

LEAVENWORTH CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES December 12, 2017

Mayor Cheryl Kelley Farivar called the December 12, 2017 Study Session to order at 9:05 AM.

Council Present: Mayor Cheryl Kelley Farivar, Carolyn Wilson, Elmer Larsen, Mia Bretz, Margaret Neighbors, Sharon Waters, and Clint Strand.

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

1. Chamber Report

Chamber Director Nancy Smith updated the Council on the planning occurring to complete Christmas Lighting and begin Ice Fest in January. The Chamber is undergoing the annual process to review what has occurred, what worked well and what didn't, and how best to move into next year's planning. She noted the annual Chamber Banquet that will occur in February and discussed Council attendance at the final weekend of Christmas Lighting. Council briefly discussed last weekend's Christmas Lighting Event attendance that is believed to have been the largest turnout thus far and how difficult it is to try to estimate the actual number of attendees. Director Smith commented on the use of lodging tax dollars for advertising and noted that very minimal amounts are used for Christmas Lighting directly. Discussion continued on bus parking and coordination for the trains and other tour companies.

2. Public Works Facility Plan Update with RH2 Engineering

City Administrator Joel Walinski gave a brief background to Council on the Public Works Facility Planning process and introduced Erik Howe, P.E. of RH2 Engineering. He noted that additional capacity for the Wastewater Plant is one of the main reasons for the need to expand, as well as upgrading the facilities, machinery of the Wastewater Plant and storage area for Parks and Public Works. Mr. Howe reviewed the discussions that have been occurring with staff and consultants involved in the various pieces of the project, particular for specialized services. He reviewed the Phase 1 Concept Plan and Build-Out Master Plan that was provided in the packet noting the changes in the street right-of-way, new locations for the Public Works and Parks staff buildings, vehicles, equipment and storage. This process involves many facets of engineering including streets, mechanical, electrical, water, sewer, stormwater and facility designs for maximizing efficiency and space. Council discussed some specific needs in particular to the use of space for storage and the repair and maintenance of city owned vehicles/equipment. There is concern at the cost of relocating the road access and whether the City could consider purchasing additional public property within the area for future phase-in growth.

Councilmember Bretz questioned the concept of whether the current location of the facilities is the right location and if there has been discussion in the past about finding a different location, with exception to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Councilmember Larsen stated that there was discussion of this in years past and how the City did expand the properties over time as new land purchase opportunities arose. Mayor Farivar concurred and added that discussions have occurred on other potentially viable locations around town that had pros and cons; however, this

location meets many needs of the City and crew for easy access and has a central location to respond quickly to the residential and commercial areas. She added that the current County shop locations that are located on the Chumstick near North Road may be ideal; however, the County does not have a desire to liquidate those properties. Councilmember Larsen noted that the location of the Wastewater Plant creates a lack of interest for residents or businesses to even desire purchasing the City owned property. Discussion continued on other potential properties adjacent to the current owned property and options to acquire those in the future.

Council discussed where the funds will come from to address these improvements. Administrator Walinski stated that some of the funding is part of the loan/grant funds in conjunction with the Wastewater Plant Upgrade and that additional dollars will need to come from the General Fund. Funding may be borrowed from the Public Works Trust Fund, if the Legislature restores that program, or the City may have to look into more traditional borrowing as the project progresses. Council continued discussion of the current location and the impacts the expansion will have on local area residents and businesses.

3. 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

Development Services Manager Nathan Pate stated that he would like the Council to provide some guidance on how they would like to see the review process move forward for the Comprehensive Plan changes that have been completed by the Planning Commission. He noted that the entire draft document is located on the City's website. He discussed some options to begin the review process with the first option being an overall acceptance of the Planning Commission's recommendations as a whole with no changes. Another option is to consider specific sections that are identified by individual council members, which need to be studied by the Council before accepting amendments as presented. A third option is a page by page review by the Council that will be very time consuming and take away from the ability to do other city business over the course of the next year. He talked about the timeline for Comprehensive Plan changes noting that the City is behind schedule of adoption based on the statutory requirements that also has some effects on grant opportunities.

Councilmembers discussed their expectation for moving forward with the review and that there is a need to see some of the working notes of some specific areas; council members noted the Housing and Transportation Elements for particular review. Manager Pate stated that he could work on creating more highlighted summaries of the committee discussions, similar to the document he provided at the previous council meeting, to help facilitate what and how language was amended. Councilmember Larsen suggested that council members stay at a higher level to look at key elements that are changing in the Plan, he noted that the higher level is meant to provide guidance rather than specific changes that may hinder developer related decisions in the future and in the field. Mayor Farivar noted her goal to have the Council consider and approve Policy 9 regarding water hook-ups within the city's limits and urban growth area; she wants the Council to understand the ramifications of this policy to protect and ensure water right access to those that are within the boundaries administered by the City. Council discussed the option in the city code that allows for water access outside the service area when a hardship occurs; this language will remain within the code and is not part of the Plan changes. Council continued to discuss the timeline for approval and how best to approach individual reviews with staff

assistance on questions to prepare everyone for the adoption in early 2018. Mayor Farivar questioned some sections of the current redline documents from the last Planning Commission changes and made some suggestions for changes. Council questioned the age of some of the data documents that were utilized to make changes to the Plan. Manager Pate explained that this was also discussed by the Planning Commission, and that in many cases, older documents are all that is available in their complexity and that some newer information may have such minor updates that the information is not creating a major impact to the data.

4 . Resolution 22-2017 for 2018 Rate & Fee Schedule

Administrator Walinski noted the changes that have been incorporated based on prior discussions with Council to stabilize rate increases as best as possible over the next several years. He stated that Resolution 20-2017 lays out the plan to set the utility rates for the next five years, based on a percentage increase, which Council requested at the last meeting. Resolution 22-2017 includes the actual dollar changes that have been incorporated for the rate increases for the 2018 calendar year. Mayor Farivar discussed the expectation to keep the rate increase as a stable set rate each year and suggested that the rate increase be further modified based on the average of 3.75% each year. Council discussed the minimal change that stabilizing the percentage would have on the actual dollar amount and noted that the current structure will be fine as each of the years is staying below the former figure of 4-5% each year.

Councilmember Larsen voiced his concern at approving Resolution 20-2017 that will set the rate increases for the next 5 years, regardless of the language included to amend the rates; he is not comfortable with voting on this item and committing future Council's to the rate structure. He added that he has not seen the full draft plan and does not know what the funding increases will be used for. Council discussed some of the major projects that have been included in the five-year plan to include the Wastewater Plant Upgrade, the Water Plant meter replacements and building a reserve for the Water Fund. Councilmember Neighbors stated that her impression of the discussions that have been occurring over the past several months does include the projects noted and that the decision to create a stable annual increase over time, to avoid a major one-time increase, was the expectation. Council continued to discuss whether they would like to approve and commit to the five-year plan or to consider a lesser term of commitment or rejecting approval of the resolution in its entirety.

Council questioned some specific areas of changes within Resolution 22-2017 for the 2018 rates regarding some of the water rate changes and Festhalle rate changes.

5. Council Open Discussion

Manager Pate noted the plan for an upcoming tour of the new Hampton Hotel. Administrator Walinski updated the Council on recent discussions with several Riverbend Drive residents regarding the existing access off of KOA. With the completion of the new road this access will no longer be used as an access point for recreational vehicles.. However it still is prudent for the City to have the access remain to provide an emergency access or access for City services.

Council had a brief discussion on the noise from Oktoberfest versus downtown businesses and how the code is enforced for violations based on a formal complaint being submitted.

Study Session adjourned at 12:25 PM.

APPROVED



Cheryl K. Farivar
Mayor

ATTEST



Chantell Steiner
Finance Director/City Clerk