

City-Wide Holiday Decorations

May 12, 2017

The Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce purchases, maintains and stores the city-wide decorations. Every year the Chamber board and community volunteers go through every display, replacing needed bulbs, and putting aside those displays that no longer work. Decisions are made about whether certain displays can and should be refurbished and if there is enough money to do so. The last refurbished displays were done about 6 years ago.

Due to many comments made by the community about our current Christmas displays, the Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce recently held two community forums to discuss updating and refreshing the Christmas displays used around town.

There are many considerations when it comes to the city-wide displays. They are:

- Must be located on public property
- Must be located where there currently is a power supply
- Must meet all ODOT safety codes
- Must last for several years and be able to store and move easily
- Must be of a size and style to create an impact (be visible) as people drive through town
- Must be strong enough to withstand all kinds of weather
- Must be vandal proof and theft proof

At the first forum, it was decided to keep and expand the snowflake theme. The current snowflakes need refreshing and the light bulbs converted to LED bulbs. LED bulbs are expensive, but use far less electricity, are brighter, last longer, do not generate heat and are not fragile. This results in a long-term cost savings. The wiring on the snowflakes is still good, but many of the sockets need to be replaced as they have broken over the years of use.

Every year permits are needed for the Season's Greeting displays to cross the Highway 30. ODOT does not like things crossing the highway, due to safety concerns, but they have issued the permits. Because it is not known, from year to year, if the permits will be issued, spending money on new across the highway displays may not be the best use of limited funds. The current displays can be refreshed so that they can be used until ODOT no longer allows them.

The Peace On Earth display needs complete renovation and has been put aside, not be used, for the past few years. It has, however, been inadvertently put up.

The cost for refreshing all of the current usable displays comes to approx. \$5000.00.

At the second forum, designs for additional snowflakes were looked at. A plan was approved to purchase a new silhouette snowflake design and alternate this one with the old design. This should update the look along the highway. These new snowflakes cost approx. \$650 each and a minimum of 10 will be needed for a cost of \$6500.00. Fundraising is necessary in order to purchase these. Until these displays can be purchased, the Christmas Tree displays will continue to be used so that the highway will be decorated all the way through town. They will need to be refreshed and converted to LED light bulbs.

Another snowflake design was looked at for Nehalem Street, but Nehalem does not have power poles to hang and light the decorations so this idea was put on hold. The only way Nehalem can be lit is by the individual merchants each lighting their own storefronts.

The Christmas displays are stored in the old city shop on Depot Street. There are many old, non-working displays that need to be discarded and the entire building needs to be cleaned out and possibly repaired. According to OSHA regulations, all the the displays need to be stored off the ground, so new racks will need to be built. Clatskanie Chamber will organize a work party this summer to accomplish this. The community will be invited to help.

Last December, many people expressed interest in helping fund new Christmas displays. If you are still interested donations may be set to:

Clatskanie Chamber Lights Fund
PO BOX 635
Clatskanie, OR 97016

Or contact Susan Sherman at Umpqua bank to make a donation to the Chamber Holiday Lights Fund.

In order to The Chamber to purchase new displays for the 2017 Christmas season, money must be in by **July 10th, 2017**.