

CLE ELUM LODGING TAX & EVENTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

JANUARY 14, 2026

8:30 AM

119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

Committee Present:

Beth Williams
Audrey Malek
Jon Cornelius

Staff Present:

Matthew Lundh - Mayor
Whitney Prosek - Office Assistant
Debbie Lee - Clerk
Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director
Ed Mills - Fire Chief
Rich Albo - Police Chief

2. Appoint New Chair for 2026

Committee Member Williams nominated Committee Member Malek to serve as chair. Malek accepted the nomination, and the nomination was approved unanimously.

a. Set Meeting Time and Day

The meetings will continue to be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m.

3. Unfinished Business

a. Update Lodging Tax Application

The committee is still awaiting feedback from the Consolidated Lodging Tax Committee. Once received, their input—including what they would and would not fund—will be incorporated into the application. Efforts will be made to align the application's philosophy with the committee's overall approach and to prepare participants for the consolidated process. This item will be addressed at the next meeting.

b. Event Code — Redline Version — Continued Discussion (Steven Cook & Whitney Prosek's Comments)

Significant work has been completed on the special event application. The code is nearly ready to be submitted to the council for review.

The cost of the permit has been fixed, and changes to the application may be held off until

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the related code is finalized. Currently, the application does not indicate that applicants are responsible for any costs they may incur; this is addressed in the code.

Chief Albo raised questions regarding penalties and fines, specifically who authorizes them and whether there is an appeal process; the responsible individual needs to be clearly identified. The penalty section requires further development.

Many timelines were adjusted to give applicants and the city more time to respond. Insurance coverage types and limits could be listed on the website with a link and determine whether any exemptions should be specified.

Discussion on whether the display of the special event permit, including the fire and life safety plan, is required on-site, as noted in the stipulations.

c. Event Application

Both the Event Code and the revised Event Application have been developed in conjunction with each other.

Whitney Prosek — Office Assistant will incorporate the suggested edits, and a clean version will be sent back to the committee for review. Once the code has been approved by council.

4. New Business

a. Cle Elum Lodging Tax & Events Committee — Meeting Minutes — December 10, 2025

MOTION: Committee Member Williams made a motion to approve the December 10, 2025, Lodging Tax & Events Committee Meeting Minutes; seconded by Committee Member Malek.

MOTION CARRIED: 2 yes 0 no. 1 abstention (Cornelius)

b. Cle Elum Downtown Association — 2026 Christmas Parade & Fireworks — Lodging Tax Application

Jordan Peterson reported that there are no significant changes from previous requests. The total cost of \$7,750 covers the fireworks permit. The fireworks will use larger shells of the same length as in previous years, consistent with those used during Pioneer Days. The parade drew about 200 fewer people due to rain, though overall attendance at events has increased compared to previous years. The fireworks display is designed to be brief, timed to occur while people are still downtown, allowing visibility from multiple areas, as noted by the Police Chief. Communication indicates that the fireworks will begin after the parade, and since all events this year fall on a Saturday, higher attendance is expected.

Notable placer data has been included in the applications this year.

c. Cle Elum Downtown Association — 2026 Holiday Lighting — Lodging Tax Application

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The Reflection of Perfection event experienced a few minor issues during setup. The lighting display attracted approximately 1,200 citizens, and feedback was positive. The flagpole park lighting is scheduled for Saturday after Plaid Friday, on November 28, 2026. The Public Works building was added to the display, resulting in an increase in associated costs, offset in part by a grant for Wye Park to add electricity. Plans to extend lighting to Hartwig Boulevard are under consideration, though this will require specialized equipment, which is currently being explored.

d. [Cle Elum Downtown Association — 2026 Visitor Center — Lodging Tax Application](#)

The requested amount is \$33,976.35 for a position that works with the Cle Elum Downtown Association. In 2025, approximately 3.3 million people passed through Cle Elum. Part of the funds will be used to update signage to better indicate the location of the visitor center.

e. [Cle Elum Downtown Association — 2026 Placer Labs Intelligence Software — Lodging Tax Application](#)

This data, which comes from a two-year contract, tracks people using geofencing technology. It provides valuable insights for events and infrastructure planning. The cost is \$12,996, with the difference reflecting a sales tax increase. The information is shared with businesses to help them make informed decisions about advertising.

f. [Cle Elum Downtown Association — 2026 Pioneer Days — Lodging Tax Application](#)

The request of \$35,873 is larger than in previous years, largely due to America 250 and the anticipated increase in attendees. Additional support from other agencies will likely be needed, as the fireworks and parade occur on the same day and require more personnel to manage. Chief Albo supports the request, noting that it allows police to focus on emergency calls while other professionals handle event duties safely. Compensation is also requested for local flaggers, as having personnel familiar to residents helps maintain order.

MOTION: Committee Member Williams made a motion to recommend all Lodging Tax Applications go to the council for consideration; seconded by Committee Member Cornelius.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 yes 0 no.

g. [Yakima Heart Safe Initiative — AED/CPR Program 2026 — Lodging Tax Application](#)

Dan Morbacher, a retired paramedic, started an education business focused on selling AEDs. Public access programs for AEDs are crucial for saving lives; while only about 10% of cardiac arrest patients survive with CPR alone, survival increases to 70–90% if defibrillation occurs within four minutes. Most AEDs are currently kept behind locked doors, but placing them outdoors presents challenges with weather and theft, requiring more expensive protective cases.

After consulting the legislature regarding lodging tax funds, it was determined that these costs could be covered under the infrastructure portion. His goal is to make the city a heart-safe community.

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Possible locations for AEDs include City Hall, the skate park, and outdoor-accessible hotels. The kits can also include Narcan, EpiPens, and Stop the Bleed supplies. When a case is opened, it can take a photo, send an email, and even alert 911 with the location. Each AED can be monitored for battery life and theft. GPS and cellular technology, along with a monitoring system, tracks battery and pad expiration, Narcan status, and sends alerts about four months before expiration. Fire and law enforcement personnel are assisting in identifying optimal AED locations throughout the city.

MOTION: Committee Member Williams made a motion to recommend this Lodging Tax Application be forwarded to the council for consideration; seconded by Committee Member Cornelius.

MOTION CARRIED: 3 yes 0 no.

5. **Other Committee Comments**

For holiday lighting and fireworks, it would be in the city's best interest to solicit additional bids to ensure the best price is obtained.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.



Steven Cook, Chair



Debbie Lee, Clerk