

City of Creswell City Council Work Session Meeting

Council Members Present:

- Mayor Smith
- Councilor Costilla, Council President
- Councilor Dukes
- Councilor Holt
- Councilor Kent – excused absence
- Councilor Kremer
- Councilor Morris – excused absence

Audience Present: 9

Press Present: 0

Staff Present:

- City Manager Vincent Martorello
- Public Works Director Cliff Bellew
- Airport Manager Shelley Humble
- Finance Director Jim Piper
- City Planner Curtis Thomas
- City Recorder Caitlin Born

Open Meeting

Mayor Smith opened the March 23, 2026, City Council Work Session at 6:01 PM. Mayor Smith asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Committee Reports

A. Park and Tree Advisory Board

City Manager Martorello provided the report for the Parks and Tree Advisory Board. The board's recent discussions centered around Arbor Day preparations, with vendor applications being distributed and 4-5 applications already received. The board also discussed updating the current parks master plan, with options ranging from a full update to a technical addendum that would identify which recommendations have been implemented and which remain valid. The board is

leaning toward the technical addendum approach and plans to bring their findings to council when complete.

City Manager Martorello reported that Public Works has completed the path at Garden Lake that had been discussed previously. The path leads to a large rock with a plaque and was constructed using compacted three-quarter minus material with a soldier course on the sides, maintaining consistency with the existing appearance rather than using pavers as originally considered.

Discussion Items

A. Richard Heyman Proclamation

Mayor Smith requested council feedback on establishing a proclamation for Richard Heyman Day on May 25th, which is Colonel Heyman's birthday. Mayor Smith proposed flying flags down Main Street in recognition of the day. Council members expressed no objections to moving forward with the proclamation.

Mayor Smith also discussed the possibility of celebrating Creswell's birthday, noting that this year marks the city's 158th year of incorporation (July 16, 1868, making 2026 the 158th anniversary). He suggested working with City Manager Martorello to potentially display a banner celebrating Creswell's birthday around July 16th, which falls close to July 4th celebrations. Council members were supportive of exploring this celebration.

B. System Benefit Fee / IGA Follow

i. Follow Up To January 26, 2026, Conversation Regarding IGA and Potential Increase of Sanipac Fee

City Manager Martorello presented a follow-up memo regarding the potential termination of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that currently has Sanipac absorbing system benefit fees charged by Lane County at Short Mountain. His analysis showed that if Sanipac no longer absorbs these costs, the most common 35-gallon cart would see approximately a 4% rate increase for residents. For commercial accounts, including Creswell Mobile Home Park and the school district, increases would range from \$125 to \$160 per month.

City Manager Martorello outlined two options for council: continue with terminating the IGA or postpone termination until negotiations between Sanipac and Lane County conclude. He noted that Sanipac and Lane County are attempting to negotiate a lower system benefit fee or compromise, though recent discussions have not progressed significantly. City Manager Martorello emphasized that the city does not want to be placed in the middle of these negotiations or bound by their timeline.

He reported that Sanipac has agreed to maintain current fee structures (status quo) until they reach a negotiated outcome with Lane County, should the council prefer to wait. However, even with a negotiated outcome, fees are anticipated to increase, though potentially not by the full 4%.

Councilor Holt emphasized that terminating the agreement would free Creswell from future obligations to Lane County, which she viewed as the most important consideration. Council President Costilla confirmed that any fee increases would be in addition to Sanipac's typical yearly CPI increases already built into current fees.

Mayor Smith and several councilors expressed distrust of Lane County's handling of waste management issues, referencing previous contract problems. City Manager Martorello noted that Lane County has mentioned potential consequences including closure of transfer stations or reduction of programs, though he clarified there is no direct correlation between Creswell canceling the IGA and what might happen to the Creswell transfer station.

Councilors questioned whether Lane County was using intimidation tactics by raising these potential consequences without providing specific data or numbers. The consensus among council members was to proceed with terminating the IGA to avoid future entanglements with Lane County's waste management decisions.

The council provided unanimous consent through head nods for City Manager Martorello to proceed with terminating the IGA. City Manager Martorello will bring a resolution to the next council session for formal action.

C. Creswell Chamber of Commerce Annual Report

Mandy Hoggard, Chamber Secretary, and Kelly Makinson, Chamber President, presented the annual report for the Creswell Chamber of Commerce. They explained that 2025 began with a newly formed executive board after the previous president stepped down following years of service.

The Chamber expanded its board to broaden representation and bring fresh perspectives, with all board positions now filled. Their goals included reconnecting with existing members, bringing back former members, and celebrating new business growth through grand openings for McDonald's in August and Humble Bumble Nutritionals in December.

2025 Event Highlights:

- April awards banquet honoring local businesses and citizens
- May garage sale weekend with over 80 participants, including expansion with the Bulldog Market
- July 4th celebration with expanded parade route and over 115 parade entries, continuing pancake breakfast partnership with local churches
- December Winter Lights Festival, which received positive feedback as their best yet

Website Statistics:

- Fourth of July celebration: 9,600 views
- Winter Lights Festival: 2,900 views

- Citywide Garage Sale: 1,200 views

The Chamber is working to revamp their website with fresh content and rotating pictures to better serve visitors and new community members.

Financial Health:

- 2025 operating income: \$83,000
- 2025 expenses: \$77,000
- Primary revenue sources: membership dues, Tourism and Recreation Tax (TRT) from the city, and modest event profits
- Primary expenses: advertising, staffing, and event costs

Community Impact Areas:

- Development of local tourism visitor information guidebook (expected May release in partnership with Chronicle)
- Coordination of community events
- Operation of state-recognized visitor and travel center
- Support for local nonprofits and schools
- Business development and recruitment services
- Leadership development and legislative support

2026 Initiatives: The Chamber plans to enhance their "Business After Hours" events, with the most recent at Banner Bank drawing over 40 attendees. They are exploring having the city sponsor future after hours events.

For the Fourth of July 2026, celebrating America's 250th anniversary, the Chamber plans to make the celebration "bigger and more spectacular" with a festival-style event. Due to fire safety concerns and lack of adequate snowpack, they are moving fireworks to the old mill location using a local, federally licensed company providing 1.4 class fireworks rather than 1.3 class to reduce fire risk and fallout.

Construction at the high school will require different parade staging arrangements, but the Chamber plans to accommodate more participants rather than limiting entries. They are also developing partnerships with local companies for fire safety support and exploring vendor opportunities.

The Chamber emphasized their central role in strengthening the local economy through steady leadership, business connections, tourism efforts, and partnerships with schools, nonprofits, and civic organizations. They are working on a farm-to-table event during garage sale weekend and expanding the Bulldog Market.

High school students will help produce promotional materials including buttons, t-shirts, and tank tops with the slogan "The place to be to celebrate 250."

Council members inquired about the hotel tax increases, with Mandy Hoggard confirming significant improvement in 2024-2025 after difficult years in 2022-2023. They discussed membership levels and coordination opportunities with other city events, including the airport's Young Eagles flights.

D. Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) Discussion

Airport Manager Shelley Humble, accompanied by Airport Commissioner Kyle Bushman and online participants Tom Wolf and Karen Flannery (National STOL founders), presented a proposal to bring a National STOL competition to Creswell Airport.

About National STOL: Tom Wolf explained that STOL (Short Take-Off and Landing) competitions feature aircraft competing head-to-head in both takeoff and landing distances, with combined times determining winners. The organization has held over 30 events nationwide since 2020, maintains FAA safety accreditation, and has achieved no incidents or injuries over five years of operations.

National STOL has significant social media presence with 625,000 followers, generating 267 million impressions and views in the previous year. Their events feature live broadcasts and attract pilots from across the United States and Canada, creating destination-style events where participants stay for the full week.

Economic Impact: Using Pinedale, Wyoming (population 2,700) as a benchmark, their event attracted 900 attendees with 30% being non-local visitors who spent 257 nights in hotels, generating \$63,000 in direct visitor spending. Including pilot spending, Wolf projected a conservative \$135,000 economic impact for Creswell, noting that Creswell's population and regional draw is significantly larger than Pinedale's.

The events typically run Thursday through Sunday, with pilots arriving Thursday and staying through Sunday. Ticket prices are \$15 presale online (increasing to \$20 closer to the event), with children 12 and under free. Revenue would be split 50/50 between National STOL and the city.

Proposed Partnership: National STOL requested a \$30,000 partnership fee to cover production, staffing, and logistics costs. Airport Manager Humble reported having five verbal commitments from local businesses for sponsorships and set a goal of raising \$40,000 to ensure the event breaks even or generates profit.

Airport Manager Humble emphasized her track record of successful fundraising, having raised \$3,250 in two days for the previous autumn airport event. She noted strong community interest, with businesses on the airport field committed to supporting the event and multiple local STOL participants already identified.

Proposed Date and Logistics: The event would be held August 28-30, 2026. Airport Manager Humble addressed fire safety concerns, noting the airport already has water trucks available and her plan to work around any fire restrictions. She confirmed discussions with the FAA, who are

supportive and willing to assist, and that National STOL carries their own insurance with a rider covering the city at no additional cost.

City Manager Martorello framed the proposal as a community investment, noting that even if the city invested \$10,000 after sponsorships, the broader economic benefits to local businesses, hotels, and restaurants would justify the expense. He emphasized the airport as one of Creswell's stronger identities and this event as supporting economic development and community engagement.

Finance Director Jim Piper identified available funding sources including tourism funds budgeted annually (\$3,000 minimum) and discretionary funds from programs like Movies in the Park that could provide seed money for the event.

Council Discussion: Councilors expressed enthusiasm for the event while raising practical questions. Councilor Holt emphasized the need to ensure the city wouldn't face ongoing financial obligations if the event proved unsuccessful. Airport Manager Humble assured council that businesses on the airport field were committed to preventing any failure.

Kyle Bushman, speaking as both Airport Commissioner and experienced STOL pilot, endorsed the event's quality and community impact potential. He noted STOL competitions represent "the hottest thing in aviation" and draw significant participation and spectator interest.

Council members discussed the event's potential to establish Creswell as a destination location, similar to how other communities lack significant attractions compared to neighboring Cottage Grove. They saw this as an opportunity to create something uniquely associated with Creswell.

Concerns were raised about hotel capacity, with acknowledgment that visitors would likely stay in Eugene and surrounding areas, benefiting the broader regional economy. The broadcasting aspect was emphasized as providing worldwide exposure for Creswell and local businesses.

Community Integration: Plans include coordination with the Chamber of Commerce for cross-promotion, working with local media including the Chronicle, and incorporating local businesses as vendors and sponsors. The EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) committed to providing breakfast service, and discussions included possibilities for wine tours and other complementary activities.

Airport Manager Humble noted coordination with the airport's Young Eagles program and potential scheduling considerations with other community events.

The council provided unanimous consent through head nods for Airport Manager Humble and City Manager Martorello to proceed with developing the National STOL event, including pursuing sponsorships and preparing detailed financial planning for council review.

City Manager Martorello committed to providing detailed financial analysis in an upcoming city manager update, and Airport Manager Humble will coordinate with National STOL and local sponsors to minimize city financial exposure while maximizing community benefit.

Adjournment

With no further business Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

*Signature on File

Nicholas Smith, Mayor

Attest:

*Signature on File

Caitlin Born, City Recorder