

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Dunagan, Hamrick, Figueras, Bruner, Wangemann, Couvillon
STAFF PRESENT: Padgett, Sheppard, Marlowe, Felts, Hamby, Jordan

Mayor Dunagan called the meeting to order and served as the presiding officer.

Director Carol Turner welcomed everyone to Featherbone Communiversy.

City Manager Kip Padgett provided an overview of the plans for the day indicating this retreat would be different from the past in that it would focus on goal building.

Facilitator Walt McBride stated the day would start with the big picture then pare down to a few strategic priorities that can be submitted to departments to build goals. The agenda would serve as a guide. He stated leadership is mobilizing resources to accomplish important work. The starting point was determining why local governments exist with specific emphasis on the City of Gainesville. There should be a review of the vision and the mission statements to establish strategic priorities. Then, priorities are followed by action. Council provides structure for the action by providing human resources and funding. Mr. McBride indicated effective cities/counties use this concept.

Vision answers the question of why does the city exist. The mission forms the tangible image. The strategic priority was the broad goal. If these items reflect what is valued in public service, we know we are doing the right thing.

Attendees were divided into three groups to discuss what they value in public service. The following responses were shared: excellence, trust, honesty, accountability, open communication/transparency, compassion, quality of life/public value, people and meeting their expectations, leadership, commitment and stewardship.

Council Member Wangemann felt it is important to know the difference between essential and non-essential service. He also stated leadership is influence.

Mr. McBride indicated *Leadership on the Line*, written by Martin Linsky and Ronald A. Heifetz, was a great book for elected officials to read.

RECESS: 10:30 AM
RECONVENE: 10:48 AM

Mr. McBride stated public values balance liberty, community, prosperity and equality. He briefly defined what falls into each category then asked the groups to define the important work to be accomplished. The results of the discussion yielded the following responses:

- Forward thinking
- Provide a better community
 - Economic development
 - Jobs and opportunity
 - Essential services at a reasonable cost

Council Member Figueras commented on finding balance within government.

Council Member Couvillon commented on adjusting the budget on a regular basis.

Mr. McBride stated the community needs to see the business plan and the balance sheet.

There was discussion about the city's vision and mission statements which are noted below.

Vision Statement: Gainesville is committed to being an innovative city, providing a close-knit community feel in which to live, work and play.

Mission Statement: The mission of the City of Gainesville is to enrich the community of Gainesville by practicing good stewardship of resources and providing innovative and exemplary services for all people. To accomplish our mission we will:

- Maintain the attitude of "Do more with less/Efficiency first";
- Be exemplary in our service quality, low expenditures and effectiveness;
- Continue to revitalize the Midtown area to further the close knit community feel;
- Be innovative in our Economic development, in order to stimulate the local economy;
- Be accountable to citizens and each other for our actions; and,
- Uphold the highest professional and ethical standards.

LUNCH BREAK: 11:54 AM
RECONVENE: 12:50 PM

Council Member Bruner commented on the importance of good morale among staff.

Mr. McBride read the mission statement again and gleaned the following from it: the City should be aesthetically pleasing, provide basic services and be innovative.

Mr. McBride stated it was time to create action items. Each attendee was given five post-it notes to record specific actions that needed to be addressed. Each item was read aloud and grouped into one of following categories:

1. Economic Development
2. Infrastructure Improvements
3. Internal Operations/Revenue Generation
4. Leisure Services
5. Quality of Life

RECESS: 1:40 PM
RECONVENE: 1:49 PM

Mr. McBride indicated the five categories should be viewed as the priorities of the governing body. Each category was discussed to obtain additional thoughts. The end result of this exercise yielded the following strategic goals:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Community Development – promote Gainesville as a regional HUB
- Midtown Development
- New Business Development
- Look for additional property for new businesses/industries to support the Chamber
- Encourage/Facilitate private development and redevelopment
- Economic Development north of Enota along Thompson Bridge
- Maintain ISO rating at Fire Department
- Focus on increasing jobs through continued investment in the Olympic Venue and identify future industrial parks

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Widening of Green Street
- Address traffic flow along Jesse Jewel between Queen City Parkway to Downey
- Traffic on Green Street, Jesse Jewell and intersections at E.E. Butler and Queen City Parkway
- Ask Hall County for funds to help pay for street resurfacing projects
- Public Works – Traffic Improvements – Implement Plan
- Sidewalks along corridors
- Explore new revenue sources to augment traditional ones (i.e., taxes) to create equitable collection from those benefiting from services
- Implement transportation plan recommendation
- Address the storm water issues of an aging infrastructure system
- Move entrance to post office off Green Street
- Resolve Cedar Creek/North Oconee issue with County

INTERNAL OPERATIONS / REVENUE GENERATION

- Use technology to improve efficiency and reduce costs
 - Enhanced software
 - More integration of technology
- Review employee salaries and benefits to evaluate and improve, as needed, to employ and retain a top-quality workforce
- Encourage departments to work collectively to resolve issues
- Find revenue to address necessary capital projects in pending status
- Increase public awareness of City operations and financial position:
 - Marketing/Sales efforts
 - PAFR
 - Rack Cards
 - Website, Facebook, etc., social media, public service, texts
- Involve more young people in government
- Educate the legislative delegation on the importance of a reasonable LOST calculation method
- Utilities Marketing Director

LEISURE SERVICES

- Direct more attention toward services for senior citizens and disabled programs
- Challenge Hall County for continued support of the rowing/canoeing/kayak venue
- Look for ways to encourage positive attitudes among our people
- Work with Hall County to improve library services in the downtown area
 - Impact fee collection
 - Parking
 - Expansion of the main branch
- Enhanced recreational services for youth (baseball/softball fields)

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Signage
 - “Welcome to Gainesville” signs at entrances to the City
 - Way finding signage
- Beautification of public areas including right of ways
 - Renovate Roosevelt Square
 - Landscaping plan for City corridors and downtown square
 - Work with Hall County to beautify inside of downtown square OR simply buy it and do it ourselves
 - Enhance landscaping on Midtown Greenway (solicit private partnerships and/or donations)
 - Beautification of gateway corridors
- Remove commercial and residential blight
- Code enforcement
- Improve the 129 South entrance to Gainesville (infrastructure, clean up, business development)
- Streetscapes into and out of Square along Washington and Bradford Streets
- Neighborhood Protection

Mr. McBride thanked everyone for their participation throughout the day and closed with the distribution of Evaluation Forms.

COUNCIL ISSUES

Mayor Dunagan thanked staff for the planning required to make the workshop a success and Council Member Figueras thanked Mr. McBride for facilitating.

CITY MANAGER ISSUES

City Manager Padgett advised Council that a tour of Featherbone Communiversy was scheduled for February 13 immediately after the Work Session. He also suggested that the Work Session be rescheduled for 10:00 AM. Council concurred.

ADJOURNMENT: 2:41 PM

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