

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Monday, February 13, 2023
5:45 p.m.

Conference Room 303 - Shoreline City Hall
17500 Midvale Avenue North

PRESENT: Mayor Scully, Deputy Mayor Robertson, and Councilmembers McConnell, Mork, Pobee, Ramsdell, and Roberts

ABSENT: Councilmember Ramsdell

STAFF: Bristol Ellington, City Manager
John Norris, Assistant City Manager
Nate Daum, Economic Development Program Manager

GUESTS: Shoreline Chamber of Commerce Board:
Lara Grauer, Vice President, Lara Grauer Photography
Jack Malek, President, Windermere Real Estate
Erin Ison, Secretary, Erin Ison Agency, State Farm
Joseph Irons, Economic Development & Government Affairs Committee Chair,
Irons Brothers Construction
Devin Walker, Treasurer, Monka Brewing Co.
Marilla Sargent, Past President, HomeStreet Bank

At 5:49 p.m., the meeting was called to order by Mayor Scully. All Councilmembers were present except for Councilmember Ramsdell.

Nathan Daum, Economic Development Program Manager, noted the growth of the Chamber of Commerce and their work to support small businesses during the pandemic. He expressed appreciation for the partnership between the City and the Chamber to connect with businesses and provide support through their challenges.

Lara Grauer, Chamber Vice President, reviewed some of the Chamber's accomplishments. She said the Chamber is working to boost membership and increase opportunities for volunteering. Joseph Irons, Chamber Economic Development & Government Affairs Committee Chair, pointed out that the Chamber is run entirely by volunteers at this time.

A Councilmember asked if membership dropped due to businesses closing or if businesses need to rejoin. Ms. Grauer confirmed that some businesses need to be invited back and suggested that membership may have dropped off due to the pandemic and the program being conducted remotely. Mr. Daum noted that participation in virtual Chamber events increased once they were offered for free. Ms. Grauer added the Chamber's after hours, luncheon, and breakfast networking events have had good attendance.

It was asked if the Chamber could be promoted through the City's business license program. Mr. Daum stated promotional materials were previously included in a welcome packet for new Shoreline business owners and he is looking to pick the practice back up.

A question was asked about the City's next steps to provide assistance to businesses. Mr. Irons said to keep Mr. Daum coming to Chamber meetings, expand on the partnership with the Chamber, increase the frequency of meetings with Council and the Board, and invite businesses to join the Chamber.

A Councilmember asked about the benefit of making outdoor dining regulations permanent and Ms. Grauer commented there are not many restaurants in Shoreline and outdoor dining is not appealing in all areas. Devin Walker, Chamber Treasurer, stated his experience with developing outdoor dining at his brewery as more problematic than beneficial due to issues with permitting. Mr. Irons supported Mr. Walker's thoughts and shared a similar experience with clients at his construction business. He noted that permitting involves many requirements from City Code and takes too much time to process, which both increases project costs and can turn people away from the city. Jack Malek, Chamber President, suggested focusing outdoor dining in areas of demand and making sure those areas are safe and equipped to support it. He echoed the idea that permitting through the City takes longer than it should and highlighted a need to increase interdepartmental coordination in the City.

It was brought up that consistency in the permitting process may be an issue and a Councilmember asked what the City's process is for flagging this type of issue. Mayor Scully commented that permitting issues for outdoor dining is specific to that code and needs to be addressed. He said there is not a solid plan in place to flag the issue but work on improving permitting has been done and more work is to come to strengthen the process.

Mr. Irons remarked the City needs to be walkable to make outdoor dining more successful. He said to make existing areas of the city more walkable, there will be a sacrifice to parking. To increase code compliance, he suggested addressing permitting duration and using a gentle compliance approach opposed to a sterner code enforcement approach and commented more work needs to be done to support existing businesses through development. Mr. Daum stated they are working on finding opportunities to convert residential properties to commercial through pathways that are acceptable by Code.

Following a question about sidewalks, John Norris, Assistant City Manager, gave an update on some sidewalk projects in the city. Ms. Grauer advised that availability of sidewalks are a way to encourage people to walk around and dine outdoors. Mr. Irons mentioned there were concerns from the Parkwood Neighborhood Association about parking and traffic with the addition of new sidewalks but noted the benefit to safety and walkability.

A Councilmember pointed out that the State Legislature could mandate zero parking in station areas off Aurora. It was asked how much parking is needed in developing areas, and Mr. Irons responded no one size will fit all. Mayor Scully explained the City would be best to decide Development Code regulations to preserve the integrity of the city. He said the concern is that if

the City cannot work out development issues, there could be regulations from the State that don't align with local priorities.

The Mayor and Council thanked the Chamber of Commerce members for their support of the local business community and for participation in the evening's meeting.

At 6:48 p.m., Mayor Scully declared the meeting adjourned.

Kendyl Hardy, Deputy City Clerk

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