

MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
October 19, 2017
6:00 pm City Hall

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Cox called the meeting to order at 6:00pm
Council members: Paul Hendricks, Robert Muth, Mark Peterson, Jenny Taylor, Amy Weissfeld.
Staff: Carla Cosentino, Eric Hansen, Leana Johnson, Ben Shumaker, Ken Woodrich, Karl Russell.
Guests: Mary Repar, Bruce Nissen, Larry Krug, Ann Birkenfeld, JP Hollström, Ryan Vollans, Kari Fagerness, Rick May, Tabatha Wiggins, Philip Watness, Scott Anderson.
2. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None.
3. **MINUTES:** September 21, 2017 City Council Meeting
MOTION: **PETERSON** moved to approve; **WEISSFIELD** seconded. Approved unanimously.
4. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
 - a) Water adjustment – Sandra Loftus (meter No. 30500) requested a water adjustment of \$29.54 for a broken outside faucet and pipe, which they have since repaired.
 - b) Special Occasion Liquor License – #094618 for Friends of Stevenson Library for Artist of the Gorge Event on November 4, 2017
 - c) Training Request - Karl Russell requested approval to attend a 3-day workshop on Utility Management in Spokane, Washington, December 5-7, 2017. Approximate cost to the City will be \$817 plus use of a city vehicle.
 - d) Liquor License Renewal –#088968 Andrew’s Pizza SW, Inc.
 - e) Liquor License Renewal –#087635 Red Bluff Brewing, LLCMOTION: **WEISSFIELD** moved to approve; **HENDRICKS** seconded. Approved unanimously.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** **Ann Birkenfeld** read from a prepared statement, which she presented for attachment to the minutes. She discussed the potential Fireworks Ban, saying she does not support it. **Johnson** responded that she had met with Fire Chief **Rob Farris** who concluded they don’t support a complete ban, but rather request a ban related to fire conditions, by ordinance, effective 2019. **Repar** emotionally reminded that she and many others are very upset about the noise the fireworks create, not just the fire hazards. She also commented that she hopes the City works with the County on informing the public about a warming center this winter if weather conditions warrant it; she explained that last winter many residents did not know this was available. She suggested establishing a telephone callout to inform residents.
6. **PUBLIC HEARING:** 6:30 pm Sewer and Water Rate Changes. City Administrator **Leana Johnson** presented a draft ordinance for public comment and Council consideration. This was the second public hearing for the proposed sewer system rate changes.

System Development Charges were discussed at length. It was asked if all future replacement costs were included in the calculation; the answer was that it does not include the treatment plant and it is delineated in the documents, all other future replacement costs are included. Water system

development charges were determined similarly as sewer system development charges. **PETERSON** said they will review these numbers again when the final sewer plant design is ready.

Rick May asked if there has been a study on the effects on development as a result of these proposed increases. **Johnson** said no. **TAYLOR** asked if there could be pre-purchasing. **Johnson** said staff is working on that. People who paid \$500 years ago won't have to pay new rate, but going forward there will be limits on development progress. **Repar** emotionally pleaded the case for people on fixed incomes who aren't getting an income increase to match the utilities rates increase and said it is a drastic hardship. She said more study on rates is needed since the rate increase will not even make a dent in the \$10 million project cost. She said people's paychecks aren't increasing 50%. She suggested making the increase much smaller with longer incremental raises, and then reviewing how the funding efforts are progressing. **Johnson** said there is a draft ordinance for senior discounts in the works, which would apply to low-income seniors who pay the utility bill.

David Bennett said the City is between a rock and a rock. As a resident, he doesn't like the increase, but believes we have to bear it. As a local builder, he said it will affect construction and that the home construction industry's expenses are increasing by 20%; trying to build an entry level \$250K home with those rate increases is going to be difficult. **MUTH** said it's still cheaper than most other communities. **HENDRICKS** would like to see a system development fee discount for smaller homes not in the "Mc-mansions" category. **WEISSFELD** agreed and said it should be considered as a general policy to have a discount for "attainable" (affordable) housing. **MUTH** disagreed since the cost of materials is increasing. **Nissen** said he is hiring two employees, making \$48K and \$50K, who are moving here from out of state and they can't find affordable housing.

Nissen said in August the Rate Committee all agreed something has to be done, but since then he's looked at the data and it's overstated by 40%, by an engineer's math error (as well as a 15% error for Walking Man Brewing). **Johnson** said Tetra Tech responded and those calculations were correct. **Nissen** said he believes that the rate committee and City still really have no idea what needs to be built, and yet the rate will increase; there's no sound data, he doesn't see the basis for it. He also said that this is the second public hearing but the design/plan now bears no resemblance to one in the first hearing and believes more time should be allowed to review this new plan. **Woodrich** said rate setting hearings are not required by law. **PETERSON** said the Rate Committee talked about an ordinance that would be good for one year. **Johnson** said they discussed that two years would be better and then review it: 50% increase over two years, then 30% increase. This plan gives high users time to get systems in place to reduce BOD (biological oxygen demand). **Nissen** asked if it's certain that a year from now treatment will be "inside the gate" or by users individually, stating he doesn't want to invest \$80K and then find that his system won't work with the system the City eventually constructs. He said the plan needs to be certain before carrying out punitive measures on the users. **PETERSON** said he thought Council decided all treatment would be at the plant in order to protect the Waterfront, and that the punitive measures were for an incentive to users to reduce BOD levels. **Nissen** said he's being asked to treat onsite as well as the City treating at the plant; a clear understanding of how to fix this problem is needed. **Johnson**: we can make it more tier based on user levels. **Nissen** said he understands something has to be done, but prefers to know exactly what it is before the "hockey stick" method is employed.

Fagerness commented that she's not involved in the Rate Committee, but still sees a lot of ambiguity; she suggested a memo of agreement by committee members be developed. She said local businesses have a hard time understanding this increase and January seems a really bad time considering all the

local catastrophes. There was discussion about whether rate increases are necessary in order to apply for grants. **Johnson** said a target of \$68/mo was determined, based on DOE's determination of median income for the area and other factors, to be eligible for some grants. It also shows good faith by the City to start saving now for the project. **Shumaker** explained the granting agency determines the grant based on what is needed to make it affordable to meet the rate.

The meeting turned to addressing Council informational memo regarding water rates: base rate 25% increase this year and next, then 3% annual increase thereafter. The Capital Plan has built in projects for future maintenance/growth. Compared to nearby cities base rates, Stevenson is about in the middle. **Repar** reiterated that many have fixed incomes, which are not near a median of \$50K. She said the median was \$26K when she worked with the City's Comprehensive Plan update almost five years ago. **Mayor Cox** said if people get priced out of the market, as renters, they may have to move to a more economical location. 7:16 pm closed.

7. PRESENTATIONS FROM OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

a) Skamania County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director **Casey Roeder** provided an update on recent events and activities. She said it's good to be able to present an update to the City, and apologized that this was the first time this year. It's been a good year for events, even though Skamania Lodge closed for ice storms, which delayed the Chamber annual dinner. Overall, people still come to Stevenson despite all the issues, and she thinks more will come for our open trails. Columbia Gorge Alliance has recognized the need for correct information about trails open/closed. Many visitors have been very disappointed when their trails are closed but the Chamber has been able to give them alternatives. Shoulder season has been busy here. Stevenson's proximity to Portland and open trails are two reasons why visitors will continue to increase here. The Gorge Region has been coming together as a whole; the Chamber has worked with Lee Weinstein, a public relations company, on a program called Show the Gorge Some Love. Stevenson has been featured on Portland Live, channel 8, with Bonnie Heemeier of Bloomsbury being interviewed for 4 min 8 sec on air. Smoke closures, cruise ships not coming for three weeks, etc. has taken a toll on local businesses. She spoke of an event at Revolution Hall forthcoming to raise money for Gorge Alliance. Friends of the Gorge donated \$40K to the Hood River Sheriff's office.

Events: Gorge Blues and Brews was not attended as well as in the past but the Friday night segment had the best year. Proceeds were donated to the downtown Plaza project. 2018 will be the 25th anniversary for Gorge Blues and Brews, Skamania Lodge, and Big River Grill. The 2018 Skamania County Visitors Guide will focus on Skamania Lodge and it will also be the 50th anniversary of the Stevenson Business Association (SBA). The Chamber was involved with the Fourth of July event, Gorge Days in North Bonneville, the Fair market sale, beer garden for Bluegrass Festival, and Big Foot Bash/Logtoberfest (a new event in its second year focusing on unincorporated areas of the County). Winter in the Gorge is coming up and an Instagram campaign managed by Sasquatch marketing. Hike the Gorge weekend was very successful. The Chamber received a grant from the Port of Seattle to update the website and newsletter. Overall travel spending in 2015 to 2016 has been up; jobs down in 2017 from closure of Bonneville Hotspings Resort. Chamber is losing funding from city of North Bonneville. January 19, 2018 is the Chamber's annual dinner, with an auction to raise money to make up for loss of the City of North Bonneville funding. **Roeder** discussed a Lewis and Clark geotourism website, Missoula to Oregon coast with workshops to nominate sites that should be on their map. Our local workshop

will be at 9:30 am October 25 at Hegewald Center for local nominations. She said there is much more to report on, but Council has seen it in her monthly report.

- b) **Ryan Vollans**, Manager of Port of Cascade Locks Presentation regarding Bridge of the Gods (BOTG) toll increases. **Vollans** has been holding meetings locally to spread the word about the toll changes. The Port Commission will hold a hearing and vote soon, with the increase effective February 1, 2018. The increase affects only 3 to 8 axle commercial trucks, \$3/axle, or coupon book at \$2/axle. The Port is developing automatic tolling technology similar to Hood River bridge, who is also updating its technology and toll rates to be similar with BOTG and will share “back office” software with the Port. This will reduce backups in the summer, weekends, and evenings. Heavy trucks damage the bridge. The Port will honor old \$.75 coupons, but they need to be exchanged at Port office for the new \$1.00 coupons by the end of the year. **WEISSFELD** asked what percentage of the 3 to 8 axle trucks is local traffic? **Vollans** was not sure but said he could see how many pay cash versus coupon; he estimated 10 to 20 percent most likely. **WEISSFELD** said there are extra trucks on SR14 because of taxing per mile in Oregon versus a gas tax in Washington, which encourages trucks to use SR14. She said increasing the tolls on commercial trucks is positive for Stevenson. **TAYLOR** estimated the trucks only save 20 to 30 dollars by going on SR14, and said anything we can do to help to close that gap is good. **Vollans** met with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) regarding log books tracking, trucks avoiding way stations in Washington, etc. He said ODOT has increased patrol and has caught several trucks avoiding way stations and crossing into Washington on BOTG—it is an \$8,000 fine. **Nissen** noted his company sees 25 to 30 trucks per week in and out of his facility and wanted to know how “local traffic” is defined since his business relies on trucks coming in and out. **WEISSFELD** said trucks barreling through having no business here and aren’t considered local. **Vollans** said local delivery/pickup trucks can buy a coupon book. **Nissen** said he rarely sees the same truck driver. **Vollans** said the Port can keep a coupon book inside the toll booth for certain trucks, and he invited all to attend the Port’s hearing and voting meeting.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

- a) Sewer Plant Update: Public Works Director **Eric Hansen** provided an update on the Stevenson Wastewater System and the Compliance Schedule. He said they’ve been hauling solids away at \$1,100 per trip. Engineering has been working on RAS (return activated sludge) system; a consultant from the treatment company has worked on optimization at other plants and has met with some of our local users (Walking Man). CH2MHILL has been jar testing for loads. DOE visited on October 3 for compliance issues, said they need to see more maintenance by our contract operators. Under DOE’s Administrative Order, the City must have a plan to maintain adequate capacity. **Hansen** will recommend a moratorium at next meeting. If the City institutes it, the City can control when to apply or lift it, based on loading range; on the contrary, if DOE issues it, there is no flexibility. **Shumaker** said he submitted a ~\$1.9 million grant application for engineering design plans for treatment plant and some collection systems. The plant has exceeded capacity and there was an overflow. He spoke of a geotechnical analysis of a high infiltration and inflow unstable area, and evaluating increased risk for property owners if the City takes action that could cause land movement. **MUTH** asked about adequate capacity at 900 pounds limit, saying the City is under that and proved our plant can handle it. **Shumaker** said DOE accepts this in the interim.

WEISSFELD said the City still doesn’t really know what has caused the BOD levels to spike. **Hansen** agreed and said last week he tested some loaders who asked to be retested but we still really don’t know what the problem is. **Johnson** mentioned curbside composting could help, but we don’t have mandatory curbside collecting. **TAYLOR** commented the cost to dispose trash here is

expensive. **Shumaker** presented a large graphic of the proposed treatment plan. **Hansen** said DOE is more interested in listening to our local users and their issues and discussing creative options. **Nissen** said his company has been settling its spent yeast in totes for the past few months and having it hauled offsite, as well as Walking Man and Backwoods; they've taken 1,500 pounds of yeast out of the system. **Hansen** said the City is hauling about 40,000 pounds a month.

- b) Kanaka Creek Project/Change Orders: **Hansen** presented Crestline Construction requests for change orders. He requested ratification of Change orders 1, 2 and 3, as presented. These change orders increase the total contract amount by \$55,173.25 for a new contract total of \$665,928.25 and add three working days. These are all reimbursable since the project is under budget.

Change Order #1: Right-of-way issue.

MOTION: **MUTH** moved to ratify \$47,306.25 Change Order 1; **HENDRICKS** seconded. Approved unanimously.

Change Order #2: no road base was determined; need suitable road base with all the logging trucks.

MOTION: **MUTH** moved to ratify \$4,656 Change Order 2; **HENDRICKS** seconded. Approved unanimously.

Change order #3: driveway to residence not picked up on original survey.

MOTION: **MUTH** moved to ratify \$3,211 Change Order 3; **HENDRICKS** seconded. Approved unanimously.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) AWC Health Insurance Agreement: **Johnson** recommends changing the health insurance plan from the current AWC HealthFirst, which ends 12/31/2017, to the AWC HealthFirst 250 plan and adding vision coverage with the VSP \$10 plan. **HENDRICKS** asked if she'd talked to all staff. **Johnson** said not all yet.

MOTION: **HENDRICKS** moved to approve changing the health plan to AWC HealthFirst 250 adding vision option 3 VSP \$10 plan; **PETERSON** seconded. Approved unanimously.

- b) Skamania EDC Contract Approval: **Johnson** requested Council approval of the presented contract with Skamania County Economic Development Council for services related to the general economic development of the city for a total cost of \$9,945.

MOTION: **WEISSFELD** moved to approve the EDC contract for \$9,945; **TAYLOR** seconded. Passed unanimously.

- c) Resolution Updating Authorized Individual for the Local Government Investment Pool: Resolution 2017-300 was presented to update the authorized individual for the account from former City Administrator Nick Hogan to current City Administrator **Leana Johnson**.

MOTION: **WEISSFELD** moved to approve Resolution 2017-300; **HENDRICKS** seconded. Passed unanimously.

- d) Height Restriction No Parking: **Hansen** reported on the design options for a vehicle height parking restriction on Second Street east of the west entrance to the A&J parking lot to improve visibility for vehicles leaving the lot. **Shumaker** presented two color graphics of the proposed signs to choose from.

MOTION: **TAYLOR** moved to approve installing sign option 1; **PETERSON** seconded. Passed unanimously.

- e) Set Date for Council Retreat: February 8, 2018, a Thursday, from noon to 5:00 pm was set for a Council visioning retreat; **Scott Anderson** is available.
- f) Preliminary Budget Update and Salary Planning: **Johnson** presented a preliminary budget update (current year revenues and expenditures compared to budget) and of salary schedule adjustment (Cost of Living Increase) for 2018 and reported she will recommend the Portland-Salem CPI-U increase of June 2016 to June 2017 of 4.4%. She said budget amendments will be necessary; 2018 draft priorities will be based on last year. **TAYLOR** asked about the on-call pay analysis; **Johnson** is working on it.
- g) Downtown Homeless Discussion: **Johnson** updated Council on the status of the issue and options for Council to discuss. ACLU prevents legislating whether you can sit or lie down on a bench. Since the rains have started, there isn't an issue. The City removed a bench at request of property owner. Options for actions in the future: install a bar in middle of bench (photo presented) ~\$200 each. In this instance, the homeless person was not interested in any options presented to him. **Mayor Cox** rented a residence to him in the past and he's the only person Cox ever evicted. **Woodrich** said law enforcement and other team members of social services are used to successfully address these issues for other cities—pure law enforcement is not successful on its own and vice versa. The topic was unanimously tabled.
- h) Hidden Ridge Pedestrian Pathway: **Hansen** presented the matter of the completion of a pedestrian pathway from Hidden Ridge as required in the 2006 plat approval. **JP Hollström** referred to the letter he submitted. A sidewalk was inadvertently left out of the short plat in the original work on this development at the cul-de-sac, which would lead directly into **Hollström's** backyard. There's no point of the sidewalk now; it was for future connectivity. None of the current property owners south of there have any development plans. City retains the easement and can covenant to future owner of the lot to pay for sidewalk if needed. **Shumaker** said it's hard to require new tasks of the developer since it was approved in 2008 already. 104 feet, city could bear the cost if it was ever necessary. Conclusion: City retains the easement; remove sidewalk from punchlist. Waive cost. All agreed.
- i) Temporary Public Works Employee Status Change: **Hansen** requested changing the status of the temporary public works employee **Brian Griffith** to full time. DOE has already said the City is understaffed. He'll assist at the plant as laborer; he is an excellent employee and the City wants to retain him, since it's very hard to find good workers for only a seven-month season. **TAYLOR** said she's worried about public perception of City hiring a new person in light of the high dollar treatment plant that is needed. **MUTH** reiterated how tough it is to find good workers. **TAYLOR** requested the City calculates what it's going to cost; all agreed to extend **Griffith's** contract one month to wait for City's decision. **Repar** noted the City's need to maintain all the landscaping. **HENDRICKS** said he'd like to work with **Griffith** on the litter downtown; **Hansen** said **Griffith** is tasked with surveying the downtown area each day for maintenance issues. **Rick May** has seen how much work the City's been doing and has seen **Griffith** work and would hire him.

MOTION: **HENDRICKS** moved to extend the employment agreement with **Brian Griffith** one month. **TAYLOR** seconded. Passed unanimously.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS:

- a) Financial Report: **Johnson** presented the City's Financial Report for year-to-date revenues and expenditures through September 30, 2017.
- b) Building Permits Issued: **Johnson** presented a summary of recent Building Permits issued for new residential or commercial/industrial buildings. Five have paid since last meeting (17 new dwellings this year, two new pending).
- c) Gorge Happiness: Information regarding the Gorge Happiness events and calendar was provided by One Community Health.
- d) Sheriff's Report: Skamania County Sheriff's report for September was presented for Council review.
- e) Municipal Court Cases Filed: A summary of Stevenson Municipal Court cases recently filed was presented for Council's review.
- f) Planning Commission Minutes: The Planning Commission did not meet in September.
- g) Chamber of Commerce Activities: Skamania County Chamber of Commerce activities in September were presented.
- h) Fire Hall Plan Update: **Johnson** updated Council on plans to move forward with the new Fire Hall. She met with Fire District 2 and introduced herself to the volunteer group. Next year she'll include it in budget for design and architectural; possibly have EOC in the building and EMS. She will get more information on funding opportunities (USDA Rural Development may be a source).

11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

- a) **Johnson**, City Administrator: November 9, 2017 will be the first Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting; applications for funding are due October 24, 2017. There was discussion about allowing residents to disconnect utilities when they go away for extended time. It was decided the Council should consider this, with an increase in the turn-on fee. Currently there is a \$100 fee to turn utilities back on. Fire Department sent four staff and one apparatus to the Underwood Fruit fire last night in Bingen. There are new sick leave rules and she is researching establishing a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) plan for staff.
- b) **Hansen**, Public Works Director: Employee **Tyson Schupbach** passed the Water Distribution Manager test. **TAYLOR** asked if winter storm planning is in place; **Hansen** said yes.
- c) **Shumaker**, Planning Director: shorelines and waterfront focus. Port convened waterfront committee including **WEISSFELD** and a few others. Proposals will come to Council for those projects. County's Shoreline plan is being reviewed by DOE currently. He encouraged Council to submit any comments they have to him. He reviewed the Planning Commission's first pass at the zones designation. And he noted the Planning Commission has been asked, and accepted, to review adjusting the marijuana buffers; state requires 1,000 feet but local authority can reduce it. It will be coming to Council soon.

- 12. VOUCHER APPROVAL AND INVESTMENTS UPDATE:** September 2017 payroll, and October 2017 A/P checks have been audited and were presented for approval. September payroll checks 11773 thru 11792 total \$82,583.27 which includes one EFTPS and two ACH payments. A/P Checks 117793 thru 11867 total \$196,870.25 which includes three ACH payments. The A/P Check Register and Fund Transaction Summary were presented for review. Detailed claims vouchers were available for review

at the Council meeting. No investment activity in September. **MOTION: MUTH** moved to approve the vouchers; **WEISSFELD** seconded; approved unanimously.

13. **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS. TAYLOR** said the Nicklaus property on Iman Cemetery road is becoming a nuisance, with cars, boats, dogs, people living down over the bank, fire fighters afraid to access the property; the City needs to enforce its rules. Someone should submit a complaint. She said it's an area for new development, it's not what we want to present for our community.

WEISSFELD said the City needs to have a legislative agenda, as suggested by Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and wants this item on our next agenda. She asked when Sheriff Dave Brown will give another presentation. **Johnson** said in November. **WEISSFELD** asked if there is a TAC application for the new concrete wall art project. **Johnson** said no. **WEISSFELD** will figure out how to get the wall project to TAC.

14. **ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:**

15. **ADJOURNMENT** 8:35 pm.

_____ approved; _____ approved with revisions

Frank Cox, Mayor

Date

Minutes by Julie Mayfield

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UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

- November 9, 2017 6pm Special Council Meeting and Public Hearing on proposed 2018 budget.
- November 16, 2017 6pm Regular Council Meeting and final Public Hearing on proposed 2018 budget.



Crazy Ray's Fireworks

Ray & Ann Lueders

160 NW Second Street * Stevenson, WA 98648

crazyraysfireworks@gmail.com

October 19, 2017

City of Stevenson
7121 E. Loop Road
PO BOX 371
Stevenson, WA 98648

Attention: Frank Cox, Mayor; Leana Johnson, City Administrator;
Council Members: Robert Muth, Amy Weissfeld, Paul Hendricks,
Jenny Taylor, Mark Peterson

We respectfully submit the following information as Public Comment for the meeting of Thursday, October 19, 2017. Please include a copy in the official public record.

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) sets out clear regulations related to the retail sales and use of consumer fireworks. These regulations are monitored and enforced by the Washington State Patrol, State Fire Marshall as well as the local fire officials serving Skamania County. As clearly stated in RCW 70.77.111, "...fireworks, when purchased and used in compliance with the laws of the State of Washington, are legal."

Regrettably, the illegal actions of a young, unsupervised individual caused not only a massive wild fire in our neighboring state, but has since triggered unwarranted panic and a frenzy of citizens who are intent on banning the sales or use of legal fireworks for all. For this reason, we are submitting these comments and asking the City Council to give great consideration and provide ample research prior to making any decisions that may have economic and social impacts to our communities. We are also requesting to be identified as stakeholders in this issue and that we be provided a seat at the table for any future planning or decisions associated with any level of prohibition being investigated.

Within the state regulations and those currently delegated for modification to counties, towns or cities there lies ample safety precautions related to the sale of consumer fireworks. These regulations include required setbacks, limited sales periods, and restricted inventory, signage

and age restrictions on those able to purchase fireworks. Fire protection and suppression is also regulated and inspected annually before sales are allowed to begin. In addition, the state requires ample liability insurance for all retail sales operations. The City of Stevenson further requires that they are listed as additional insured on any liability policy and that property used for sales is legally leased or owned by those licensed retail sales companies.

Initial compliance aside, it is imperative that the city staff and council give thought to the fireworks ban recently established in communities to the west. By banning firework sales and restricting use in areas of Clark County consumers were driven to find alternative purchasing options. As a small business owner, we were grateful for the influx of customers and in turn encouraged them to shop and visit other local establishments in the city of Stevenson. Given their positive experience with our sales team and the metropolitan community's current desire to "support the Gorge", I am confident that a large number of these customers will return. Any restriction or ban that you would consider implementing would only serve to shift tax dollars you could collect to another municipality and discourage our customers from enjoying the benefits of other local businesses inside the city of Stevenson.

As you work through this process, we ask that you carefully examine the impacts of banning a legal product that is used when celebrating community and personal events, consider the impacts it will have on local business ventures and how those proprietors (both for-profit and non-profit) support your communities. We firmly believe that enough regulation exists and that any further action to prohibit the sale or use of fireworks would be senseless and bureaucratic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ray & Ann Lueders
Proprietors