

‘City of Peace’ idea well-received

By Julie Akins For the Tidings

Posted Apr 20, 2017 at 2:00 AM

Ashland may soon become an “International City of Peace,” judging by the favorable reception to the idea from councilors present at Monday’s study session meeting.

“A hundred and 60 cities around the world are Peace Cities, it’s straight forward. It fosters a consensus value meaning this is the way we want to be going forward, with inclusion and valuing other people,” David Wick, executive director of the Ashland Culture of Peace Commission, told councilors. “This means we are a community which endeavors to make progress by fostering a community of peace.

Councilor Greg Lemhouse, saying people would want to know, asked Wick if the city becomes obligated in any way.

“Nothing,” Wick responded. “It’s just a proclamation saying this is our value. ... There’s no financial requirement from the city, nothing whatsoever required of the city but to say, yes we want this.”

Wick cited possibilities for spiritual and peace tourism. “This gives us the opportunity to raise awareness and brand the City of Ashland as a City of Peace,” Wick continued. “There’s no downside, there’s only upside to raise our profile.”

Dennis Slattery expressed support, as did councilor Traci Darrow. “I think the work you’re doing is very, very valuable,” she said. “I appreciate all the work you have done in bringing this forward. I think it’s important and I support it going forward.”

Wick requested a proclamation supporting Ashland as a City of Peace. “This is another piece of really branding Ashland as a City of Peace,” he said. “There’s real economic potential.”

Irene Kai, a board member for ACPC, told councilors said residents would also benefit. “I would be proud,” she said. “We want to be a leader in peace.”

The ACPC is requesting a proclamation of support before June 16. Wick hopes to celebrate the declaration on Green Show stage on opening night, June 16.

Lemhouse asked such a proclamation be put on an upcoming agenda. Mayor John Stromberg, noting the absence of councilors Stefani Seffinger and Rich Rosenthal, said it would be good for them to be able to participate in further discussion and have any questions they may have answered.

Councilors also briefly discussed in study session whether or not they should continue having the regular Monday study session meetings before the regular Tuesday business meetings.

“I don’t think we need study session regularly,” said Lemhouse. “We’ve been able to get through the items efficiently without needing a study session.”

“We will give it a try,” said Stromberg. “Maybe we don’t need to do them before every regular business meeting, but I think it’s a good opportunity to talk about things when we don’t have a tight schedule.”

Slattery suggested a middle approach. “To clarify, I’m not suggesting we do not do study sessions ever,” he said. “We should have them for big items that need study and discussion.”

Darrow also said she found the meetings of value.

No specific decision was made, but Mayor Stromberg agreed to call study sessions as needed and consider holding them prior to regular business meetings, which begin at 7 p.m. in council chambers at 1175 East Main St. on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

— Email Ashland freelance writer Julie Akins at julieannekins@gmail.com and follow her on Twitter at [@juliekins](https://twitter.com/@juliekins).



SIGN UP FOR DAILY E-MAIL

Wake up to the day’s top news, delivered to your inbox
