for an experiment where this—and we realize that too. We think that, you know, there's going to be a niche for electric vehicles, because we have such small trips throughout the community, but there are certain vehicles that just won't be able to ever go electric, or, you know, not for a long time until technology comes along. But there's a there's a niche right now for us to capitalize on them.

**Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 12:36**

Yeah, yeah. I definitely would agree with that. And but kind of finishing where I was kind of thinking is that also just having this extra money and with the money that was going to go towards replacing the vehicles that too is another, I think, going to be beneficial. And we've seen—seems like vehicle prices have kind of stabled off at this point. And definitely the market for electric vehicles under \$40,000 is getting much, much bigger than it was even five years ago that—

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 13:01**

Absolutely.

**Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 13:02**

—maybe two vehicles might be possible if they're spread out or who knows. But with that, I guess we're ready for a vote. So, all in favor? Aye. Opposed? Abstentions? That passes four to zero.