

CITY OF SULTAN COUNCIL RETREAT – February 19, 2022

Mayor Wiita called the retreat to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Due to the mobile nature of the retreat there was no remote attendance option; the meeting was in person attendance only. Mayor Wiita called roll and the following were in attendance:

Councilmembers: Morgan, Aldrich, Dearborn, Hund, and Sivewright. Absent: Neigel.

Staff: City Administrator Ibershof, Public Works Director Morgan, Community Development Director Galuska, Finance Director Erdman, Operations Manager MacDicken, and City Clerk Pevey.

Mayor Wiita confirmed the retreat would start off with a tour of facilities, Beginning with the wastewater treatment plant. At approximately 9:05 a.m. the retreat was paused and all participants walked to the wastewater treatment plant located at 30403 US2, Sultan.

At approximately 9:15 a.m. the meeting was resumed and Public Works Director Morgan provided an informational tour of the wastewater treatment plant. During the tour PWD Morgan explained the various elements of the treatment plant upgrade. The questions and discussions focused on the various aspects of the plant.

At approximately 10:00 a.m. the retreat was paused and all participants walked back to city hall and proceeded in vehicles to the Hammer Property at 14310 Dogwood Court, Sultan.

At approximately 10:25 a.m. the retreat was resumed at the Hammer Property and Community Development Director Galuska explained the potential park project work completed to date that included public input to determine the needs of a potential park at this location. He explained the history of the property and how it came to be owned by the city sewer fund as well as the property features. Discussion followed on the initial project and the possibility of future upgrades and expansion potential.

At approximately 10:45 a.m. the retreat was paused and all participants proceeded in vehicles to the water treatment plant at 31020 124th Street S.E., Sultan.

At approximately 11:00 a.m. the retreat resumed at the water treatment plant and Public Works Director Morgan along with Operations Manager MacDicken provided a tour of the facility. During the tour discussion focused on the various aspects of the upcoming plant upgrade and the status of the new installed cell tower at this location.

At approximately 11:45 a.m. the retreat was paused and participants drove to the Public Works Field Office at 703 1st Street, Sultan.

At approximately 12:00 p.m. the retreat resumed with a lunch discussion on various projects budgeted for 2022 with the timing of those projects as follows:

- City hall parking lot expansion project – planned for mid-summer to early fall.
- HVAC upgrade completed at the police department facility
- Covered parking at the Public Works Field Office to include a lean to structure by the fence adjacent to the current dog park. With an anticipated completion date of December 2022 or 2023 depending on project costs versus funding budgeted.
- Irrigation system replacement at Osprey Park
 - Discussion on small treatment system installation on the current well utilized for irrigation versus connecting to the city water line nearby. Anticipated completion by end of summer.
- Osprey Park basketball court gutter replacement – Anticipated completion by end of third quarter.
- Gazebo ADA ramp installation – Crew to install and aim to be completed before the Summer Shindig.

- Brief discussion on revitalizing the volunteer project to assist with beautification project in city parks.
- Discussion regarding rising construction costs due to inflation. It is estimated that roof replacement at the Gazebo and PW Field Office would cost approximately \$70,000.
- Travelers Park wayfinding signs and dog park – Anticipated completion end of second quarter.
- Evacuation Trail Lighting – Design completed by end of third quarter. Confirmed this project is being funded by a county grant to the city. Discussion followed on theft deterrent lighting.
- Hammer Property Park – The city is obtaining money for the design expected completion by the end of 2022 with construction in 2023.
- Utility Rate Study – Work beginning with first council discussion planned at the council workshop set for March 3rd to review the capital facility plans, general facility charges, and other factors to determine the appropriate utility rates.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades – Contract for construction management approved at the February 24th meeting authorized staff to post the call for bids. Staff anticipate bringing the contract award to council in April. Engineers estimate predicts the cost to be approximately \$17 million dollars and staff is suggesting a Department of Ecology loan to fund this project.
- Stormwater Facility Fee – Staff suggest council considers implementing this fee as the stormwater fund is the only utility without a fee. Discussion on the city taking over retention pond maintenance currently assigned to HOA's and the need to upgrade the stormwater utility with additional staffing to handle the workload. Further discussion on this topic at the March 3rd workshop.
- US2 improvements – The city tied for 1st place to obtain a Rural Town Centers and Corridors Grant and will hear the results of that grant application in the next few weeks. In addition, Mayor Wiita testified at the Transportation Committee. Staff continue working with WSDOT to understand and follow their process with the city remaining in the driver's seat to ensure this project moves forward. Discussion and confirmation of progress with Mayor Wiita at the helm, new legislative maps slated to be implemented in 2023 splitting the city into two districts (39th District and 12th District) creating six legislatures working on behalf of the city with Senator Hawkins appearing to be the driving force. All parties are in agreement on the need for US2 improvements.
- Water Treatment Plant – initial design work completed with construction set to begin in 2023. Staff suggesting a Department of Health loan to pay for the project and confirmation that Senator DeIBene had secured water infrastructure money towards the project in the legislative budget. The hard work of Finance Director Erdman on the recent 2020 audit was acknowledged. She cleared up previous audit findings paving the way to move forward on this project.

At approximately 1:00 p.m. the lunch meeting paused and participants toured the Public Works facility with discussion on the various elements of the facility including projects completed at that location to date and future planned projects.

At approximately 1:35 p.m. the retreat paused and participants travelled back to City Hall at 319 Main Street, Sultan.

At approximately 1:55 p.m. the retreat resumed and the following topics were discussed:

What does community engagement meant to you

Administrator Ibershof opened the floor to input from councilmembers on ways they want staff to improve communication and engagement with the public. Suggestions presented as follows:

- Council felt the city was doing a good job with the city newsletter, website, and social media outlets.
- Suggestion to implement community tour/open house of facilities with projects related to them such as the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Water Treatment Plant, Public Works Field Office, and Hammer Property Park Project.
- Discussion on newsletter push to renters and seniors that don't receive the utility bill and a question regarding the cost to mail newsletters to a wider area than utility billing customers.

- Suggestion utilizing a reader board along US2 to call attention to special events and meetings.
- Suggestion of a city booth at events such as the Shindig, Farmers Market, Trunk or Treat, etc. with a combination of boardmembers and staff represented to call attention to work performed by the city.
- Possible Town Hall meetings to bring attention to special projects such as the Hammer Property park project and US2 improvements.
- Discussion on ways to push notificaitons to citizens via the website and other aveneus via email or text message.

Police Services and Mental Health

Police Chief Martin started the discussion by confirming the city currently has four Snohomish County Sheriffs Deputies assigned to Sultan providing 24/7 police coverage. He also confirmed there are 28 deputies, 1 administrative assistant, and 1 detective assigned to the East Precinct of the Sheriff's Office located in Sultan. He confirmed the majority of crimes were property crimes such as burglary and theft. He confirmed the Sheriff's Office was down 24 deputies and experiencing a staff shortage and that they are in their annual rotation process anticipating a 30% change of deputy staffing. He is actively recruiting officers who want to be in the East Precinct and have an active role in the community. He assured the council there would be continued police staffing for the community despite the changes and challenges.

Discussion shifted to multiple officers frustration with recent legal changes and what that meant for police operations. He explained officers can't pursue a suspect until they have established that a crime has occurred and that there is probable cause to pursue arrest of a suspect. He further defined that probable cause has to be in relationship to a violent crime and provided real life examples of recent situations where they were hindered by the law. He further stated that legislative changes on probable cause and the use of force came with it implications of officer decertification and personal punitive damages if an officer was found to be in violation of the laws.

He stated that due to the recent legislative changes there is a misconception among the public about the need for calling 911 as they feel the police won't do anything. He stressed the importance of the need for citizens to call 911 and do their part to notify the Sheriff's Office of incidents to bring attention to the problems within the current system in order to implement necessary changes. Chief Martin stated he is working on a plan to increase foot patrols and hire off duty officers to show a presence in the community and to provide more community outreach on this topic.

There has been a significant increase in mental health phone calls and the Sheriff's Office is working with the Office of Community Health and the embeded social workers to come out and engage with citizens to offer resources and assist in upholding the law where they can. He confirmed drugs appear to be the number one cause for the increase in mental health calls. In addition there has been an uptick in suicide response calls and the Sheriff's Office is working with the Coalition Prevention group to address this issue.

Despite this he noted that drug cases are down dramatically due to the Blake decision and that the Sheriff's Office is continuing to work with the prosecutors office on how to respond and process these calls taking into account the changes to the probable cause laws. He and many involved in law enforcement are hoping for legislative fixes on the use of force and assistance with mental health professionals sent to help in these cases.

Council inquired on ways they could assist with staffing issues and discussion centered around various elements including offering bonuses, working with legislators, etc. Chief Martin confirmed the city already offers great incentives to officers in the form of training, support, etc. Mayor Wiita confirmed the city is working on a grant in coordination with the cities of Goldbar and Monroe to obtain a mental health counselor to be shared by the three cities. They also suggested rallying the community to "See Something, Say Something".

Discussion shifted to nuisance properties and the chief confirmed that documentation of calls for agencies to respond is imperative to ensure progress is made to correct the situation. He provided examples of recent properties that were succesfully cleaned up when the process is implemented and tracked.

Community Events

Melody Dazey, Economic Development Tourism Manager, presented the council with current work at the visitors center including the following:

- Welcome Walk Saturday, February 26, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. focusing on introducing new members of the community to local businesses.
- Visitor Center is now open on Saturdays as of January 2022.
- Events planned for 2022 and list provided to include but not limited to:
 - Sultan Shindig returning in 2022 with details still to finalize.
 - Farmers Market set to return on every Saturday during summer 2022 with one weekend a month highlighting youth market vendors.
- Business Improvement and Retention. Dazey confirmed she is working with property owners and individual business owners to assist with their needs to improve their business and/or location.
- New website created for the Chamber of Commerce, Farmers Market, and Sultan Shindig.
- Confirmed the city has a large microbusiness population and approximately 700 letters were mailed to those businesses in an attempt to start a series of industry roundtable discussions to encourage a co-op of collaboration amongst various small business owners.

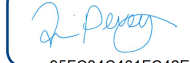
Discussion then focused on current collaboration efforts and coordination still needed between the chamber and the city. It was confirmed that in order to get the word out to citizens about events and activities it must be stated seven times in seven different ways for people to hear it.

ADJOURNMENT

Before the meeting adjourned council and staff expressed appreciation for the efforts and discussion that occurred at the retreat. Staff continued to encourage council to reach out to staff to ask questions as the discussions on various projects continue throughout the year. It was confirmed that a tour of the city dam would be scheduled for later in the year.

Mayor Wiita adjourned the council retreat at approximately 2:45 p.m.

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Tami J. Pevey, City Clerk



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Russell Wiita, Mayor