

LEAVENWORTH CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

April 11, 2017

Mayor Cheryl Kelley Farivar called the April 11, 2017 Study Session to order at 9:00 AM.

Council Present: Mayor Cheryl Kelley Farivar, Elmer Larsen, Carolyn Wilson, Gretchen Wearne, Mia Bretz, Margaret Neighbors, Richard Brinkman, and Sharon Waters.

Staff Present: Joel Walinski, Herb Amick, Nathan Pate and Chantell Steiner.

1. Chamber Report

Chamber Director Nancy Smith updated the Council on the Washington's Playground planning, events and advertising that are scheduled over the next year. She noted that last year the City of Leavenworth was featured in several major nominations for items such as Best Places in the Northwest. She further discussed some of the special videos that are being put together to advertise Leavenworth's wonderful weather and sunshine opportunities that will be highlighted in future television advertising with Washington's Playground. She talked about other ideas such as having the Alphorn being played at a Sounder's game, hosting singles events and other fun new ideas for promoting Leavenworth. She then provided handouts on the April Spring Sensations event that features locally grown food and wine showcasing the Pear in particular; the Spring Sensations passbook that visitors use to visit featured events; and a handout showcasing the events for Maifest noting that arts and crafts are featured along with special activities in honor of Mother's Day. She gave a brief report on summer entertainment activities that are currently in a planning phase including Taste Leavenworth, the scheduling of bands in the Gazebo, and other festival type events for summer. She provided the annual Chamber Leavenworth Guide that showcases the yearlong events and activities that are available to residents and visitors.

2. Chamber of Commerce Contract

City Administrator Joel Walinski stated that the Chamber of Commerce Contract being presented is similar to the past contract which provides 18.5% of the previous year's annual collected Lodging Tax dollars and covers a period of three years. He stated the use of the dollars to support the Chamber's operation of the Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center and additional dollars for general advertising and event promotions. He explained the process for reimbursement that includes a report from the Chamber that identifies where the dollars are spent on a quarterly basis that ties to the annual budget presented to the Council. He noted some new language that has been suggested by the City Attorney regarding the requirements for retention of records for auditing purposes. He then reviewed the requirements within RCW 67.28.1816 that requires the use of the dollars to support bringing tourism and creating overnight stays within Leavenworth. There was a brief discussion on past reporting and allocation of the funds utilized by the Chamber and how they are equitably shared between City and County Lodging Tax dollars as well as revenues generated by Chamber members and fundraising.

3. Proclamation: Statement on Intolerance

Mayor Farivar stated that the proposed draft proclamation being presented was put together by Councilmember Brinkman as discussed at the recent annual retreat. Councilmember Larsen questioned the inclusion of multiple comments regarding immigration as these appear to be going towards a political statement whereas he recalled the retreat discussion to be more focused on intolerance to hate acts, hate speech and hate crimes. Councilmembers discussed individual feelings and ideas on what should be included in the proclamation. Some concerns included too many statements regarding immigration in the proclamation; the need to support the citizens of Leavenworth; to be cautious on limiting what values can and should be included that should not be based on fear or repercussions from the federal level;

consideration to write to State Legislature's on the need to focus on immigration reform; the lack of rioting and/or deportation within Leavenworth; and to fine tune the proclamation to be supportive of all citizens in general. There is concern of the proclamation having a political stance in the views of others and it was noted that at this current time this cannot be avoided if the Council wants to proceed with any type of statement. Councilmembers discussed removal of some of the statements for consolidation of content and to avoid language towards immigration while retaining language on intolerance of hate acts, speech and crime. Various suggestions to remove specific words and statements were discussed and requested to be reviewed at the next study session.

4. Alley Vacations

Development Services Manager Nathan Pate provided additional handouts for the Betz alley vacation request and explained to the Council that this alley vacation was a previous request in years past that was not approved due to the potential use for snow storage; however, that is no longer the case for the City. He proceeded to review the materials that were provided from the applicant noting a specific page that was included which does not pertain to the actual request; this page is being replaced with the new handouts from Staff. Administrator Walinski explained the history of the County's "operation of law" enacted in 1889 regarding establishing Right of Way and the vacation of property, noting that this parcel is part of the Ralston Addition that was platted in 1898 prior to the establishment of the City of Leavenworth in 1906; this property would still fall under the original operation of laws from 1889 that allows for vacating without compensation to the City. Mayor Farivar added that the Ralston Addition is the only section of the current City limits that falls under this rule. Council discussed future expectations for the use and potential expansion of River Street and whether there are any potential ramifications in vacating the alley behind the Betz property; it was noted that there are no city utilities or known future City needs. It was noted that in the previous request to vacate the property it was done by both abutting property owners whereas the current request is being submitted by just the one property owner.

Manager Pate reviewed the Boyd alley vacation request and provided additional map handouts on this request. He identified the location of this alley and the request to consider a land swap from the City rather than making payment for the alley vacation. He stated that discussion of land value would be discussed in more detail at the Executive Session this evening if the Council chooses to proceed with the public hearing. The new maps identify the requested vacated portion of land versus the proposed new utility easement location on the adjacent side of the Boyd property. It was noted by staff that the existing alley is steep and would be difficult to develop as an alley access where the proposed land swap location would be more feasible.

5. Downtown Recycling Survey Follow-up – Aubyn Honeysett

Mayor Farivar introduced Ms. Aubyn Honeysett who is returning to provide a report on a recycling survey that she conducted over the past year. Ms. Honeysett began with a discussion of the recommended methods to resolve the issues noted within her materials that were included in the council packet. She stated that she would like to see changes made as soon as possible to the recycle center signage that could increase more use as well as considering opening the facility for more periods of time. She suggested using more than just English on containers and to consider symbols that may help create better use of the recycle cans. She provided some background information on her education and experience that she utilized to perform the study. The Council discussed current signage that is now different at the facility to create more openness for all residents and visitors to recycle and to consider more segregation of the yard waste being for residents only on separate signage that may be deterring people from knowing that they can recycle. Ms. Honeysett stated that during her survey, several businesses noted that they would bring recycling to the drop off center if they had been aware that they were allowed to; she added that some stated that they already take their recycling home to keep it out of the waste stream. There was a brief discussion on the Nutcracker recommendation; the affordability and ease of design may be one additional recommendation to easily implement.

6. Quarterly Update Future Council Agenda Items / Project Tracking

Administrator Walinski stated that the Council is being provided the quarterly update of the projects being tracked for Council review and asked if there are any specific questions on projects. There was a request to provide Council with a copy of the Overnight Rental door hanger prior to putting those out in the Community. Administrator Walinski gave a brief update on the progress that is getting underway to send notifications to property owners that were previously identified as illegal overnight rentals. He reminded the Council that some projects are multi-year projects and may include unknown estimated dates of completion. He then noted the draft Future Council Agenda Items that are subject to modification in the future.

7. Quarterly City Newsletter Recommendations – Distribution in May

Administrator Walinski asked the Council if they have any additional items for consideration in the next newsletter. He stated that the February Newsletter was a little behind schedule and that it is currently out for printing. Councilmembers discussed the planned articles for the Recycle Center and Comprehensive Plan that are great articles to include. Mayor Farivar stated that the Minute with the Mayor will focus on the progress with the current Parking Study.

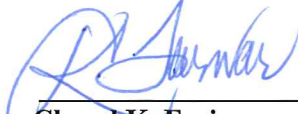
8. Council Open Discussion

Councilmember Wilson referenced a recent article in the Leavenworth Echo on Dr. George Hoxsey and his support to the community as the railroad doctor in the late 1800's. She suggested considering a future project or memorial to honor him with if possible.

Councilmember Bretz requested some clarification on the development of the Cost Allocation Plan that will be considered for approval this evening. Finance Director Chantell Steiner explained the background involved with the development of the Plan to equitably distribute costs specific to utility related funds based on actual time spent on the utility. Administrator Walinski added that cost allocation came about several years ago through the requirements of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) which is a federal level mandate on how local governments must itemize costs. Director Steiner further explained some of the detailed ways that employees are currently tracked to show proof of personnel time spent on specific areas and how this will need to be reviewed and amended over time as new and better information is attained.

Study Session adjourned at 11:25 AM.

APPROVED



Cheryl K. Farivar
Mayor

ATTEST



Chantell Steiner
Finance Director/City Clerk