



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Title: Request for Council Action – Chamber of Commerce Contract

Preferred Agenda: March 8, 2022

Submitted By: Julie Fisher, Administrative Services Manager

Reviewed By: Christy Wurster, City Manager Pro Tem

Type of Action: Resolution ____ Motion Roll Call ____ Other ____

Relevant Code/Policy: Type Code/Policy Here

Towards Council Goal: Vision Statement: We aspire to make Sweet Home a community people find desirable to live in.
We aspire to create an economically strong environment in which businesses prosper.
Be an effective and efficient government: (5) Continue to implement financial “best” practices.
Economic Strength: (3) Collaborate with regional partners

Attachments: Chamber Contract – (Draft Track Changes and Final)

Purpose of this RCA:

To approve a contract with the Chamber of Commerce for operation of a visitor center.

Background/Context:

The City has had an agreement with the Chamber of Commerce to operate a visitor center in the City of Sweet Home for several years. In 2016 the City entered into a contract with the Chamber that defined desired outcomes for the first time. Since, staff has worked with the Chamber to refine the reporting and language of the contract.

The Chamber has requested and the Chamber Board of Directors has approved the revisions to the contract.

The Challenge/Problem:

How do we continue to support the operation of a visitor center in a transparent manner that ensures an appropriate return on the taxpayer’s investment?

Stakeholders:

- City Residents. Residents, their friends, and family are the funding source through tourism funds and taxes. They invest taxes and trust us to operate our local government as efficiently as possible.
- City Councilors. Council members are the voice of the citizens we serve. Each member of this group is interested in providing the best service possible. They must balance leadership with representation.

- Business Community/Chamber of Commerce. Local organization comprised of business owners. The Chamber operates for the benefit of its member businesses and the economic vitality of the community as a whole.
- Tourists: Tourists who visit our community may be reliant upon information provided by a visitor center.

Issues and Financial Impacts:

1. The Chamber is dependent upon this funding to operate the visitor center during non-business hours.
2. Tourists and businesses utilize the services the Chamber provides.
3. The contract is for \$15,000 in FY 2022/23, paid out in three installments of \$5,000 each throughout the year.

Elements of a Stable Solution:

Agreement with the Chamber to operate a visitor center in Sweet Home that is palatable to both entities.

Options:

1. Do nothing. The agreement expired June 30, 2021. Failure to negotiate a new agreement may cause closure of the visitor center/Chamber office during peak visitor hours.
2. Approve the contract as presented. By approving the contract, operation of the visitor center will continue with no gap in service.
3. Renegotiate the contract. Council could attempt to direct staff to renegotiate and change terms of the contract. Council would need to give staff direction as to which specific terms of the agreement they'd like revised.
4. Remand the contract to a committee to renegotiate terms. Council can always assign a review of the contract terms to a committee.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends option #2. Approve the contract with the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce for operation of a visitor center as presented. The contract is fair, and its structure encourages accountability and transparency.