

LEAVENWORTH CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES October 10, 2023

Mayor Carl Florea called the October 10, 2023 Study Session to order at 5:32 PM.

Council Present: Mayor Carl Florea, Sharon Waters, Clint Strand, Jason Lundgren, Anne Hessburg, Marco Aurilio and Tibor Lak.

Council Absent: Zeke Reister

Staff Present: Matthew "Selby", Chantell Steiner, Lilith Vespier, Tom Wachholder, Andi Zontek-Backstrum, John Schons and Andrea Fischer.

1. Chamber Report

Executive Director Troy Campbell from the Chamber of Commerce reported on Oktoberfest 2023 which is happening now in Leavenworth. The first weekend of Oktoberfest was a success. On Friday in 2022 there were 1,300 visitors and this year there were around 2,400 visitors with 991 being locals. There are three ambassador groups helping each weekend. Chelan County Sherrif Mike Morrison stopped by and felt the event was in good shape. The shuttle service is a success with many people utilizing it. On Saturday there were 600 people in line at 12:20 PM, fortunately all of them were able to get into the event. Saturday the Chamber counted the third highest number of footfalls on Front Street since they have started counting in July of 2021. Councilmember Strand asked if the footfalls during Oktoberfest translate to December numbers. Director Campbell does not know, but is hopeful in any case. Councilmember Aurilio asked if the Chamber would grow Oktoberfest, to which Director Campbell stated he would like to keep Oktoberfest on a smaller scale to accommodate the town. The biggest complaint they have received is the fact that the tickets sell out so quickly. Chamber President Kevin Rieke stated that he heard from the visitors who did not get into Oktoberfest that they had a great time in town, and Director Campbell stated that there are a lot of things to do in Leavenworth. He suggests visitors look at the calendar on Leavenworth.org to find all of the things happening around town at any time.

The checks for the recreation ambassadors were just mailed out to the non-profit groups that participated this summer.

The Chamber is starting to prepare for Village of Lights: Christmastown: as the lights in Front Street Park are starting to be put up in between Oktoberfest weekends and will have some fancier lights than usual.

The Chamber Board has two seats that need to be filled this election cycle which is happening at the end of November with the winners announced in December.

2. Downtown Recycling and Big Belly Trash Cans

Public Works Director Tom Wachholder introduced CIP Manager/Deputy Public Works Director Andi Zontek-Backstrum and Parks Division Supervisor John Schons to offer a presentation about Big Belly trash cans and what they can offer the City.

Currently the City is spending 39 hours per week emptying garbage in the downtown core between the Public Works Utilities department and the Parks department. The City previously looked at Big Belly trash cans, but it was not financially feasible at the time. Currently, there are many more designs to choose from, and compared to what we spend in time for the garbage services in the City this has become more feasible. It will save the City around \$7,300 per month and free up Public Works staff to do other things.

The Big Belly trash cans can hold up to three times more than our current trash cans which will reduce the time spent checking and emptying trash cans. The City is looking at the Sense model, which will offer feedback to the employees on when it needs to be emptied, further reducing the time spent dealing with the trash. The City would only get the Sense trash cans in the high traffic areas where garbage tends to fill faster, and the rest of the cans will not have the sensor, but can be checked at the same time when emptying the Big Belly cans with the sensor, assuming trash fills at the same rate everywhere in downtown. This will lower the cost of labor to empty the trash cans. These garbage cans will work with our automatic garbage truck.

There are two options for purchasing the Big Belly trash cans. We could buy them outright, or we could rent them. To purchase these trash cans, it will cost the City \$387,500 which includes 10 of the Smart trash cans, and 45 of the Sense trash cans. To rent the same number of trash cans, it would cost \$13,000 initially for shipping, then would cost \$5,600 per month(?). This includes the installation, annual cleaning and inspection with ongoing service for the length of our lease. The rental option is nice as it puts the maintenance responsibility on the vendor. The biggest downside for buying outright, is we are responsible for the upkeep and will have to service them ourselves.

These cans are bear-proof and can be used for recycling and composting as well. Waste Loop is wanting to start a pilot recycling program downtown, which these trash cans can accommodate. Winton is willing to collect the compost from these cans and haul to their site for a fee. There have been recycling programs in the past, which resulted in so much contamination the recycling had to be thrown away which defeats the purpose. The City is picking up cardboard to recycle seven days per week, and Public Works staff needs to remove garbage from the cardboard in order to recycle it.

The trash cans can be wrapped in a design of our choosing to go with our theme. Director Zontek-Backstrum spoke to the facilities staff at Link Transit as they have been using these trash cans for a while now, they love them and are looking to get more.

The Council is supportive of a two-year rental option to try them out and see how it works.

Director Wachholder gave an update on the recycling center. The City is working with Waste Loop to get new signage for the recycling center letting residents know that the yard waste is for residential customers only. Winton will be accepting our yard waste on a more regular basis, as opposed to storing it in the cemetery for longer periods of time.

3. Resolution XX-2023 – Rate & Fee Schedule 2024 Draft Call for Changes

Director Steiner stated staff is looking for direction on how much to charge for utilities in 2024. The Council will be passing a professional services agreement with HDR at the evening meeting to conduct a utility rate study which will give the City guidance on how to bill utilities, however we are in between at this point. The rates that are proposed are based on the biennial budget.

HDR is going to be looking at our current rate structure and the possibility of billing per gallon rather than a base rate will be investigated. They will be looking at the rates with a conservation mindset and utilizing our new meters. It is also going to update the system development charges which have not been changed since 2008.

The Council was supportive of the recommended increases from staff.

The Festhalle, cemetery and parking fees still need to be updated which will be presented at the November 14, 2023 meeting before it is passed in December.

4. 2023 Project Tracker/2023 Future Council Agenda Items

Mayor Florea asked the Council if they have any questions on the project updates provided. Staff responded to questions on items related to personnel, Bed & Breakfast density, roundabout at Icicle Road, grants and grant writing, cottage housing and surveys for the public.

The City's new plow trucks will be arriving in November 2024. The new blower is here and training will be happening on October 31, 2023. the street sweeper is coming soon.

5. Council Updates/Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

Mayor Florea asked the City Council for suggestions for future topics for Study Sessions. Councilmember Aurilio asked to start researching changing the form of government again. It was discussed to hold off talking about this until January 2024 after the elections are over. Councilmember Waters suggested a Fire Committee to discuss wildfire topics and develop plans.

Study Session adjourned at 6:46 PM.

APPROVED



Carl Florea
Mayor

ATTEST



Andrea Fischer
City Clerk