



## City of Leavenworth

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### City Council

Carl J. Florea - *Mayor*  
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Sharon Waters  
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Jason Lundgren  
Anne Hessburg – *Mayor Pro Tem*  
Zeke Reister  
City Administrator - *Vacant*

March 31, 2020

Members of the Community,

Well, things are really changing. Until this virus came along, I had only participated in a video conference one other time. It was OK, but I wasn't too excited about it. I prefer the old fashion way. You know, with real flesh and blood encounters, where the other attendees are three dimensional and don't flicker or pause while their words continue on.... You remember those times, right?

Well, this morning I just participated in my 4<sup>th</sup> video conference of this week, and it's only Tuesday morning! It has been interesting, to say the least. On the call this morning, someone was musing whether we were establishing a new "norm" and that these conferences would be "how things are done" moving forward. In some ways, and for some things, it might make sense. This meeting today was project-related and involved several people from Spokane, a couple from Wenatchee, and three of us from the City. So, to save the time and expense of travel, these video conference meetings might make sense to continue and make it the new "norm".

But there are other things, like our Council meetings, for example, where we conducted the last one by phone, and are now exploring adding video conferencing as an option, where it will not replace the old and become the new "norm." When this is over, we will go back to the old face-to-face meetings. However, what may occur is that this new option of video conferencing may be added to the meeting rather than replacing it, so that we will move forward with a hybrid, which could be the best of both worlds. People who cannot come to meetings but are interested to "attend" by video. This might have pushed us more quickly to where we should be.

Then there are those things, that once this is over, will simply go away. The video option will be shelved and we will return to holding them with face-to-face flesh and blood meetings. Under this category, I would place something that we will be involved with over the next two days. Myself, then my department heads, and finally the Council and some chamber reps, will be interviewing four finalists for the open position of City Administrator. All of these three interviews will be done by video conference. This is not how this should be done, in my mind. It just isn't. Three dimensional matters. Flesh and blood matters. However, it is the sign of where we are in this season of "stay home, stay healthy" that we are doing this. If you are thinking, "well, you control this, if you don't like it, don't do it." True. But it is also true that we started this process before this need to "stay home" happened. And, we have candidates who have applied in good faith, and we want to consider them in good faith. We can't expect them to tread water until travel opens up. They certainly can pursue other options. So, I have chosen to move forward, doing something completely out of my character and preference, and something I hope to never have to repeat.

What I still am thinking at this point, however, is.... We can hopefully narrow the field, or even come to consensus on one candidate to be our new administrator. But I can't imagine offering the person a contract without first being able to see them face-to-face and shake their hand. Just can't imagine it.... But, if I am honest, I am doing a lot these days that I couldn't imagine doing just a short time ago! Time will tell!



**Carl J. Florea, Mayor**

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