



City of Leavenworth

700 Highway 2 / Post Office Box 287
Leavenworth, Washington 98826
(509) 548-5275 / Fax: (509) 548-6429
Web: www.cityofleavenworth.com

City Council
Carl J. Florea - *Mayor*
Carolyn Wilson
Mia Bretz
Sharon Waters
Clint Strand
Jason Lundgren
Anne Hessburg – *Mayor Pro Tem*
Zeke Reister
City Administrator - *Vacant*

April 24, 2020

Community Members,

It is so much fun to be involved with a community like Leavenworth! People are so creative, concerned, and willing to share! I have gotten responses here and there to some of my daily messages. Mostly those have been brief, and either in the general “thank you” category, or longer rants along the lines of “you’re full of...” But I have never received as many long and thoughtful email responses as my letter from yesterday received. That was the letter where I talked about my planned focus group that would be centered on the eventual and gradual opening back up of our town. While I won’t share each of those with you, (I have responded to each of them personally), I will share with you all the gist of them and my general thoughts and clarifications. I do this because I know that for every one who responds, there are at least ten others who share the thoughts but just don’t put it in writing, either because they don’t have the time, or because they aren’t sure how to put it into words.

The first group of emails I got was from those I will call the group of hand-raisers. You know them. They are the ones you remember from your school days. Whenever the teacher asked for a volunteer to do something, they practically jumped out of their seats with hand held high, maybe thrusting it up and down, and often accompanied by some noises that did not necessarily say these words, but the meaning was clear, “Pick me, pick me!” It is really gratifying to know how many people there are that want to serve this community and have its best interests at heart and are eager to serve! Unfortunately, one of the things I want is to keep the group as broadly representative as possible, while keeping it small enough to be able to effectively hear one another. A couple of you expressed concern that there were no residents represented, but most all were businesses. This one is rather humorous to me, because one of the critiques I heard when I was running for Mayor, that I was “just a resident” with no business experience and would not understand or represent their interests effectively. Well, I do plan to be in this group. 😊 And Councilmember Zeke Reister is also a strong residential advocate and he will be on this focus group as well.

The other group of responses was concerned that I was moving too fast and was going to endanger the community. Let me assure all of you. This is about beginning to plan for what it will take for us to move forward. It is not about moving now. It has three representatives from the medical field precisely because we take seriously our need to put safety first. This is about gathering the information we need, and taking the steps that will get us to a place where we can begin appropriately and safely to open up when the time comes. I take very seriously my charge to look out for the health and safety of our community and that will guide what we do, regardless of what the state chooses to do. We are unique, and that will be taken into account as we explore this responsibly.

The final group of emails were also fun ones. These were the ones where people shared their own ideas about what would help us move forward. Some you can imagine, like requiring masks to visit inside any store. Others were inventive, like closing down parts of Front Street to allow for social distancing. It’s great to see people engaged. And as I told one resident who shared ideas – it’s better to hear the same idea ten times that to have it not come up because everyone assumed someone else would raise it. I encourage anyone with an idea to share it – with me or with any focus group member. As I promised, once I have this group committed and we have met together for our first time, we will be communicating what we are doing, and will publish contact info for each of them.

In the meantime, stay safe!



Carl J. Florea, Mayor

City of Leavenworth
700 Highway 2
Leavenworth, WA 98826
(509) 548-5275
cflorea@cityofleavenworth.com