

CITY OF LAKE STEVENS
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/RETREAT MINUTES
Friday, January 18, 2019 and Saturday, January 19, 2019
9565 Semiahmoo Parkway, Blaine, WA 98230

CALL TO ORDER: 9:00 a.m. by Mayor John Spencer

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Daughtry, Gary Petershagen, Kurt Hilt, Todd Welch, Rauchel McDaniel and Brett Gailey

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Marcus Tageant

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: City Administrator Gene Brazel, Finance Director Barb Stevens, Human Resources Director Teri Smith, Human Resources Specialist/Executive Assistant Julie Good, Community Development Director Russ Wright, Public Works Director Eric Durpos, Police Chief John Dyer, City Clerk Kathy Pugh, Capital Projects Coordinator Aaron Halverson (1/18/2019, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Mayor Spencer convened the meeting at 9:09 a.m. for the purpose of conducting a special meeting/retreat to discuss city business as summarized below, with no action to take place.

Capital Program: Capital Projects Coordinator Halverson shared a PowerPoint on the City's capital program and reviewed the status of the "Big 5" projects, which are North Cove Park/Main Street, Frontier Heights, South Lake Stevens Road Multi Use Path, 20th Street SE improvements and Village Way Access. Also discussed were facilities improvements including the Police Department, the Public Works shop remodel, fuel and decant facilities, and acquisition of property for a Community Conference Center.

The Police Department facility needs were discussed, and the Mayor said it is important to move forward with a multi-pronged effort, which includes making an offer on an alternative location and working with another architectural firm to see if the current concept for Chapel Hill could work or if a new design could be developed that would bring the construction cost down, while still meeting the needs of the Police Department well into the future.

There was discussion as to how the current building could be used once the Police Department has been relocated.

(Councilmember McDaniel arrived at 9:25 a.m.)

Discussion turned to how the library might be re-located, whether that relocation would be temporary or permanent, and that the culture of the community needs to be taken into consideration.

Coordinator Halverson next reviewed funding for the various capital projects, and each project was reviewed and discussed in detail.

Coordinator Halverson turned the conversation to the city's parks, again reviewing the status of each park and what improvements are being made.

Director Wright commented the City has received an overture from a citizen to make an open space donation of a one-acre site off Hartford/Grade Road that is encumbered by wetlands. There was discussion regarding the possibility of creating a wetland area that could be enhanced and provide for the transfer of mitigations, which might provide flexibility during development.

Turning back to parks, Director Wright identified the need to create two parks in the south end of the city, one on the west (20th Street Ballfields) side and one on the east side of SR 9 yet to be acquired. Also discussed was the long-term possibility of creating a sports location at the old landfill site. It could be a joint or regional project. Field inventory was reviewed, including the needs for Little League. Providing more sports and recreation space throughout the city was discussed, and it was noted that sporting events can help to drive the city's economy. There was discussion about additional parks the city will or possibly could acquire, including Wyatt and Sunset Parks, potentially the Bonneville Ballfields, and possibly acquiring property north of the 20th Street Ballfields for a dog park.

Coordinator Halverson next reviewed the status and funding of various transportation projects within the city including the 79th Avenue SE access road to Cavelero Park, 20th Street SE, the South Lake Stevens Road Multi-Use Path, Village Way access project, and 24th Street SE and 91st Avenue SE extensions, as well as various sidewalk projects.

Director Wright provided an overview of the improvements for North Cove Park and said it is at 30% design, and that the goal is to have the park improvements be cohesive with the downtown plan. Coordinator Halverson added the North Cove Park project is underway with Public Works taking the lead on Phase 1. The steps of this project were reviewed and discussed in detail, and there was an in-depth discussion of the proposed Pavilion. Administrator Brazel shared the proposed design of the Pavilion and said the general design is an open concept intended to keep the lake visible. Council was supportive of this project.

(Coordinator Halverson left the meeting at 12:00 p.m.)

UGA Expansion: Director Wright opened the conversation by reviewing the land use and comprehensive plan statistics, noting the community has grown by 412%. He reviewed the growth targets and discussed the goals of the Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2050 plan. Director Wright said the city has hired a consultant who is moving forward with an updated Buildable Lands Report, which will also consider the city's unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA).

There was discussion on the pros and cons of expanding the city's UGA to the north and/or to the south, and on how those areas might be utilized as either residential or industrial areas for future development purposes.

Sewer District Unification: With City Attorney Greg Rubstello participating by conference call, there was a general discussion regarding the Sewer District Unification process and the need to move forward. It was commented that there needs to be a plan for moving forward and that it is

important to make the Interlocal Agreement work. The City is anticipating a response in the coming week from the Sewer District to its letter dated December 28, 2018, and once that response is received, decisions on how to move forward can be made.

Capital Development-Sidewalks: Director Wright reviewed the history of sidewalks and the waiver program, and the public's interest in having more sidewalks in the city. Staff's suggestion is that the city initiate a fee in lieu of sidewalks option for single-family construction where appropriate, and the City can then apply those fees to help develop sidewalks throughout the city. Discussion ensued, and Council was supportive of establishing a fee in lieu of sidewalks option.

Economic Development: Director Wright introduced the discussion and said the question is, does the city have the infrastructure that will bring investment. There was discussion as to how economic development can be pursued, and the importance of developing a strategy. Also discussed was the need to develop infrastructure, such as sewer, to bring that development here. Director Wright suggested it is important to consider financial strategy, recruitment and investment processes, and incentives, as well as identifying a desired outcome. The city will need to focus on how it can make the community unique and vibrant. A suggested focus was sports and other types of recreation.

The discussion turned to a suggestion of completing a city-initiated rezone along 20th Avenue SE to expand the Commercial District zoning, and rezoning near Haggen's from Mixed Use to Commercial District to make the properties more inviting to retail.

In response to Director Wright's question, Council was generally supportive of the idea of bringing in a sports event or other similar event, possibly with the assistance of a sponsor to spur economic development.

Mayor Spencer summarized that there was a strong interest in completing rezoning as suggested, identifying what the incentives are for businesses to invest in Lake Stevens and to move forward with attracting a sporting event.

Property for Food Bank: Mayor Spencer updated there is a potential purchaser for the property on 20th Street SE next to Trestle Station, generally known as the "nursery property", who would then donate the property to the Food Bank. The discussion is that the building that would be constructed would then house the Food Bank, Family Center and provide space for Veterans Commission services as well.

Fireworks: Mayor Spencer commented that citizens have raised concerns about fireworks regarding safety and noise and that Council has not addressed these concerns. Police Chief Dyer agreed with the Mayor's comments and recommended from a public safety standpoint that fireworks be banned. He added that enforcing laws against illegal fireworks is difficult when fireworks are allowed. Discussion ensued, and there was support that the question of banning fireworks be put to an advisory vote. Also discussed was the importance of enforcement of fireworks laws on the days when it is not legal to shoot them off.

At 4:10 p.m. the meeting was recessed to January 19, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Mayor Spencer reconvened the meeting and called it to order at 8:34 a.m. on Saturday, January 19, 2019.

Transportation Benefit District: Director Stevens reviewed the history of the city establishing and assuming a Transportation Benefit District (TBD), and requested Council direction as to their preference for a \$20 vehicle tab fee which could be implemented by resolution, or a voted sales tax of up to .02%, which would need to be voted on again every ten years. Director Stevens commented that the tab fee requires an interlocal agreement with Department of Licensing and that it is six months from initiation before the city will receive any of the revenue. She added that if Council moves in the direction of a sales tax, the Department of Revenue collects the tax and distributes it to the city. If Council determines to place a sales tax on the November ballot and it passes, sales tax would begin to be collected January 1 and there is a two-month lag before distribution of the revenue to the city. Director Stevens reviewed the election timeline including the need for pro/con statements and that it would be important to retain a consultant to help with community outreach and making appointments of citizens to write the pro and con statements.

Discussion ensued as to Council preferences for moving forward and the fact that even with revenue from the TBD, the City will still need to provide general fund dollars to help pay for pavement maintenance and preservation. Director Durpos said that the city's roads are deteriorating faster than the city can pay to maintain them, and Administrator Brazel added that it is not typical for a city to pay \$1 million from its general fund to maintain and preserve roads. There was consensus to move forward with an education campaign and to put the sales tax on the November ballot.

Boards and Commissions: Director Wright said that some of the duties of the Arts Commission and Parks Board overlap and that the two groups have started to blend, including creating a working group consisting of two members from each group. While the Arts Commission is primarily responsible for providing art in the community, it has done more recreational programming than the Parks Board, including Music by the Lake and Theater in the Park, as well as other programming. Combining the boards as the City moves forward with the creation of its Parks and Recreation program would be a way to move forward, and Director Wright requested Council direction. Discussion ensued and Council requested staff move forward to combine the Arts Commission and Parks Board into one board.

Making Lake Stevens a Better Place to Live: Administrator Brazel began the conversation commenting that the new Pavilion will have high speed internet and other technology as appropriate. The widening of Main Street will allow for the installation of infrastructure to support current and some future technology needs. He cautioned, however, that there is no way to predict what the future holds for technology. Discussion ensued and there was general agreement that the city needs to be more proactive in providing technology infrastructure, including charging stations for electric vehicles, and making more highspeed internet conduits available. Mayor Spencer clarified that Council is requesting more information, and this will be brought back.

City Operations: Director Smith said that current practice is to bring all FTE changes to Council for approval including budgeted positions, repurposing and reclassifications done through the budget process. She requested direction as to whether Council would like to continue in this fashion, or if position changes that are within the budget could be processed administratively. Discussion ensued and Council commented it is important for them to be involved with staffing decisions. There was general agreement that position changes that take place within the budget could be brought forward on the Consent Agenda and removed to Action or Discussion if Council wished further discussion.

Director Smith said there have been internal discussions about changing staffing hours to four tens (4/10's) and possibly being closed on Fridays. The questions are how to meet the needs of customers, creating efficiencies in work and meeting employee needs. There are some soft savings with 4/10's. Director Smith added there appears to be about 50/50 support amongst staff for a shift to 4/10's, with perhaps the greatest support coming from Public Works. Discussion ensued and there was general agreement that 4/10 shifts will be evaluated on a case-by-case, job-by-job and department-by-department basis and to keep City Hall offices open Monday through Friday.

Adjourn.

The special meeting/retreat was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.



John Spencer, Mayor



Kathy Pugh, City Clerk