



CITY OF WHITE SALMON

City Council Special (Retreat) Meeting – Saturday, June 29, 2019

Council and Administrative Personnel Present

Council Members:

Jason Hartmann
Donna Heimke
Marla Keethler
Ashley Post
Amy Whiteman

Staff Present:

Pat Munyan, City Administrator
Bill Hunsaker, Fire Chief/Building Official
Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer
Ken Woodrich, City Attorney

1. Call to Order

Mayor David Poucher called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. There were approximately 3 people present, including Joyce Ebbert who moderated the meeting for the city council.

2. Presentation

Healthy Trees – Fire Wise, Tony Gilmer – Fire District #3 Safety/Training Officer (Retired DNR Forester)

Tony Gilmer, Fire District #3 Safety/Training Officer made a presentation to the city council regarding healthy trees and fires. Council members discussed tree health and maintenance with Tony Gilmer.

3. Agenda Item Discussion

Joyce Ebbert, Moderator suggested to the city council they may want to prioritize the items on the agenda in order to have the discussion council members want to have given the limited time available.

Council members identified the initial priority items as follows:

- Council and Mayor Roles
- Inclusivity
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Economic Development

4. Council and Mayor Roles

Ken Woodrich provided an overview of council and mayor roles under the “strong mayor” form of government which the City of White Salmon operates as.

The council and staff discussed roles.

The council discussed reviewing ordinances for inconsistencies and other areas that could use improvement or clarification. There was discussion of possibly establishing a special committee that would just review ordinances or having the Community Development Committee begin a review of ordinances.

The council discussed council meeting formats. There was a consensus of the council to hold six workshops throughout the year to address a single topic. Staff will email council members to determine the preferred dates and times for holding workshops.

5. Inclusivity

Amy Martin said that it is up to the council if it wants to discuss and address social issues. She said the city council should not shy away from these issues. She suggested holding an inclusivity training for council members and management staff that would run from 2 to 4 hours.

Marla Keethler said she does think it is important to address the capacity of council members and staff when issues are brought up. She said the council needs to consider what it is taking on and can it be delivered. Keethler said she does believe the council wants to create a compassionate community and that is a life quality.

Ken Woodrich said the comprehensive plan update can address things such as quality of life.

Council members discussed inclusivity.

Council members said they would like to see an agenda related to inclusivity training prior to scheduling the training. The majority of council members thought the training might be a good idea.

6. Infrastructure – Streets

Mayor Poucher said he would like to add an agenda item to the next council meeting requesting the city council to direct him to write a letter to the state regarding narrowing the travel lanes in order to widen the north shoulder on Highway 141 in the vicinity of the Loop Trail and lowering the speed limit to 25 mph.

The council discussed Highway 141 and the Loop Trail in relation to pedestrian traffic and safety issues.

Bill Hunsaker noted that narrower travel lanes on Highway 141 could cause problems with truck traffic.

The council discussed the Hood River Bridge project and the city's 6-year transportation program.

The council discussed the funding opportunities for street projects. There was a consensus that the issue would be referred to the City Operations Committee for further consideration and possible recommendations back to the city council.

7. Infrastructure – Water

The city council and staff discussed priorities related to the city's water system including replacing the 14" main line from Buck Creek, the new slow sand filter project, establishing a booster pump in Bingen in case of an emergency so Bingen could supply water to White Salmon.

The council and staff discussed the city's ability to charge "impact fees" and the differences between development charges and impact fees.

8. Infrastructure – Broadband

The city council agreed not to focus on broadband at this time as there are rapid changes happening related to the issue.

9. Infrastructure – Parks

The city council discussed the desire to replace the playground equipment in the park including developing a "natural play area" with logs and boulders to climb on. It was noted that possible grant funding may be available for this project. There was a consensus of the council to address replacing the playground equipment in 2020.

The city council also discussed the tennis courts. It was noted that the city does not own the tennis courts the school does. The council and staff discussed possible local cost improvements that could be made to the courts.

The city council discussed the proposed Riverfront Park. Dave Poucher updated the city council on the status of the county acquiring title to the property. He said that once the county has title the property can then be transferred to the city. Staff discussed the need for a permit from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway for a pedestrian bridge across the railroad and the possibility of obtaining grant funding from the BNSF Foundation.

10. Infrastructure – Pool

The council and staff discussed the status of the existing pool and the future decommissioning of the pool. Staff noted that the White Salmon Valley Pool Metropolitan Park District is in the process of conducting feasibility studies on the city's property across the street from Whitson Elementary and school property located on Loop Road.

11. Infrastructure – Other City Facilities

The city council discussed other city owned facilities.

Staff noted that the city hall bid will be issued July 3, 2019.

Pat Munyan said he is meeting with US Cellular regarding a possible tower location at the Strawberry Mountain Reservoir. He said it will generate some income for the city.

The council discussed future opportunities for a new city shop at the Spring Street property.

12. Housing

The city council discussed short-term rentals, commercial zoning, and annexations. It was noted the Community Development Committee will be bringing a draft ordinance to the city council that provides for registering/permitting short-term rentals. It was noted that the ordinance does not address zoning of short-term rentals.

Staff noted that a clearer annexation process is needed. It was noted that the Planning Commission would also like to see the annexation process addressed.

The city council and staff discussed the desire to know what land is available in the city limits and within the urban exempt area. Staff noted that the city is working with the county on a buildable lands inventory and housing analysis that will address both the urban exempt area and lands within the city limits.

The city council discussed the idea of establishing partnerships related to housing including Insitu.

Mayor Poucher updated the city council regarding the efforts to establish a community land trust in the area. He said that Proud Ground will be making a presentation at a special city council meeting on July 29th. Poucher said he has invited a number of people representing several organizations to the presentation.

13. Economic Development

The city council generally discussed economic development and said it would be great to see incubator spaces established in White Salmon. Staff said working with White Salmon Valley School would be useful in establishing the incubator spaces.


14. Other Items

Jason Hartmann said he would like the city to address curb-side compost pickup in the future.

18. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

David Poucher, Mayor



Jan Brending, Clerk-Treasurer