



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Title: Request for Council Action – Reviewing and Approving the Contract for the Visitor’s Center

Preferred Agenda: September 12, 2023

Submitted By: Kelcey Young, City Manager

Reviewed By: Kelcey Young, City Manager

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

Towards Council Goal: Increasing Revenue Opportunities

Attachments: Sweet Home Visitor’s Center Operations Agreement

Purpose of this RCA:

Reviewing and determining whether to approve an agreement with the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce regarding operations of the Sweet Home Visitor’s 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. In 2016 the City entered into a contract with the Chamber that defined specific desired outcomes and deliverables for the first time. Since that time the City and Chamber of Commerce have entered into an agreement on an annual basis. Attached is the most recent un-signed agreement, and the agreement from 2022.

The contract changes include:

- Elimination of Saturday Visitor Hours

The Challenge/Problem:

The City of Sweet Home currently provides funding for the visitor’s center. Should the agreement lapse it is possible that Sweet Home would not have a place for visitors to come and learn more.

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.
- Executive Management Team. Comprised of six department heads, each with a responsibility to the citizens and Mayor to run their day-to-day operations as efficiently as possible. All are fiscally conservative while five are well educated and well spoken.

- Business Community/Chamber of Commerce. Local organization comprised of business owners. The Chamber operates for the benefit of its member businesses and 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.
2. Tourists and businesses are reliant upon the services the Chamber provides.

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 August 30, 2023. 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 to see changed.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends option #2. Approve the contract as presented