

2015 LONGVIEW CITY COUNCIL RETREAT

Friday, May 15, 2015 – Longview City Hall 2nd Floor Training Room, 8:00 a.m.

Council Present: Don Jensen, Mayor, Ken Botero, Chet Makinster, Tom Hutchinson, Mike Wallin & Steve Moon

City Staff Present: David Campbell, City Manager, Kurt Sacha, Assistant City Manager / Fiscal Director & Chris Smith, Human Resources Director

Facilitator: Lloyd Halverson

Mayor Jensen opened the retreat by welcoming all and announcing that Mary Jane Melink would not be in attendance due to a family emergency.

Dave introduced Facilitator Lloyd Halverson and explained though this retreat is a little different in that it's late in the year; he is excited for the day and looking forward to gathering important information and establishing outcomes.

Agenda Review / Summary of Pre-Session Councilmember Interviews:

Lloyd reviewed the day's agenda and then asked if everyone felt they were heard regarding the pre-session interviews. Councilmembers responded affirmatively that their thoughts were reflected in the pre-session document. Lloyd then reviewed his summary of observations from the pre-session interviews, which were:

Accomplishments

- Streetscape improvements to include Tennant Way improvements
- A "more attractive" downtown
- Entry way signs
- RA Long Park improvements

What would make for a successful outcome of the retreat?

- Will be successful if we leave with a half dozen tangible, concrete and agreed upon goals, including economic development
- Strong positive consensus among Council of what we will work on and commitment to make it work
- Clear one/two year goal-setting objectives
- Open dialog, sharing of views, arrive at consensus and leave with ideas of where and how we can make things better
- Informal dialogue, which informs, reports, confirms and gets new agreed direction and goals
- If we walk out feeling good, having heard one another and we got agreement

How is the budget working?

- Ending fund balance is exceptional
- Prudent, frugal, cautious, conservative
- One comment had issue with the budget process, stating Council was passive and needs to be more active and engaged
 - Dave : We have regular quarterly budget updates
 - Don: Kurt has an open door policy and will explain everything
 - Chet: Council sets policy and feels they should not micro-manage. Kurt does a great job

How does/should Council communicate with staff?

- Council is able to have direct contact with department heads and inform Dave
- How deep in the staff organization does Council communicate?
 - Don: I don't have a problem with communicating to anyone on staff
 - Chet: I don't contact staff but work through Dave
 - Dave: I hope you feel okay to communicate with staff. Most are going to appreciate the interaction but some may not feel comfortable

How does Council interact with one another?

- Work well together and supports one another
- Described as a family who can agree to disagree and then move forward
- Workshops are less formal than Council meetings
 - Dave: In regular business meetings we should continue to address Council and Staff by title (i.e. Councilor or Manager). This sets the tone for the public/audience
 - Don: In the past Council seemed to be talking over on another. Council now raises their hands and that has resolved the problem
 - Council should ask for staff response through the City Manager
 - Ken: By Council addressing staff through the City Manager, it also sets the tone for how the public should address staff

Constituent Comments

- Mike: There is complication/confusion of who to address questions too. It's more of a citizen issue, not a Council/Manager issue
- Steve: Steer citizens comments/questions to Council, not staff
- Chet: Constituent comments are not a question and answer session but an opportunity to make comment.
- Don: We did post "Comment Guidelines"
- Mike: We are not necessarily in agreement in how the constituent comments are addressed
- Should constituent comments be to engage in dialog vs. making comment? There was Council consensus to provide citizen with staff contact information and referral to the City Manager.
- If there is erroneous information, there should be a response of the facts to assure the viewing audience has the correct information.

- Mike: How much of the meeting is the Council's and how much of the meeting is the citizen's.
- **Council concluded that this could be a lengthy discussion and agreed to workshop the protocols and/or process for addressing constituent comments.**
- **Chris to work with Mike re: development of constituent comment protocol**

2014 Accomplishments

- Dave: Reflect on 2014 and what was accomplished, mostly in a positive way but there may be things not accomplished.
 - Staffs report on work plan accomplishment.
 - Budget – Adopting a new two year budget that responded to Council's priorities, reflected in the new positions and those paid prior by grants that were able to be funded in Public Safety...**huge accomplishment.**
 - Downtown Streetscape
 - Upgrading water lines and pump stations (16th, 17th and Baltimore area).
 - Setting in place a process of reviewing the complaints with regard to the water system. We haven't gotten to the end yet but setting a process is an accomplishment.
 - Longview PDA re: economic development
- Ken: Still have to take a look at the water issue. It was a good thing developing the water advisory committee. We are going to see some great things that will come out of this committee. Communication to the public of what is going on with the water issues. Still have an issue with the silica.
- Chet: Would it make sense to do a report card to the community?
 - Educate the community as to what our accomplishments are.
 - Kurt: What form would you like to see this? Similarly to the county report card we've seen in the past.
 - Don: Maybe we want to take ½ page add out in the newspaper of our accomplishments. Even inserts in the utility bills
 - Mike: Council also has a responsibility to relay to community
 - Examples of accomplishments: Healthcare plan, public safety, EMS, on-line credit cards. Those sorts of things should be recognized.
- **Staff to present to Council a way in which we disseminate City accomplishment to the public.**

Review/Confirm Strategic Initiatives

- Lloyd: Assume Council wants to confirm existing initiatives.

- Chet: Is there an assumption they are in order or should they be rearranged by priority?
 - **Move “Provide sustainable water quality & environmental infrastructure” to the top of the Council Initiatives list for the 2015.**

Council believes initiatives as written have been thoroughly vetted and are “nearly perfect”

2015 Work Plan review and adjustment and/or confirmation

Apparent highest priority work plan items, such as:

- Direction / confirmation on water system
 - Problem definition- though the Council has final decision it seems to be out of our hands
 - Re-commit to agree with advisory committee’s recommendation
 - Mike: Their recommendation but our (council) decision
 - Chet: Want to be hands off regarding final decision
 - Dave: Look at what staff has prepared in proposed work plan and see if that captures your expectation
 - Ken: Suggest we wait until the committee makes final recommendations of what is the problem and the solution
 - Dave: Overview of the 2015 Work plan related to the water quality issues (Pages 34-36, Slides 67 – 71)
 - **Make 3rd bullet on Slide 67 deliverable #1. Remaining deliverables move down**
 - **Deliverable #6, Slide 71 replace the word “implement” with the word “evaluate”**
 - **Second Bullet – change the word “implementation” to “evaluation”.**
 - Lloyd: At this meeting we acknowledged this is an important issue
 - Reviewed in detail of the issues related to water quality
 - Take advisory committee seriously
 - Don: Congratulated Council on keeping hands off advisory committee
- Economic Development
 - Page 16, Slide 31 –
 - Chet: How do you (Dave) feel about being the point person re: economic development?
 - Dave: too early to tell.
 - Dave: Active participation in CEDC, SR 432 project

- Mark Brown has been spending a lot of time in Olympia re: SR432 working with the County. Feels it's a natural thing for the City and County to work together.
- Dave: Page 16, Slide 32 - 3rd bullet. Expectations of the performance standards may have to re-think their business plan (example: paved parking lot scenario).
- **Delete Deliverable #2 but replace with exploring possible lease via PDA, Port**
- Steve: Should we set parameter as to requirements for development timelines of the property (example 1 year to begin development)
 - Kurt: Discussion regarding debt service and the need to sell the property to reduce the debt service. Initially anxious to sell property but may be different now. Certainly worth discussion.
 - Dave: We do have a question on our checklist. It is not identified in the deliverable but wouldn't feel bad if Council didn't want to sell to a developer that is not going to develop for 5 years...etc.
 - Do we want to get in the real estate business? A question as to whether the City should/could lease property. Mike – we could possible lease via a PDA.
- Page 17, Slide 33
 - Deliverable #2:
 - Mike: Believes we should increase the amount of revolving fund loan dollars.
 - **Kurt: Increase marketing/advertising effort to provide/promote use of remaining funds.** Need to partner with recipients of loan fund to continue to promote the revolving fund program.
- Page 18, Slide 36
 - Dave: We could use/need additional resources to implement.
 - We've refreshed the work plan. Conclusion – x number of months the City Manager will report back
- Economic Development Fund
 - Kurt: Provided financial review.
 - Assumption lots 9-10 are sold.
 - Don: Do we want to hire an economic development coordinator
 - Chet: What would that person do (job description)
 - Mike: Not just limiting to the Mint Farm but include regional, LID, SR432, Sewer Lagoons and/or land development/re-development. We don't have a champion for Longview.

- Lloyd: City Manager to develop job description. Not only the person but also marketing etc.
- Dave: Would prefer to give it a *few months* and determine what I can absorb in my work plan. We will know if lots 9-10 are sold, which could/would fund the position.
- Don: Thinks we need to move forward now. Need someone courting prospective economic development
- Steve: Agrees with Don. Need to have at least 4 months before getting up to speed. Need to cheerleader to promote development. “Hey, come up to Longview”. Think we need to focus on City of Longview.
- Ken: Great idea. Do we have the resources to do that?
 - Kurt: Depends. A full FTE might be problematic. Perhaps we could contract or share.
- Chet: Not just going to be able to pick up someone off the street. We need someone with a specific skillset.
- Tom: Without benefit of further discussion...toward fall of this year
- Mary Jane (via Don): Has greater urgency to do it now.
- Mike: Thinks time is of the essence. If you want to collaborate, should be within the City taxing district.
- **Council wants staff to start the process for development of an Economic Development Coordinator and/or evaluation of contracting etc. Staff to prepare by end of June.**
- Page 12, Slide 23
 - Mike: Police Chief believes this is an urgent matter.
- Page 28, Slide 55 – Deliverable #5 – **No need of a name change to “Memorial.” Put a period where there was a comma.**
- Page 32, Slide 64 –Deliverable #2 – **Delete**
- Upcoming budget issues
 - Indigent Defense
 - Higher caseload. May need to contract with same firm or provide in another way another firm. Supreme Court mandate.
 - Mike: Question re: diversion program. Try to do what we can to mitigate (i.e., diversion program)
 - Public Records Request Disclosure
 - Largest volume involves LPD but also most other departments.
 - Mike: If we do have to have a full FTE, perhaps there could be an ombudsman re: citizen liaison.

- Dave: May be coupled with dealing with school speed zone violation processing.
 - School Zone Safety improvements
 - Dave: May impact but does have a funding source.
 - Don: Could be some issue with legality and be required to payback.
 - ADA Transition Plan
 - Seasonal staffs go through right-of-way. May need seasonal/part-time staff.
 - New Public Safety Radio Network
 - Dead spots for radio coverage causing possible safety issues.
 - Updating Strategic Plan for the City.
 - Dave: Will probably bring back end of this year or possibly next year
- Capital Expenditures
 - MVGC Cart Storage
 - Police Gun Range
 - Dave: Probably more reasonable to have this as a regional issue.
 - Mike: We do not need a gun range alone. This is the wrong message we are sending to the general public. If we were to have a regional multi-use training facility (police and fire).
 - ADA Transition Plan – Potential millions \$\$ in cost
 - Downtown Parking Lot Repairs
 - Dave: Not a mandatory sort of thing. Getting difficult to stripe, etc.
 - Acquisition of Cowlitz River parcel
 - Acquisition of property South of City Hall
 - Could be advantageous for future use.
 - New netting for MVGC Driving Range
 - Dave: Could be new netting. Not sure of cost.

Working Together

- Work together very well.
- Straightforwardly addressed the big issues; water, economic development etc.
- Terms occasionally heard in interviews:
 - Elected officials steer the boat and staff row the boat.
 - Elected – Encourage to give deference to the background and knowledge of staff.

Council Committee Assignments

- Dave: Taking on an assignment you (Council) may want to give up and/or be removed from appointment (NOT STAFF).
 - Ken: Sits on **Longview Downtown Liaison** along with Dave, John. Suggest that we have City Staff continue without Council
 - Mike: **Cowlitz Housing First Coalition**. Meetings are largely reports. Feels no value except to relay a problem. LPD is always represented on this committee. No value in Council being there.
 - Dave: Suggestion for Council liaison on the **Golf Advisory Board**. Is that an assignment you want to make? Ken believes it is part of the **Parks Board** and would be happy to be liaison for the **Golf Advisory Board**.
 - Steve: Because it's an enterprise entity, there should be separate Council representation.
 - Steve: **Ethnic Support Council** doesn't think there is any value for Council to be appointed to this Council. **Local Emergency Planning Committee (Fire Chief on the Board of Directors)**. **Delete, subject to legal/regulatory review.**

Workshop Schedule

- Nothing on June 4th
- ADA Transition Plan on June 18th
- West Longview Annexation (August 20th or September 3rd)
- July 16 the Water Advisory Committee Report (may move)
- Citizen Committee to discuss street infrastructure

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Constituent Comments
- Water
- Success report to citizens
- Transportation