

2001 06 25 SS

LAKWOOD CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

Monday, June 25, 2001

City of Lakewood

City Council Chambers

10510 Gravelly Lake Drive SW

Lakewood, WA 98499

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harrison called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: 6 - Mayor Bill Harrison; Deputy Mayor Claudia Thomas; Councilmembers Ann Kirk Davis; Larry Humphrey; JosÃ© Palmas and Sherri Thomas.

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Councilmember Excused: 1 - Councilmember Doug Richardson.

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Staff Present: City Manager D. Scott Rohlfs; Assistant City Manager Jeff Butzlaff; City Attorney Dan Heid; Finance and Systems Director Galen Kidd; Community Development Director David Bugher; Public Works Director Bill Larkin; Police Chief Larry Saunders; Human Resources & Services Director Debi Young and General Services Director/City Clerk Alice Bush.

: City Manager D. Scott Rohlfs; Assistant City Manager Jeff Butzlaff; City Attorney Dan Heid; Finance and Systems Director Galen Kidd; Community Development Director David Bugher; Public Works Director Bill Larkin; Police Chief Larry Saunders; Human Resources & Services Director Debi Young and General Services Director/City Clerk Alice Bush.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

Presentation on NatureFest.

Ms. Nancy Pearson, Cascade (Tahoma) Land Conservancy, introduced Ms. Sally Larsen who spoke about the history of NatureFest and those who financially supported the event.

Ms. Pearson requested that the City partner with the Conservancy to assist with planning, outreach and seeking volunteers to help NatureFest grow. She asked that the City increase the City's contribution for printing expenses to publicize the event, assist with providing names of contacts with businesses to support the event, provide the use of the City's canopies, and help with setting up on the day of the event. The event is held the first Sunday in October.

Discussion ensued on a volunteer database that is accessible to the Conservancy; use of the City's work crew to assist with set-up; and presenting their request for assistance to the City's Events Committee.

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Presentation on community survey.

City Manager Rohlf's reviewed the results of the community/residential survey as outlined below. He noted that 403 heads of households were surveyed in the evening, resulting as follows:

Quality of Life

- 35% superior or better
- 47% about the same

Qualities Most Appreciated

- friendly community
- small town feeling
- attractive residential areas
- good police protection
- attractive park like setting
- diversity

Greatest Concerns

- safety and crime
- poor image
- run-down areas of town
- Lakewood Mall

Satisfaction with City Services

- 82% Satisfied with local services
- 9% Dissatisfied
- 9% Did not know

Satisfaction with Primary Services

- 85% Police
- 77% Street and Sidewalks
- 71% Parks and Recreation
- 69% Animal Control

Satisfaction with Secondary Services

- 85% Community Development/Building Permits
- 85% Code Enforcement
- 89% Human and Social Services

Support for Tax Increase

- 61% Very or somewhat likely to support tax increase for Police and Public Safety
- 54% Pedestrian improvements

- 54% Parks and Recreation
- 50% Human and Social Services, street lighting and traffic flow

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Issues Affecting the City

- 88% Activities and facilities for youth
- 79% Parks and Recreation services and facilities
- 76% Crime is a major problem in Lakewood
- 76% Redevelop Lakewood Mall
- 62% Theme park boost to local economy
- 45% Difficult to find out about major issues affecting the City

Economic Strategies

- 69% Favor attracting more retail to Lakewood
- 64% Favor providing assistance to small businesses
- 62% Felt (40%) or appear noncommittal (22%) to facilitate the proposed theme park

Importance of Town Center

- 83% Consider a well-defined town center is important

Suggestions for improving Lakewood's Image

- Reduce crime and improve safety
- Redevelop Lakewood Mall
- Improve run-down areas of town
- Keep taxes low or reduce taxes
- Beautify the city
- Develop a town center
- Have more parks
- Build more sidewalks
- Make streets more attractive

Awareness of Tax Sources

- 51% Recognize property taxes are a major source of money
- 26% Sales tax

- 14% Taxes - unspecified

- 26% Don't know

Knowledge of Tax Level

- 11% Have some knowledge of the proportion of the property tax bill that is attributable to city

- 55% Believe that taxes in Lakewood are about the same as other cities

- 24% Believe taxes are higher, 6% are lower and 15% don't know

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Attitude toward how City communicates to the Community

- 65% City doing a good or excellent job providing information to citizens

- 28% Poor, 7% unsure

Sources of Information

- 73% The News Tribune

- 53% Word of mouth

- 23% TV news

- 12% City Connections newsletter

City Connections

- 46% Recall receiving issues

- 69% Read most or some of the articles

- 29% Skimmed it

Internet Access

- 56% Have internet access

- Those living in Lakewood 10 years or less are likely to have Internet access (66% versus 47%)

Employment

- 43% Work full-time

- 11% Work part-time

- 85% Commute to work

- 13% Work out of home

- 36% Commute to Tacoma

- 34% Commute to Lakewood

Demographics

- Median age - 50%
- Children - 40% have children
- 12 years (median) as a Lakewood resident
- 64% Single family households
- 82% Caucasian

Redevelopment/Economic Development Administrator Bock then presented the results of the business survey.

Four hundred two (402) randomly selected Lakewood businesses were interviewed with owners and managers.

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Satisfaction with City Services

- 83% Satisfied with Police
- 80% Business license
- 73% Street maintenance
- 71% Street and sidewalks
- 69% Building permits

Lakewood as a place to do business in comparison with other cities

- 19% Good or better
- 43% About the same
- 24% Not as good

Priority for Specific Issues

- 91% Reduce crime
- 79% More business-friendly climate
- 68% Flexible sign ordinance
- 73% More retail stores
- 64% Beautify city

Discussion ensued on analyzing the information and what the City can do; better clarifying the results of the information on tax increases; clarifying that the term "run down" places in the City did not come from the City.

Council recessed at 8:32 p.m. and reconvened at 8:42 p.m.

Summary and review of Land Use and Development Codes.

Principal Planner Nelson briefly highlighted pertinent sections of the Land Use Development Code. She explained that the Council and Joint Planning Advisory Board will be meeting on July 9, 2001 to discuss the codes.

Discussion ensued on providing elder care housing for seniors; timeframe for adopting the zoning code; comments from the Oak Park neighborhood; and determining whether to schedule a public hearing before the Council.

Redevelopment Plan Review.

Community Development Director Bugher provided an overview of the Redevelopment Plan and proposed concepts for traffic and development.

Discussion ensued on the number of people who participated in the review workshops.

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Creating Chapter 2.52 of the Lakewood Municipal Code relative to establishing a Telecommunications Advisory Board.

City Attorney Heid reviewed the proposed ordinance to establish a Telecommunications Advisory Board.

Councilmember Palmas requested that an ad hoc committee be established versus a standing committee to develop policy recommendations on telecommunications to the Council. He then asked that the scope of the committee include telecommunications and information technology.

Discussion ensued on how other cities handle telecommunications. It was the consensus of the Council to not schedule this item for the July 2, 2001 Council's agenda.

ITEMS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR THE JULY 2, 2001 REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Creating Chapter 2.52 of the Lakewood Municipal Code relative to establishing a Telecommunications Advisory Board. - (Ordinance - Consent Agenda)
2. Awarding a bid for the construction of storm drainage improvements on Hipkins Road. - (Motion - Consent Agenda)
3. Appointing individuals to the Planning Advisory Board. - (Appointments - Regular Agenda)

Mayor Harrison announced that Item No. 1 will not be placed on the July 2, 2001 Council's agenda.

Mayor Harrison requested Council to provide him with their input on the Planning Advisory Board appointments.

City Attorney Heid reviewed the code on the sale and discharge of fireworks.

BRIEFING BY THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Rohlfs reported on the legislative backfill of Initiative 695 funds and the likelihood that the City will receive backfill funds for a year.

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City Manager Rohlfs indicated that staff will provide a summary of the sexual offender Bill for the Council and that staff will be asking Council for direction on this matter.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Davis reported on the Lakewood Commuter Rail station and funding for parking.

Councilmember Davis asked for an update on the Humane Society audit.

Councilmember Thomas commented on the Lakewood Garden Tours on June 23, 2001.

Councilmember Thomas asked for an update on the treatment of Lake Steilacoom and the Health Department testing of all the lakes.

Councilmember Thomas reported that there are a number of mobile homes at Fir Acres parked on the City's right-of-way and that the City is being blamed for having to relocate these homes when actually the land owner is evicting these units.

Councilmember Thomas asked for an update on the work of the Puget Sound Energy Ad Hoc Committee.

Councilmember Palmas reported on the veterans memorial kick-off meeting to introduce a proposed concept for a veterans memorial. He indicated that the next steps are to establish an ad hoc committee and a fundraising committee.

Mayor Harrison asked staff to determine how requests for funding such as NatureFest and Lakewold Gardens should be brought before the Council for funding consideration.

Mayor Harrison reported that the police volunteer program received an honorable mention award by the Association of Washington Cities.

Mayor Harrison asked for an update on the Main Street project.

Mayor Harrison asked for an update on the Hipkins Road traffic calming project.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

BILL HARRISON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

ALICE M. BUSH, CMC

CITY CLERK

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