

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2009

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Library Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, June 15, 2009 at 6:30 p.m., with Council President Ralston presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Councilors Ralston, Lundberg, Wylie, Leezer, and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa, and members of the staff.

Mayor Leiken was absent (excused).

1. Council Briefing and Initial Discussion of an Emergency Overnight Homeless Shelter Program.

Planning Supervisor Jim Donovan presented the staff report on this item. Homeless advocates have asked whether the City of Springfield will consider an expanded emergency shelter policy to cope with a rising homeless population in the City of Springfield. The attached memo identifies the City of Springfield's current regulations for camping, parking, sleeping and emergency shelter, providing some alternatives and potential impacts to facilitate a discussion with City Council, staff or affected agencies in a balanced and expeditious manner.

Attachment 1 in the agenda packet contains background on current ordinances and policies for camping, parking and sleeping in the City of Springfield and a general description of the potential social, legal and financial impacts of a public-private pilot overnight shelter program that is reportedly successful and cost effective to local jurisdictions.

Mr. Donovan explained the homeless parking ordinance in the City of Eugene which included a program with St. Vincent DePaul (SVDP). Some facets of a similar program in Springfield were highlighted in the council briefing memorandum included in the agenda packet. There was an extensive screening procedure for the proposed program, which was geared towards families that were homeless and stressed moving the family into permanent housing. In judging the success rates, SVDP noted they had a low return rate. The potential financial impacts to the City were fairly moderate. He explained the costs. He had discussions with SVDP who was open to make this program workable and work with the City as a partner.

Mr. Donovan discussed the code amendments that would be required for this type of program and where it could be included in the Municipal Code. He discussed the recommended action. Staff knew there was an issue in the community, but also recommended a measured approach by doing a Chapter 8 amendment to add overnight facilities to the existing ordinance, adopting the ordinance that would allow SVDP to run the program, and initially participating in the program for 6 months, then re-evaluating based on results. Staff was suggesting going forward step by step. This could be done by resolution with a sunset clause or extension clause. He described the

attachments in the agenda packet. The last attachment was a sample of the changes. Mr. Donovan noted that he had a marked up copy for Council to review.

Councilor Pishioneri said this was a good response to an identified need and he liked the staff recommendations. He agreed with the six month review, and would also support a one year review. He thought it would be wise to include a clause to extend or end the program at Council direction. He wouldn't mind having something written in the resolution for staff to provide a report to Council, and also identify triggers when certain instances occurred. This was a great program through SVDP.

Councilor Leezer asked about trash collection at the sites.

Mr. Donovan said staff's recommendation was that SVDP and the church would take care of trash. Trash receptacles or dumpsters would be provided.

Councilor Wylie agreed with Councilor Pishioneri. SVDP had done a wonderful job in Eugene, it was well run, and this was an opportunity for the City to do what we could for our area. If it worked well, we could expand if necessary.

Councilor Lundberg agreed and was happy to see the City get to this point and address homelessness. Many of SVDP's programs were great. She would be an advocate to draft the program for one year, with a six month check in point. Six months from now would be December or January, when the need would be highest. If this was successful, she would like to get feedback from Eugene about expanding this to other types of locations. She would like to know the pros and cons.

Mr. Grimaldi clarified that she was referring to other public sites, such as schools or government buildings.

Councilor Lundberg said yes, any other public sites.

Councilor Ralston said he felt comfortable with all of the suggestions. Amending the existing Chapter 8 to allow this in church parking lots was a good place to start and SVDP was the proper agent to run that program. He would also like to see this initially as a one-year program with an extension clause, with check-ins during regular intervals.

Councilor Pishioneri explained that if it were a six month program, Council could consider expanding it at that time. Expanding it could mean allowing more than one family in each parking lot. He wanted flexibility to make adjustments.

Councilor Wylie said she would be concerned about shutting it down in six months. She would like to check in at six month with the capability of expanding.

Councilor Ralston said six months made sense, so they could change or expand it during the winter when it was needed most.

Mr. Leahy said it was inherent in Council's power to amend this at any time. Staff could report back to Council in six months.

Councilor Lundberg said it was hard to get something like this set up and she was concerned about changing it during that period of time. They wanted the program, and just needed to work through the kinks and the report each six month gave that opportunity.

Councilor Leezer thanked staff for doing this and she was glad the City was getting on board to help our citizens.

Mr. Donovan said staff was also on board. Council also had the authority of funding to increase or expand if they chose.

Councilor Ralston asked for Council's preference.

Councilor Leezer said she liked setting it up for one year with a six month check-in.

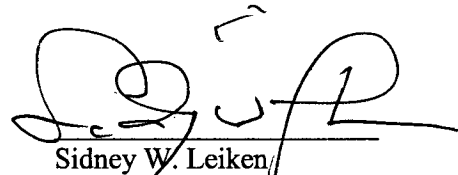
Mr. Grimaldi said staff would provide a status report in six months.

Mr. Donovan said he would move forward and try to schedule the public hearing for the proposed ordinance in July, prior to Council's summer recess.

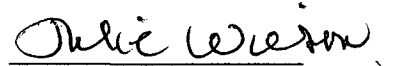
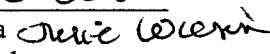
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa


Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:


~~Amy Sowa~~ 
City Recorder