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City of Yachats
CITY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY
March 3, 2022

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Present: Mary Ellen O’Shaughnessey, Anthony Muirhead, Greg Scott, Council President, Ann Stott, Mayor, Leslie Vaaler, City Manager, Heide Lambert, Carl Miller, Karl Christensen, George Mazeika, Fran Morse

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Work Session called to order at 9:30 am

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Little Log Church and Museum

(1:00) Lambert indicated in an effort to learn more about this situation and has been spending the last two weeks putting together information and history. She invited anyone to share information with her. Indicated she showed the Letter of Intent to the City Attorney and she was advised not to send it. Attorney advised the letter was not showing the “big picture” and a finalized idea. The question to the Council is: Are we trying to preserve, trying to repair or thinking about what the LLCM should be in the end. She indicated that this is a time to imagine what we want Yachats to look like when it is done.

(4:31) O’Shaughnessey concurred with Lambert and felt the LLCM are very important to Yachats She is against spending \$250K - \$500K just to repair what is there. She wants a vision of we want it to be. If Visitor Amenities is used there should be a museum for our history but also look towards the future. Perhaps make it interactive and sponsor events there.

(6:48) Vaaler reviewed some of the history of the Council’s process on this issue she asked the question: what can be done that will align with Council goals? She also brought up what Councilors ran on when running for Council. Councilor Scott spoke about values; Council President Stott spoke about transparency, She (Vaaler) spoke of community involvement and being careful with discretionary spending. She read a paragraph from the Voter Guide. She feels that the Council needs to look at a long-term big picture project. She brought up doing a survey.

(11:19) Stott felt that the Little Log Church and Museum (LLCM) has been transparent, the Board had an issue, they found a solution and approached Council and Council voted. She did not agree with the attorney’s interpretation of the Letter of Intent. She is frustrated and feels the mistakes of the past are being repeated many times decisions have been made in government, Yachats government and then nothing occurs. She further indicated that this should not be put into the “lap of the City Manager”. Indicated that the City Manager has done her due diligence and is trying to make a positive out of the negative dealt by the attorney. Very frustrated that a vote is taken and then there is no follow through.

(14:58) Muirhead indicated that the attorney was very clear and that “we’re playing politics” with \$500K. The longer it is talked about, the longer the difficult decision is put off. We’re kicking the can down the road when a decision clearly needs to be made.

(16:16) Vaaler interjected about the \$500K and referred to the August 18, 2021, Parks and Commons packet with figures form McClain Construction. She indicated that with the 20% cost increase that Larry Thornton indicated, the church part would be

1 approximate \$525K and then the next year for the museum part another \$130K - \$140K
2 plus the 20%. Now the total is up to \$681K+. She just wanted to make clear that if the
3 Council is thinking \$500K, “we’re fooling ourselves”.

4 (17:30) Stott indicated that she is certain no Council member has the expectation that
5 the figure McClain gave in August is going to hold. She referred to the January 6, 2022,
6 Council meeting where they discussed committing that first half million which is the
7 purpose of the Letter of Intent.

8 (18:22) the remainder of the Council disagreed and Muirhead indicated the number was
9 never discussed.

10 (18:40) O’Shaughnessey indicated she specifically asked what the vote was for as she
11 did not want to vote on the entire sum of money because she had not yet made up her
12 mind if she wanted to spend that much. She referred to using Visitor Amenities and
13 making sure anything done will appeal and attract visitors.

14 (19:50) Vaaler indicated that there is a “short list” of usage that Visitor Amenity money
15 can be used for and we need to use caution.

16 (20:30) Vaaler asked Scott if he had any input. He indicated that the Community,
17 Council and City are facing challenges not visible to the public. He would like to rely of
18 the Commissions and other sources on this project. He wants to be able to trust others
19 to be truthful about what we are doing. He indicated that as the longest serving Council
20 member this building has come before the Council several times; he has concerns of
21 the viability of the existing structure and is struggling; he would like someone else to
22 make the decision.

23 (22:16) Vaaler spoke to the building viability in terms of long range planning; what kind
24 of maintenance budget would be needed, what would be insurance costs, etc. Felt that
25 the Council needed to advise the community of the long terms costs as well as the on
26 time cost at this time.

27 (23:07) O’Shaughnessey indicated one way or another a decision has to be made. Felt
28 the Council has to make the hard decision. She is not against spending the money; she
29 just wants to do it carefully. She advised that people have stopped her on the street and
30 she knows that LLCM is important to many people and she is hopeful that something
31 can be done.

32 (24:59) Vaaler advised she would like to see this project in terms of “other asks” Council
33 has. She indicated that at the last Parks and Commons Commission they talked about
34 the City buying the old Landmark property., there are almost weekly asks that are
35 discretionary spending for the City and we have to look at the bigger picture. She went
36 on to read portions of the information forwarded by Fresh Air. She went on to say she
37 spoke to Carl Miller, Karl Fredrickson (Christensen) and James Kerti and asked them to
38 indicate what is the essence of the building, what are we preserving? She doesn’t want
39 to spend \$750K on a building that people aren’t happy with because it is missing that
40 essence. She indicated until she has that information and input of how the community
41 feels she cannot support the project at this time.

42 (28:35) Lambert expressed thanks for the input and reiterated that she feels the
43 museum is part of the big picture for the City and that it is a “money maker” in that it is
44 viable for grants. She felt the museum should be phase I to appeal to tourists, etc. and
45 that would be more potential for grants and other funding sources. Her opinion is “if

1 we're going to do it, do it right and do it the big way, the dream way"; don't just throw
2 band aids on.

3 (31:21) Based on what Lambert just said, Vaaler indicated on May 21st there is the
4 dedication of the Amanda Bridge coming up. There will be a sizeable group of native
5 people coming and she wondered as part of the museum if we could tap into their
6 history and perhaps get some financial assistance.

7 (33:25) Lambert responded that she had looked up Yachats Wikipedia and learned that
8 one of the oldest pit houses was here and was carbon dated to 500 AD. She thought it
9 would be cool to build a replica pit house next to LLCM so children could see the
10 different living structures and ways people lived here. An example of how we could
11 present different histories applicable to people traveling up and down the coast.

12 (34:18) Stott redirected the conversation to whether there will be a building for the
13 LLCM. She indicated she felt the urgency was no longer in saving the building and
14 referred to the engineer's report indicating the twisting of the building.

15 (36:03) Scott indicated his concern about a survey is that we have a Commission and
16 that the Council needs to listen to the Commission for advice. He acknowledged that
17 this was a Council Work Session, but knew that George Mazeika had something to say
18 and he'd (Scott) like to hear what he has to say.

19 (36:31) Vaaler indicated she did not want this to become an open session but said if
20 Scott wanted to yield his time to Mazeika she would allow it in this one instance. She
21 then told Mazeika he could speak as chair of the commission or individual, whichever.

22 (37:02) Mazeika indicated he is unhappy with the conversation. "All of the topics
23 discussed here have been discussed by the LLCM Board and Parks and Commons
24 Commission and either the Council has not paying attention to our recommendations or
25 didn't understand them, or just wants to micromanage." As chair of the Commission he
26 would not want to spend any more time discussing this. All these points have been
27 discussed and the focus is saving the structure which has always been a museum. His
28 understanding was the Letter of Intent was going to the City Attorney to get
29 recommendations of how the language should be phrased. The Letter of Intent was not
30 committing the City to \$500K or whatever. The Letter of Intent was committing the City
31 to do the project and move to the next phase which was to find out exactly what it would
32 cost and then determine if it was feasible to continue. None of these discussions
33 included the possibility of fund raising or grant raising so it still a question as to how
34 much it would cost the City out of pocket. Mazeika indicated he is not sure where to go
35 with this. All of these discussions have been had and Council has been informed and
36 part of the focus of saving the structure and then moving on to how it would become a
37 wider part of the community. He thanked Scott for the opportunity to speak.

38 (39:26) Vaaler asked Lambert is she wanted to add anything.in response to
39 Commission Chair, Mazeika. She addressed the feedback from the attorney:
40 The first questions being: was the situation an emergency? The response was it was
41 not an emergency so bids would need to be obtained. She continued explaining her
42 discussion with Attorney Williamson. He told her that the number is known and that
43 should go before the Council. She felt such a vote would not pass and so has been
44 trying to imagine the bigger picture and make it happen. She had concerns of repairing
45 the building where it no longer looked like the original structure.

1 (42:07) O'Shaughnessey asked Mazeika what has been discussed regarding the vision
2 for the Future of the Museum because she missed it.

3 (42:32) Mazeika indicated those discussions have been held by the LLCM Board, Parks
4 and Commons Commission. All along the Council has been informed that structurally
5 we have an emergency there have been many discussions on how to make the
6 materials in the museum available to a wide public. He said the Commissions have
7 been asked to take on a lot and they are capable of doing it but the council does not
8 accept the Commission's recommendations. It is a given that the Museum is not going
9 to be a log church museum; the focus is on it being a museum irrespective of how it
10 works. That all has come out of LCCM Board meetings. He is extremely frustrated that
11 we are going back to have discussions that have already been had. Either you trust the
12 Commissions and rely on them to supply accurate information and move of that
13 information or you get rid of the Commissions and do everything yourselves.

14 (44:20) Lambert indicated she felt the third option is the Plan. The discussions have
15 been held and now we need the Plan and the first step could be the urgent repairs. She
16 felt an actual plan was needed and did not intend that as disrespect to the Commission
17 and the work they have done. All of that can be integrated into the Plan. If a specific
18 plan was provided it would be easier for the Council to invest in it.

19 (45:12) Muirhead discussed not being able to count on fund raising. Hoen, while she
20 was here, attempted to raise money for this is project and those efforts were not fruitful.
21 He also indicated that before the pandemic the business community was approached
22 and that was not met with a lot of support. Spending a half million dollars of the Visitor
23 Amenity Fund was not supported by the business community.

24 (46:40) Stott discussed the that purpose of the Letter of Intent was to get the structural
25 engineering survey done so then prices of materials, etc. could be obtained and a cost
26 would be calculated. Without the survey, we'll never know what the cost.

27 (48:50) Lambert referred to the Field Investigation Report done by Fresh Air Group and
28 that is where the \$437,638 came from. She felt that no one wants to kick this issue
29 down the road but also no one wants to see this end. She indicated there needs to be
30 more choices than one or the other; have a survey done or have the Commissions
31 come up with a plan.

32 (50:17) Stott indicated the Field Assessment was very minimal and nowhere near what
33 a structural engineer would do so that needs to be done to get a clear picture of cost.

34 (51:18) O'Shaughnessey asked for clarification on the \$437,638; that's just for the Little
35 Log Church, not the museum.

36 (52:11) Vaaler interjected what the amount for the museum might be and then reiterated
37 all the different monies that would need to be spent on this project. She also addressed
38 Mazeika indicating that the Parks and Commons Commission was appreciated.
39 She continued by referring to when council voted on the weatherization that a survey be
40 done of the community before further work be attempted.

41 (54:08) O'Shaughnessey continued with her questions. Since the building is twisted
42 does that mean the building will be taken down and rebuilt?

43 (54:33) Stott answered saying the roof will be raised and put a foundation under the
44 building, do repairs and then lower the roof.

45 (55:31) Vaaler questioned where to go from here.

1 (56:15) Stott indicated if structural engineering designs were not going to be obtained,
 2 nothing will get done on the building and that leaves two options: (1) decide to spend
 3 whatever, between \$10K - \$14K for the structural engineering study; or (2) agree to kill
 4 the project as it now exists with the understanding the building may not exist by the time
 5 we get a decision.

6 (59:40) Lambert agreed that the structural engineering did supply the plan but at this
 7 time it only refers to the repairs of the church and not the whole picture.

8 (1:00:23) Stott agreed that the big picture is important but right now we either plan to fix
 9 the existing structure or start making plans for demolition.

10 (1:00:56) Scott indicated this conversation has been helpful and agrees with Council
 11 President Stott. There is no downside to obtaining the structural engineering. He
 12 indicated he is in favor of going forward in obtaining the structural engineering study and
 13 report.

14 (1:01:45) Muirhead indicated Council has already unanimously voted to get the
 15 assessment. The issue is they wanted the Letter of Intent which the attorney told us we
 16 should not send unless we were committed to spending \$437,638.

17 (1:02:55) Vaaler questioned Scott's comment regarding the engineering report as
 18 opposed to his vote regarding the engineering report for La De Da Lane. She indicated
 19 that he was in the minority on that issue, the money was spent and then the project was
 20 not done. She thought perhaps something could be learned from that.

21 (1:03:40) Scott corrected Vaaler's interpretation of his vote indicating he just not see the
 22 need for the road; causing traffic concerns for the church and it seemed like an
 23 unnecessary project being done because someone got a grant.

24 (1:04:31) O'Shaughnessey agreed about the vote for the structural engineering and
 25 discussed more about bids and the money being spent. More discussion was held.

26 (1:0:09) Muirhead asked Lambert if we could ask the lawyer if there is a way to word the
 27 letter to say we are not making a commitment to spending any money we just need an
 28 updated assessment of the costs. Lambert described various avenues the Council could
 29 take.

30 (1:10:53) Vaaler closed the work session and granted a two minute break.

31 Meeting called to order by Mayor Vaaler at 10:54 am

32 **I. ANNOUNCEMENTS, CORRESPONDENCE AND PROCLAMATIONS**

33 **II.** (1:17:02) Vaaler advised that she and other Councilors have another meeting
 34 at 1:30 so this meeting will have to close at 12:30 pm, possibly cutting some
 35 agenda items.

36 (1:17:47) Dahl's recycling was going to end on March 1. Through testimony
 37 and written letters for a House Bill, an agreement was made by DEQ to
 38 accept another 1M pounds of recycling as well as keeping the two units at
 39 Dahl open for the calendar year.

40 (1:18:53) a meeting was scheduled with the County for March 16, but the
 41 County advised they wanted to cancel the meeting until they hired a County
 42 Administrator.

43 **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

44 None.

1 **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

2 **A. Discussion of How to Convey Council's Requests to Commissions**
 3 **and How to Follow-up**

4 (1:20:11) Vaaler gave a brief background on the issue.

5 (1:21:15) O'Shaughnessey advised that on the drafted form there be
 6 specific questions from the Council. Verbal communication is good but
 7 having a written history is even better. If we expect the Commission to
 8 communicate to Council then the Council also needs to communicate
 9 clearly to the Commission.

10 (1:24:26) Stott felt there were a few things involved: (1) when a request is
 11 made for action a date or timeline needs to be set. (2) keep the form
 12 general; and (3) key points discussed by Council. Discussion was held
 13 regarding the form and the best way to communicate. O'Shaughnessey
 14 and Stott agreed to work on a draft.

15 (1:29:43) Scott advised he is not speaking as a Councilor but as a project
 16 manager working with the City Manager. He has been working to come
 17 up with a system that documents, internally, with the City and with the
 18 public.

19 (1:32:16) Vaaler asked if Scott had any problem with O'Shaughnessey
 20 and Stott proceeding and he said he did not it was content versus
 21 structure.

22 **B. Keeping a Record: What We Have Lost During the Pandemic (agenda**
 23 **item suggested by Anthony Muirhead at Council's Goal Session)**

24 (1:33:24) Vaaler reviewed the purpose of this, maintaining good
 25 institutional memory and how we might recapture some of these things.

26 (1:34:08) Muirhead continued to discuss the importance of being cautious
 27 but also getting back to where we were. He specified that a big part of our
 28 identity is hosting the various events that we do.

29 (1:36:32) Stott advised that Parks and Commons has been discussing this
 30 topic and reaching out to groups who have booked in the past.

31 (1:32:34) Muirhead continued by saying we need to get back to normal
 32 functioning and not always at emergency mode.

33 (1:39:06) Stott brought Council's attention to a chat comment from
 34 Quentin Smith regarding Fourth of July. She said events like this are
 35 definitely things that can be addressed.

36 (1:40:27) Vaaler asked each councilor to think about what is missing from
 37 our community that we had prior to the pandemic. She gave some
 38 examples of things that come to mind for her.

39 (1:42:42) Mazeika advised reopening the Commons for the last six months
 40 he mentioned different events and festivals and discussed how to
 41 proceed.

42 (1:44:17) O'Shaughnessey o discussed the festivals and that the Agate
 43 Festival was planned in January during the slow season for businesses.

1 She indicated that although this was discontinued before the pandemic
2 she misses the Yachats Arts and Sciences Academy.

3 (1:44:27) Vaaler asked if there is any step the Council wants to take

4 (1:45:54) O'Shaughnessey indicated a big topic is when is the Council
5 going to meet in person again. She has "mixed feelings" because more
6 people seem to participate via Zoom. She realizes that meeting in person
7 changes the dynamics of the meeting.

8 (1:47:28) Stott felt the sooner in person meetings can happen, the better
9 but that the City is also responsible for providing remote access. She
10 thinks a date needs to be set to resume. Perhaps just Council first and
11 Commission still meet via Zoom.

12 (1:49:26) Scott brought up a technical item. Wi-Fi in the Commons has
13 been disassembled he would be happy to assist with that.

14 C. City Hall Hours

15 (1:51:29) Lambert addressed the hours of City Hall and didn't want to
16 minimize people's ability to reach City Hall, but as an example, when she
17 came in the morning there were 100 messages on the voice mail—it takes
18 a lot of time going through those. She mentioned that the staff at City Hall
19 wasn't here a year ago whereas Kimmie was here for ten years. She
20 expressed gratitude for the citizen's patience and advised that there are
21 staff members doing jobs they weren't hired to do. Between illness and
22 family there was never more than three people in City Hall at a time. She
23 changed the hours so that he staff didn't get sick and allow staff to focus
24 on tasks. She is diligently trying to get more staff. Current hours are:
25 closed to the public on Mondays and Fridays unless by appointment;
26 Tuesday through Thursday 9-4 the drive through is open. She has been
27 meeting with people via zoom, but advised this past week she has spent a
28 lot of time with the Finance Committee because she needs to get a handle
29 on what the finances are before she can advise Council to make
30 decisions. She spoke of how the City Hall Structure was six people and
31 they currently have three. She thanked everyone for their patience and
32 support and asked for a little more because "we're not out of the woods
33 yet".

34 V. OLD BUSINESS

35 A. Next Steps for 2022 Goals

36 (1:59:54) Vaaler advised Goal 1 was accomplished by hiring a City
37 Manager and good progress has been made with a Finance Committee.
38 She went on to say several of the goals had to do with water and asked if
39 there should be a meeting about the water topics.

40 (2L01:42) Stott spoke to the water issues, indicating that she felt a special
41 council meeting dealing with only water projects was necessary and soon.

42 (2:02:59) Vaaler asked if a regular April meeting would be sufficient. Stott
43 questioned using a regular meeting just for water issues.

1 (2:03:53) O'Shaughnessey felt the Council needed a session to "take a
2 deep dive" into water and that it be well advertised so the community is
3 aware.

4 (2:04:33) Scott reminded the Council that their responsibility is policy and
5 the big picture. Felt it premature to talk about specific topics and that
6 Council needs to come to a consensus about the broader issues. He also
7 felt the Chair of Public Works be present and a full participant in the
8 discussions.

9 (2:05:46) Lambert suggested a Town Hall structure, where different
10 people can come and make presentations Discussion was held regarding
11 how the meeting should be structured.

12 (2:08:25) Vaaler also brought up the comprehensive community survey
13 and who is doing it and what steps need to be taken to get it going.

14 (2:09:46) Scott indicated he felt strongly that this was a task that should be
15 handled by the Planning Commission and discussed why. He also
16 indicated that a Comprehensive Survey was done in 2004 and when a
17 new one was done it should at least contain the same questions so a
18 baseline can be determined. He was on that Commission at the time. He
19 went on to say it was an extensive year-long process.

20 (2:12:28) Vaaler spoke about the process and she is not sure if this
21 belongs to the Planning Commission or a Community Involvement
22 Committee.

23 VI. REPORTS

24 A. City Manager

25 (2:14:14) Lambert reported that she did not get to put together a report for
26 this meeting. Vaaler did say that Lambert has been sticking to sending
27 Council a weekly summary of what she has accomplished.

28 VII. OTHER BUSINESS

29 (2:15:23) Vaaler asked how does the Council want to proceed with what was
30 discussed in the work session? Calling a special meeting, does someone
31 want to make a motion?

32 A. From Mayor

33 (2:16:05) the mayor indicated she signed an IGA from the Forest Service
34 regarding the north side of Gerdemann Gardens.

35 (2:16:43) O'Shaughnessey interjected that something needs to be done
36 about LLCM even if it goes on the next agenda; a decision has to be
37 made. It is a hard decision and she felt that Council owed the people who
38 put so much time into this issue need to have an answer.

39 (2:17:54) Muirhead indicated he thought there was interest in obtaining the
40 engineering report without sending a Letter of Intent.

41 (2:18:40) Lambert requested a qualifying question: If the building needs to
42 be repaired, is getting an engineering report going to hold the building until

1 the repairs are made? Discussion was held regarding timing, repairs, bids,
2 etc.

3 (2:28:31) Stott moved **to instruct our very swamped City Manager to**
4 **seek out Structural Engineering plans for the Little Log Church**
5 **ASAP.**

6 (2:29:23) Scott wanted to make clear that the structural part is the
7 foundation and the ability of the structure to stand up and hold.

8 (2:31:37) Vaaler questioned if this is a motion to do that no matter what it
9 costs or if the City Manager thinks the price is reasonable. Lambert
10 explained what she thought the motion meant and that was to find
11 engineering firms to come and do a plan, how much it would cost and how
12 long it would take.

13 (2:32:26) Stott modified the motion: **to instruct the City Manager to seek**
14 **out Structural Engineering plans for the Little Log Church ASAP and**
15 **engaging the engineer as long as it under \$20K.**

16 (2:33:03) Lambert advised that when she gets the estimates back she will
17 give that information to Council in her weekly reports and not make a
18 decision without Council approval. Stott struck her amended motion and
19 referred back to the original motion.

20 **to instruct our very swamped City Manager to seek out Structural**
21 **Engineering plans for the Little Log Church ASAP.**

22 **Vote:** O'Shaughnessey, yes; Scott, yes; Muirhead, no; Stott, yes; Vaaler,
23 no. **Motion carried. 3 yes, 2 no.**

24 **B. From Council**

25 (2:34:44) Stott indicated two items, one of which she asked to be on the
26 agenda. The Parks and Commons Commission voted unanimously to
27 encourage the Council to purchase now for sale Landmark property for a
28 park and a great anchor to the 804 trail. She is requesting this be on the
29 agenda for the March 16th meeting. Discussion was held. Mazeika
30 indicated he emailed Lambert with information. He further indicated that
31 since the article in the Yachats News he was contacted by a well know
32 resident of Yachats who pledged \$100K towards the purchase of the
33 property and would be willing to contribute more. They asked to remain
34 anonymous until they were sure the Council was serious about going
35 forward with it. Current asking price is \$525K, he felt it could be acquired
36 for less.

37 (2:39:15) The second item she wanted to get on record and get on the
38 agenda. She would like a discussion on public restrooms.

39 **C. From Staff**

40 Nothing.

41 **Meeting adjourned at 12:18 pm.**

42 Transcribed by Contractor, L.F. Barrett, March 15, 2022