

LEAVENWORTH CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

June 9, 2020

Mayor Carl Florea called the June 9, 2020 Study Session to order at 8:30 AM.

Council Present: Mayor Carl Florea, Carolyn Wilson, Mia Bretz, Sharon Waters, Jason Lundgren, Anne Hessburg, and Zeke Reister.

Staff Present: Ana Cortez-Steiner, Chantell Steiner, Herb Amick, and Lilith Vespier.

Mayor Florea excused Councilmember Clint Strand.

1. Chamber Report

Chamber Representative Jesse Boyd updated the Council on the protocols the Chamber is working on for opening the business community under the new rules prescribed by the Governor. He thanked the City for the tables and garbage removal in the downtown and noted that the Chamber is assisting with garbage and providing masks and cleaning supplies for the visitors. He spoke to the positive feedback he has received in regard to the closure of Front Street. He announced that the Chamber has hired a new Executive Director, Mr. Troy Campbell, who is replacing former Director Nancy Smith; Mr. Campbell will start on June 15, 2020. Council discussed the process underway for the businesses to apply for a special use permit for downtown street access, the potential changes to remove or reorganize the tables, and to consider expanding the street closures as the City moves into Phase II. Mr. Boyd confirmed that the official Kinderfest Festival is cancelled for the 4th of July; however, if restrictions allow, some events may be organized for those visitors that come.

2. Update on Osborn School Property – Decision Due by September 30, 2020

City Administrator Ana Cortez-Steiner provided the Council an update on discussions that she has had with the School District Superintendent, noting that the City will need to consider several elements prior to any commitment of purchase. Items to consider will include first looking at whether the City wants to commit to the purchase, then conducting a detailed review of the land and buildings, including an environmental assessment, to assist in determining the price that the City is willing to offer. She spoke about various agencies that she will reach out to that can assist in looking at purchase options and technical assistance. She further explained the process involved for the City to consider regarding securing the land for a future vision, considering partnerships and funding for environmental review, and to determine what the Council's vision entails for buildout and use of the property. She asked that future discussions regarding the purchase price be conducted within Executive Session to ensure a smooth process. Mayor Florea reminded the Council that he has stated to the public, that if the City secures the property, the process for moving forward will become a public process to discuss the future options for the use of the property.

3. Transportation Element Update / Budget

Development Services Manager Lilith Vespier updated the Council on the draft contract with Fehr & Peers included in the packet for the Transportation Element Update. She noted that the current contract is set at \$60,000 to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing Transportation Element, and also includes consideration of the Parking Study results, the existing 20-year project list, the new Corridor Study findings, and the request from the Friends of Leavenworth to study the peak traffic hours. She reviewed the process for updating the Transportation Element where the Planning Commission will be the platform for public engagement that will include at least four initial

meetings. She clarified that the City's 20-Year Transportation Plan is utilized to identify the annual 6-Year Transportation Plan for specific City projects that will be moving forward in the short term; a 20-Year Transportation Plan is reviewed about every seven or eight years as part of the review of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Element Update is a process that captures long term planning projects and potential code related changes that affect construction practices, such as changes to peak traffic. Council discussed the need to have a good public process to address concerns on peak traffic and level of service definitions.

4. Annual Council Retreat Meeting Topics & Dates

Mayor Florea stated that he is ready for the City Council to consider the timing and topics for the Annual Council Retreat. Administrator Cortez-Steiner reviewed the past topics that includes a review of the Lodging Tax Fund, setting priorities for the 2021-2022 Budget, development of capital improvements and Council priorities, and to consider an update to the Garbage Utility Rates. Councilmembers discussed the need to look at doing an overall financial review in light of the budget concerns due to COVID-19 and for consideration to the new Councilmembers. The Council confirmed the tentative date to be held on Friday, July 31, 2020 from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM with the potential option to split the meeting into two separate smaller meetings if conducted via Zoom. The Council reviewed in-person options for the meeting that could be held either at a local hotel or the Festhalle to ensure proper social distancing.

5. Discussion on Protocol for Mayor and City Council Public Communications

Mayor Florea discussed changes that occur when there is turnover of the Mayor and Councilmembers over time. He spoke to his passion for inclusiveness of all community members, sharing his personal opinions as his own thoughts and ideals, and reflecting on the continued lessons that have come from his recent letter to the community on racism. He stated that he is open to suggestions and welcomes open and honest communication to move forward in a productive manner.

Councilmembers shared their personal thoughts on the recent letter from the Mayor that has had very diverse opinions regarding statements from the community and visitors. There is concern of some lost trust from the community, while at the same time, this situation has created an opportunity to learn and grow from and to create better communication practices and understanding. Unfortunately, the message was lost on some perspective, Councilmembers provided suggestions to Mayor Florea on ways to move forward from this and to consider how and what is being stated from a City initiated perspective. The intent is not to censor the Mayor but rather open up dialogue in a clear manner when necessary.

Mayor Florea spoke to his experiences as an activist and the challenges that he has been faced with time and again; he knows this has expanded much further than our community, even nationally, and that has created additional challenges that he will continue to work on. He supports a unified community and wants to continue healthy productive discussions with the Council and Community.

6. Emergency Management Overview / Wildfire Planning - Kent Sisson, Rich Magnussen, and Stan Smoke

Chelan County Emergency Management (CCEM) Representatives Kent Sisson, Rich Magnussen, and Stan Smoke joined the meeting to provide an update on the role of the Emergency Management Program. Mr. Sisson updated the Council on the recent emergency response activities regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic and reviewed some examples of disaster response procedures. He then reviewed specific types of responses that have occurred for the City of Leavenworth in recent years

that includes fire related activities, and more recently, the parking management of Christmas Lighting. He described some of the mock incident responses that the department has coordinated and conducted within the city limits. He stated that practicing for the different types of incidents is very helpful to not only learn how best to respond, but to engage the community in the process for instances that require evacuation. He spoke about the need to consider evacuation procedures and the creation of safe zones when time is of the essence in an emergency that occurs quickly, such as fires.

Mr. Smoke updated the Council on the current process underway to review and revise the Chelan County Emergency Management Plan. He stated that the draft changes are anticipated to be brought forward to the Chelan County Commissioners this week; once that has occurred, the plan will be disseminated out to the Cities for each communities' personal review of their specific needs and initiatives.

Councilmember Lundgren asked how the current process works for notification and evacuation, for instance, during a wildfire, and what role does the CCEM play in the City's recovery plan. Mr. Sisson reviewed the technical process involved to electronically reach out to community members through cell phones, the emergency alert system, and for Level 2 or 3 fire situations via door to door contact. He explained that hotels require additional assistance from the hoteliers to do door to door contact with visitors. He stated that emergency services personnel, which includes police and fire, are activated in every incident. Discussions have occurred for last resort safety measures if the community is not able to evacuate; utilization of the school and school fields have been identified as a potential option. He explained that planning for Leavenworth and the Chumstick has been underway for some time; unfortunately, the Pandemic has pushed back the progress for these plans. He stated that there are only two options for evacuation in Leavenworth and that includes either east or west on Highway 2 or north on the Chumstick Highway. The evacuation depends on where the fire originates and then from there the determination of evacuation is defined. CCEM determines the situation on a case by case basis that starts with a Level 1 notification process to the Community and will accelerate from there if the fire persists. Coordination and communication with the City begins immediately through the Mayor's Office; however, evacuation processes are initiated from the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Sisson stated that there are various redundancy options for alerting the public in the event of an emergency that includes options for contact via cell phones, radio, in-person contact, mega phones, and fire whistles (old air raid type system). He added that fire whistles have not been used in recent years so that option would need practice and community notification of what the process entails. A future tabletop exercise for fire evacuation can be coordinated once the COVID-19 Pandemic has passed.

7. Council Open Discussion

Councilmember Hessburg requested a future discussion on how best to approach involvement for the Census 2020. Council had a brief discussion on zoom bombing and how to avoid that issue via the zoom security controls and to consider options allowed under RCW 42.30.050

The meeting adjourned at 10:39 A.M.

APPROVED



Carl Florea
Mayor

ATTEST



Chantell Steiner
Finance Director/City Clerk