



# COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

Monday, June 17, 2024

## APPROVED MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

### STAFF

John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Lisa Scholl, Deputy Recorder

### OTHERS

CC	Kim Pederson	M. Ponce	Judy Thompson
Rebecca Zienty	Jim Coleman	Charlene Bassine	Kim/Cornelio Curiel
Marci Sanders	Jim	Nicholas Hellmich	Margaret Trenchard-Smith
Guy Auker	Tammy Maygra	Don Patterson	Stephanie Patterson
Brandon Treadway	Brittany Hummel	B.B.	Morgan DiGiallonardo
Brady Preheim	Tiffany B.	Jane Garcia	Robyn Toschi
Steve Toschi	Brittany Lapp	Nathan Wallace	Hannah Woods

### CALL SPECIAL SESSION TO ORDER – 6:30 p.m.

### INTERVIEWS FOR SPECIAL EVENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES - TOP TWO SCORING PROPOSALS

Discussion of additional questions.

Councilor Sundeen - Tell us about a time when something didn't go quite as planned and what you did to correct the situation.

Mayor Scholl – Tell us what you know about Spirit of Halloweentown and what it means to the community. City Administrator Walsh pointed out that a similar question is in there.

Walsh reported that there will be a presentation worth 50 points followed by questions with points. He was not part of the earlier scoring and will not be scoring tonight.

### Interview Questions:

1. Please tell us what you know about the City's current event programs...logistics, operations, revenue, and expenses. (10 points maximum)
2. Please explain how you feel your company is qualified to execute the events described in the RFP. Specifically, what is your plan to deliver on expectations of these established events and integrating your vision for the program? (10 points maximum)
3. How would you go about ensuring that local nonprofits benefit from the City's events program? (10 points maximum)

4. How do you envision developing a marketing strategy that ties into the City's communications program? (10 points maximum)
5. Please share your strategies to attract sponsors and manage event revenues and expenses. (10 points maximum)
6. Please share your strategies to manage vendors including fees, equity, and logistics. (10 points maximum)
7. What questions or concerns do you have regarding accepting this contract? (10 points maximum)
8. Do you have any questions for us? (10 points maximum)
9. Tell us about a time when something didn't go quite as planned and what you did to correct the situation. (10 points maximum)

**1. Treadway Events and Entertainment LLC, *Brandon Treadway, President***

Brandon Treadway and Brittany Hummel reviewed their presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet. A few highlights were:

- Provide fun, safe environments
- Work with nonprofits
- Work as a team player
- Full-service event services
- Reviewed current events in City and goals
- Reviewed marketing plan
- Listed organizations they have worked with
- Three full-time employees and then contract for other services
- Talked about their company
- Reviewed events they have done
  - Haunted house in Kelso
  - Haunted drive-in in Clark County
  - Suncadia harvest festival in Cle Elum
  - Cinco De Mayo Fiesta in Portland
  - Picnic in the Park at Fort Vancouver
  - Scappoose 100-year celebration
  - Mardi Gras themed party for Columbia Distributing

Responses to interview questions:

1. Referred to their presentation that listed the event details and budgets. They included as much information as they could find online.
2. The City's events are in scale with events they have done over the last nine years. They use software and file sharing to share information within their team. They envision Spirit of Halloweentown being more theatrical and will look at what can be added. They excel with themes, will analyze what's been done, and find out where the community wants to go.
3. A kickoff meeting would be held with local nonprofits and partners to understand goals, strengths, and interests, working with them to help raise funds. They could not find marketing that listed what nonprofits were involved, so would add that as a spotlight as well as sponsorship development.
4. First, they want to see what the communications program looks like. How involved is the City? They want the message to be cohesive and information available in one place.
5. All the packages need to be customizable. They have great corporate sponsors and would involve local businesses as well. Software would be used for tracking.

6. Utilize software to manage vendors, which allows them to send photos and give details. They make sure every vendor is over-informed. They are provided a vendor packet full of everything they need to know and follow-up emails.

7. Questions or concerns regarding accepting this contract:

- Are any committees in place for the event?

Council President Chilton said there was a Tourism Committee in the past and they are discussing bringing it back. Mayor Scholl added that it was put on the City Administrator and it's too much. He suggested re-forming that committee and having a council liaison.

- Who does the event coordinator report to?

Mayor Scholl said to the City Council.

- Could you clarify the method of funding for each event related expense? Are there out-of-pocket expenses for the contractor that are not reimbursed?

Walsh confirmed that the contractor is paid their fee and then responsible to produce the event and generate revenue. Expenses would come out of their pocket.

- How do they perceive the transition process for events that are already in the works, i.e. 13 Nights on the River after June?

Mayor Scholl said they will be discussing that at Wednesday's Council meeting. They want to continue it to support the community. There is a lot of local talent. Council President Chilton added that there are lot of corporate sponsors who want to see the events continue.

- What is the expectation of Spirit of Halloweentown due to construction?

Mayor Scholl said Strand Street could potentially be done by Halloween. The Plaza will be available. They also own and manage the haunted house, a store, alien museum, etc. Spaces could be reconfigured.

- Prior to accepting the contract, they would like to see the 2023 event budgets to see where the money went and determine if it's within their scope.

8. Questions for Council:

- Are there any confirmed sponsors as of right now?

Council President Chilton is unsure because they are not managing it. Mayor Scholl confirmed that he has heard from four who are interested.

- Are there any copyright infringement issues for Halloweentown?

Walsh said it's been resolved.

- How quickly would the event contract be approved? They will need to move quickly if they are selected.

Mayor Scholl said it can be approved fairly quick.

9. The second year producing the Scoops Ice Cream event in Seattle encountered 3.5-4-hour long lines. They had to be creative, adding staffing and signage. They also handed out pints of ice cream to people in lines. A post-event survey was distributed for feedback, which they do for almost all events. They also invited people to come back the second day or to a future event at no cost.

**Break: 7:14 - 7:25 p.m.**

**2. Cascadia Glamping, Hannah Woods, Co-Founder & Event Director**

Hannah Woods reviewed her presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. A few highlights were:

- Reviewed the history of their formation
- Active since 2022
- Core values are innovation, professionalism, client satisfaction, and sustainability
- Serve the entire west coast
- Increasing staff and production
- Three key staff members
- Focuses on community engagement, budget management, safety and logistics, and marketing
- Have seasonal rotating staff and contractors
- Uses event management software to organize events
- Have strong partnerships in the community
- Have done 24 successful events and have 13 upcoming this year
- Have a lot of positive impact feedback
- They know how important these events are to the community and tourism. They are promising a commitment to St. Helens and Columbia County to put economic growth, community spirit, and future outlooks first and foremost. A lot of people move away and then come back to raise their families here. People want events all year long.
- Commitment to being clear and concise

Responses to interview questions:

1. Being local, they are attendees of events. She worked at Big River Tap Room during Spirit of Halloweentown and understands how busy it gets. Communication with local businesses about impacts and street closures is important. They understand the nonprofit partnerships and the need for long-term planning. Revenues have been unclear but they understand they are responsible for expenses with talent, equipment, the boat, insurance, etc.

2. They are community members and participate as often as they can. They also have close working relationships with partners and local businesses. They can make the events successful in different ways. Communicating with local businesses and utilizing skill sets allows everyone to benefit.

3. Creating a wealth of opportunities for nonprofits to benefit and be successful. She talked about a partnership with Hudson Garbage for a recycling program for people to drop their cans and bottles and decide which nonprofit they want to support. There are opportunities to look at other parking areas to have various parking zones allowing multiple nonprofits to benefit.

4. The City already has a great newsletter and social media posts. They would work in conjunction with what's already being done.

5. Created a baseline set of packages. They want to make sure local businesses have the opportunity to sponsor by having smaller packages as well as larger corporate sponsorships. She talked about using software to track revenues and expenditures.

6. They are looking at tiered vendor fees to allow small local businesses the opportunity.

7. Hannah combined this question with the next one.

8. Questions for Council:

- Events that move the City to the next level of economic prosperity require broad community support. Community support provides a vested interest in the City's success. If they are selected, what tools will the City provide to help them operate openly to earn the community's trust?

Council President Chilton wants to see the Tourism Committee formed to oversee that. It would take the pressure off the City Administrator.

- She participated in the re-branding of Keep it Local and Columbia County. What level of County involvement are they comfortable with?

Council President Chilton feels that teamwork is important. However, it is important to focus on tourism and the contract at hand. Mayor Scholl agreed.

9. The area for a private music festival in Southern California flooded, making it difficult to get in and out. Because of their experience, they were able to transport everyone safely. It took an effort of the entire team to accomplish that.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- ◆ Brittney Lapp. She is concerned about the Sand Island Sandcastle Competition in six weeks. The renowned carvers have been handpicked and a lot of preparation is needed. They need to know that agreements can be fulfilled. The proposals seem great, but she's concerned about the timing of their upcoming event. She is also involved with events on Sand Island during Spirit of Halloweentown. People enjoy it and come back. She has fallen in love with St. Helens and the events. Her life is put on hold for these events.

Mayor Scholl added that Brittney manages the event at Sand Island. World champion ice carvers and cake carvers come from all over the world to participate in the sandcastle competition. Council will discuss it on Wednesday and follow up with her.

- ◆ Guy Auker. He doesn't care about Spirit of Halloweentown, but people from all over the world come here. Reservations for airlines and hotels are already made to be here. Council is not giving a new company much time to prepare. If people come and are disappointed, word will get around. Whatever company selected will have to come up with a lot of money. Do they have the funds to start?
- ◆ Tammy Maygra. E2C has included the entire community to participate in events. People volunteer because of Tina. Without her, they will lose volunteers. Tammy disagrees with paying people to work and making responsible to donate to nonprofits. The other companies don't have a plan to include volunteers. E2C has the experience. This all started because a few people wanted the tourism money to fund their department. Now it will die because of jealousy. Council listened to false accusations and didn't correct them. Tourism is the only thing in the City that hasn't been a drain on the City. Council should focus on other problems and let Tina do her thing. The proposed Tourism Committee wouldn't know anything about running events. Council needs to put an end to the lies and do what's right.
- ◆ Nathan Wallace, Cub Master for Scouts. The decision made impacts them as they are one of the nonprofits who benefit from events as a vendor. They work with a lot of low-income families, turning introverts into extroverts, as well as teaching them about community, skills, and how to have fun. He hopes they continue to involve local nonprofits. They are already struggling and costs continue to rise. The kids are their future.
- ◆ Steve Toschi. There is a disparity between the finalists. One appears much more qualified than the other. The current contractor should have been part of the process. Businesses rely on tourism. They need someone with capacity and the ability to take it further. Treadway appears to have what it takes to handle the business but did ask about funding for events. The City made

it clear the contractor is responsible for that. Cascadia is a new company. They are new and do smaller events. The City needs someone who can deliver an internationally renowned event.

- ◆ Brady Preheim. The Request for Proposals (RFP) process was bogus. It was written by an attorney who had no idea of what the events would entail. The contract is for a micromanaged employee, not an independent contractor. Councilor Hubbard is biased with Main Street, Councilor Sundeen is enamored with Police and will do whatever they want, Council President Chilton is also beholden to the Police and willing to disparage a reputable company in public because she doesn't like the fact that they have the highest paid police in the State, and Jenni Gilbert is disqualified based on her public bias comments about Tina. What will the scores look like if they excluded those people? Main Street President Erin Salisbury has a longstanding feud with E2C about stealing their talent and then demanding a ransom to not interfere with Spirit of Halloweentown. Main Street wanted to help Hannah Woods replace Tina. Haley Starkey and Hannah went to the Dark Market and told them they plan to keep them on as an employee. That is corrupt. They have not released the scoring sheets but still want public comment on the process. He requested them four weeks ago and still hasn't received them. He wants to see whose scores are biased against Tina and who should be eliminated.
- ◆ Stephanie Patterson. She would be happy to answer any of the vendor questions. Big Foot is on board for sponsoring this year. The last 10 years with Tina have been great and should be celebrated.
- ◆ Morgan. She is not from here and represents the many people who come from far away. Spirit of Halloweentown is so important. Generations in her family watch the movies. It would be sad to see this event fall apart but would like to see it grow to more than just photo ops. In the past, you came because you were a fan of the movies. She would like to see more movie characters walking around, more food options, and explore the small businesses. A company is needed that can handle large crowds and space them out more.
- ◆ Margaret Trenchard-Smith, speaking as an individual. She respects and thanks the Council for their work. She doesn't understand the motive to replace Tina Curry. The proposed change is an injustice to Tina, who built Spirit of Halloweentown into an international festival. She makes Spirit of Halloweentown more fun and family friendly every year. It's a flagship for St. Helens. They should be thanking Tina, but she takes flak from naysayers and haters. No other contractor could replicate what she's done. Do people want to kill Spirit of Halloweentown? Would it retain its local authenticity without Tina? Tina was sensitive to nonprofits volunteering to earn funding for their programs. If their service organization is included in the future, individual members do not want to be paid. They want the club to be directly compensated. They all want to serve St. Helens and Columbia County.
- ◆ Judy Thompson. She appreciates the Council for making the interviews public and allowing public comment. She also agreed with Margaret's and Steve's comments. They had people from all over the world on their block for Nightmare on 4th Street. There is a huge disparity between the two candidates.

## DELIBERATIONS

Mayor Scholl agreed that this is a big event. It deserves the respect and thoughtfulness of the Council to make sure they get it right. Government is a slow process for transparency reasons. He hopes they're not rushing into something because they want something new.

## Council President Chilton...

- Appreciates that Cascadia Glamping has an understanding of the community.
- Appreciates how E2C has made the event into what it is today.
- Treadway has the experience with big events and theatrical elements, which will take it to the next level.

## Councilor Sundeen...

- Treadway
  - Seems to be ready to hit the ground running.
  - Have done events nearby and want to know what the community sees moving forward.
  - Concerned about other events also going at the same time. Hope they can give this event the attention it needs to be successful.
  - Likes that they will overinform vendors.
  - Asked good questions.
  - Liked the question about Disney. Wants to celebrate the movie as much as possible and expand from it.
  - Appreciates that they mentioned the ice cream festival, which he's heard concerns about.
- Cascadia Glamping
  - Impressed with them and appreciates their ideas.
  - Concerned that they don't have enough experience for what the City needs.
  - Appreciates that they want to elevate what already exists.
- Glad to hear they both plan to include nonprofits.

## Councilor Gundersen...

- Thanked them both for their presentations.
- They both bring different ideas to consider.

## Councilor Hubbard...

- Thanked them both for responding to the RFP.
- Treadway has been doing it for a long time.
- Cascadia is newer and can address more of what is needed locally.
- One is more corporate and one is more hands on.

## Mayor Scholl...

- Thanked them both for interviewing.
- Treadway has more experience for a world class event.
- They have built tourism to what it is now.
- Will continue to foster the relationships to be successful.
- St. Helens is recognized as a huge destination.
- The one event does a lot for this community and provides for all the events they're able to do. Fireworks will not bring revenue but benefits from Spirit of Halloweentown.
- Both responders are very passionate.
- Wants to give this a lot of thought and make a decision at Wednesday's meeting.
- They could go through the RFP process again.

Council President Chilton thinks they are ready to move to the next step. They should submit scores and announce the highest score at Wednesday's meeting. Mayor Scholl reminded them not to rush. Council President Chilton talked about either company being capable to doing the job. Mayor Scholl pointed out the unanswered questions, such as timing with multiple Halloween events. Council President Chilton suggested asking that question now.

Walsh pointed out that time is of the essence. Next steps: 1) Notice of intent to award; 2) Negotiation with contractor; and 3) Seven-day objection period, which makes the scoresheets and other information public.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Review of scores:

	<b>Treadway Events &amp; Entertainment LLC</b>	<b>Cascadia Glamping</b>
Councilor Sundeen	134	131
Council President Chilton	132	120
Councilor Gundersen	140; experience	140; local
Councilor Hubbard	113	120
Mayor Scholl	121; very professional; lot of experience; qualified to do the job	66; inexperience; passed from question #7 to #8 and gave her a zero for that
<b>Totals</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>577</b>

**Motion:** Motion made by Council President Chilton and seconded by Councilor Gundersen for a notice of intent to be issued to Treadway Events & Entertainment LLC. **Vote:** Yea: Mayor Scholl, Council President Chilton, Councilor Gundersen, Councilor Hubbard, Councilor Sundeen

**ADJOURN – 8:48 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl  
Rick Scholl, Mayor