



INFORMAL STAFF REPORT

MEMORANDUM

To: Ron L. Olson, City Manager

From: Esther Velazquez, Assistant to the City Manager *EMV*

Date: March 12, 2014

Subject: 2014 City Council Retreat

The City Council held their annual retreat on March 4, 2014. The retreat was facilitated by Ms. Toby Futrell. The following report is a summary of the retreat.

In her opening comments, Ms. Futrell laid out the goals for the day's retreat. The objectives were:

- Alignment among last year's Council priorities, proposed Council priorities for 2014 and the most recent citizen survey results; and
- Alignment between the most recent citizen survey results and both the City's current policy discussions and management's current operational initiatives.

Ms. Futrell explained that cities typically lagged in their citizen surveys whereby an area of concern is identified and subsequently the city reacts to explore and resolve the issue. With the recent citizen survey, Ms. Futrell found the Council and City Manager were leading the survey. The survey data validated the policy areas already under discussion and improvement plans were already underway in Corpus Christi.

Ms. Futrell outlined the following topics of discussion for the retreat:

1. Continuous Improvement to be the Best City in Texas. What it Takes.
2. Checking In on Last Year's Council Priorities.
3. Discuss Proposed 2014 Council Priorities.
4. Review Recent Citizen Survey Results.
5. Finalize 2014 Council Priorities.
6. City Manager Goals Support Continuous Improvement Efforts.
7. Retreat Summary.

Continuous Improvement To Be The Best City In Texas

City Manager Ron Olson discussed the need for continuous improvement to be the best city in Texas. He reviewed his Strategic Plan diagram (see **Attachment A**) and the process of working towards the achievement of that goal. The key points were:

- Understanding the Level & Complexity of Change Required
- Involving Difficult Organizational Culture Change
- Requiring Leadership Focus & Tenacity
- Demanding a 3-D Process:
 - Discovery
 - Discussion
 - Decision Making
- Tees Up the Debate. Raises Awareness. Reflects in Survey. Validates We are "Leading" the Survey
- Expecting a Long-term Change Process: Results Will Not be Immediate

Checking In On Last Year's Council Priorities

Ms. Futrell reviewed the 2013 Council priorities as follows:

- What is Being Done in each Priority Area?
 - Priority 1: Taking Care of Assets & Resources
 - Priority 2: Water Policy
 - Priority 3: Economic Development Policy

2013 Council Priority 1: Taking Care of Assets & Resources

- Street Investment Policy, including Dedicated Funding Through Bond Dollars & Street Maintenance Fee
- Citywide Facility & Property Services Inventory & Improvement Plan
- Asset Management:
 - Parks & Public Utilities Master Plan
 - Fleet Replacement Plan
 - Solid Waste & Municipal Court Assessments
 - Public Works & Utilities Reorganization
 - Human Infrastructure: Class/Compensation Study, Workforce Succession Planning

2013 Council Priority 2: Water Policy

- ROI Analysis, Funding & Construction of Mary Rhodes Pipeline Phase 2
- Water Supply Development
 - Desalination

Brackish

Aquifer Storage & Recovery

- Conservation & Reuse (effluent)
- Utility Rate Evaluation for Sustainability & Continuity for Future Capital Requirements

2013 Council Priority 3: Economic Development Policy

- Drafting Economic Development Strategies & Policies
- Comprehensive Plan Components
 - Infill & Redevelopment
 - Affordable Housing
- Area Plans
 - Central Downtown Business District, SEA District, Uptown, ROW from realignment of Harbor Bridge, Northside, & North Beach
 - Southside Area Development Plan
- Over the Last 3 Years, approximately \$9 million Supported Workforce Readiness & Development Efforts in our Community

Discuss Proposed 2014 Council Priorities

A week prior to the retreat, the City Council was asked to provide a preliminary list of priorities as their top areas of focus for 2014. Ms. Futrell facilitated a round table discussion with Council to explain and explore the four preliminary areas identified as follows:

1. Road Conditions

- a. Residential Road Improvement Plan
- b. Implementing Major Road Reconstruction & Maintenance Plans

2. Adopting Economic Development Policies that Shape Our Economy

- a. Targeted Industry Niches
- b. Tailored Incentives
- c. Area Specific Policies (i.e., Downtown)

3. Water Policy

- a. Water Supply Education
- b. Water Supply Development
- c. Water Supply Contracts

4. Parks Maintenance Plan & Funding

Review Recent Citizen Survey Results

Dr. Daniel Jorgensen, a professor of public administration at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi discussed the survey history and methodology. Dr. Jorgensen explained the demographics of the respondents and the zip code coverage.

Citizen Survey Methodology

- A Survey Instrument of Approximately 109 Closed-ended Questions
- 94 Attitudinal Categories With History From the 2011 Survey
- 55 or About 60% With Benchmarks From Texas Cities
- New Questions Look at Social Media Usage And Information
- Cluster Sampling Process
 - 1834 Households Selected For a Survey Throughout The City
 - About a 1.5% Probability Your Household Would Be Surveyed
- In-person Survey Delivery the 2nd And 3rd Weekends in November
- 509 Respondents
- Completion Response Rate of 27.75% -- Considered Good With No Incentives & a Long Survey Instrument
- 95% Confidence Level
- +/- 4.25% Margin of Error

Ms. Futrell then reviewed areas in the survey where the City showed improvements. City Manager Ron Olson talked about Corpus Christi being on the brink of major growth and of its number 17 ranking in the Milken Institute's Best-Performing U.S. Cities.

Areas for Celebration

1. Quality of Life & Long-Term Planning
2. Parks & Libraries
3. Public Safety: Police, Fire & EMS
4. Customer Service
5. Quality of Specific City Services: Solid Waste, Water Utilities, Animal Control, Flood Control

City Manager Ron Olson explored the areas in the survey where the City needs improvement and shared with Council the in-progress action plans for each.

Areas for Improvement

1. Quality of Life & Long Term Planning

Action Plan: Awarded Contract for Long-term Strategic Planning Services, Including Developing Strategic Comprehensive & Area Plans

- Downtown Area Development Plan
 - Central Downtown Business District
 - SEA District
 - Uptown
 - Harbor Bridge Realignment of ROW
 - Northside
 - North Beach
 - Southside Area Development Plan

2. Road Conditions

Action Plan: Four Comprehensive Street Strategies

Street Maintenance:

City Council adopted street maintenance fee, policies, & rates on 6/25/13

CIP for Reconstruction/rehabilitation of Arterials & Collectors:

Bond in phases

CIP Rehabilitation/Reconstruction for Local/Residential Streets:

Bond in phases

Assessment Program to be discussed with City Council in Spring

Policies:

Street Design Standards – City Council adopted new standards requiring 30 year life expectancy including additional base materials & curb/gutter backfill on 3/19/13

Street Cut Policy – City Council adopted street cut policy on 12/17/13

3. Economic Development

Action Plan: Economic Development Strategic Plan Under Development

Four Goals are:

- Economic Diversity
- Workforce Development
- Quality of Place
- Regional Cooperation

Ten Strategies Established, Including Strengthening Existing Businesses

Working on Targeted Market or Industry Niches, Area-Specific Policies & Tailored Incentive Tool Guidelines

Type A Retreat Planned for Targeted Investment of Remaining Dollars

4. Public Safety: Police & Municipal Court

Action Plan: Continued Increase in Police Presence

Traffic Enforcement (Up 37%)

DWI Enforcement (Up 16%)

No-Texting Ordinance

SAD (Stop Aggressive Driving) Program

Renewed Juvenile Curfew Ordinance

Continue City Support of Juvenile Assessment Center to Aid At-Risk Youth

Focused Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Efforts

Evaluate Adding In-Service Training to Improve Officer Interaction with Citizens

Municipal Court – Software system replacement underway along with implementation of other improvement recommendations under new management

5. Taking Care of Our Assets & Resources: Code Enforcement & Cleanliness of City

Action Plan:

Realigned Code Enforcement & Neighborhood Improvement under Police Department

Established Interdepartmental Nuisance Abatement Team

Approved Litter Ordinance & Extensive Educational Program

Built City's 1st Database of Facilities & Property

Established Facilities & Property Maintenance Plan with 6 Recommendations for Improvement

6. Taking Care of Our Assets & Resources: Environment

Action Plan:

Centralized Management of Public Utilities

Water Quality of Bays & Estuaries:

- Address SSOI Issues

- Approved Litter Ordinance & Extensive Educational Program for Litter Reduction

- Adopting Stormwater Best Management Practices

 - Working with TCEQ to Identify Sources of Bacteria

 - Developing Bacterial Mitigation Action Plan

Drainage Issues: Street Funding Strategies Will Address Road, Curb & Gutter Issues

7. Taking Care of Our Assets & Resources: Parks Maintenance

Action Plan:

City Parks Master Plan Implementation

- Includes Parks Maintenance Plan

- Accelerate 10-year Master Plan to 3 years

- Evaluate Resources Needed as Part of Proposed Budget

Mowing Consolidation

Create Strategy for Youth Sports Organizations Assistance

Pursue Public/Private Partnership to Develop New Athletic Complex for Tournaments

8. Quality of Specific City Services

Action Plan:

Taste & Quality of Drinking Water Heavily Influenced by the Water Quality You Start With

Need to Explore Citizen Concerns with Gas Service Further:

- Holmes Drive Explosion Due to Gas Leak

Although Decreasing, Continued High Volume of Gas Leaks

Pilot Light & Gas Turn On Requests During 11/10/13 Cold Snap

Ms. Futrell paused after each area of discussion to get feedback from Council on the findings.

Finalize 2014 Council Priorities

Ms. Futrell conducted another roundtable discussion regarding priority alignment. She pointed out that a very strong alignment existed between the data and the City's current policy discussions, as well as what Council had already identified as priority policy areas through recent decisions and direction to the City Manager.

1. Road Conditions, Including Residential Roads
 - Implement Major Road Reconstruction & Preventative Maintenance Plans
 - Develop, Fund, & Implement Residential Road Improvement Plan
2. Water Policy
 - Update & Report on State of Water Supply
 - Continued Water Supply Development
 - Comprehensive, Equitable Review of Water Supply Contracts
3. Economic Development Policy
 - Create Policy that Shapes Our Economy by Targeting Desired Industry Niches Using Tailored Incentives & Area-Specific Plans
 - Build on Diversity of Businesses Inside City Limits
 - Develop Strategies to Retain & Grow Existing Businesses
 - Continue Investment in Citywide Workforce Development and Readiness
4. Quality of Life & Long Term Planning:
 - Long-term Planning: Develop Comprehensive & Area Development Plans
 - Quality of Life: Improve City as a Place to Raise Children
5. Taking Care of Our Assets & Resources:
 - Code Enforcement & Cleanliness of City
 - Strengthen Enforcement Efforts to Eliminate High Weeds, Abandoned/Junk Vehicles, Dilapidated or Vacant Buildings
 - Litter Education, Prevention, & Enforcement
 - City Facilities & Property
 - Improve the Maintenance of City Facilities & Property

- Improving the Appearance of City Parks & Quality of Outdoor Athletic Fields
- Environment
 - Continue Evaluating & Implementing Storm Water Drainage Best Practices
 - Monitor Impacts of Best Practices on Water Quality in Our Bays & Estuaries

6. Public Safety:

- Develop Policing Strategies To Improve Nighttime Safety Downtown
- Disrupt & Deter Gang-related Criminal Activity
- Identify At-risk Youth & Reduce Juvenile Crime
- Improve Officer Interactions With Citizens
- Municipal Court Information Technology Improvements & Other Improvement Efforts

Throughout the discussion, Council provided additional input. Ms. Futrell recorded all feedback and prepared the attached final 2014 Council Priorities (see **Attachment B**).

City Manager Goals Support Continuous Improvement Efforts

City Manager Ron Olson laid out five key goals which support the continuous improvement efforts:

1. Reaffirm the ethical foundation of the organization.
2. Institutionalize a sound and effective management process.
3. Set realistic expectations regarding services and continuously improve organizational performance until Corpus Christi becomes the pre-eminent benchmark among Texas Cities.
4. Make the financial capacity of the City sustainable.
5. Assure that appointed City leadership is capable & strong.

Retreat Summary

City Manager Ron Olson praised Council for a process he coined discovery, discussion and decision making. "Rather than fire, aim, ready, this Council is being very disciplined in a policy making process that is ready (discovery), aim (discussion), fire (decision making). By doing this, we are teeing up the public debate, increasing citizen involvement and raising awareness of key policy issues. This is why our policy initiatives are leading the citizen survey this time around and our policy making is hitting the mark," said City Manager Ron Olson.

OTHER BUSINESS

City Secretary Rebecca Huerta reviewed the 2014-15 Council meeting calendar. She recommended the following Council meetings for cancellation:

- August 12 – Summer Break
- November 25 – Thanksgiving
- December 23 – Christmas Holiday
- December 30 – New Year’s Holiday

The Council concurred with the meeting schedule as proposed.

Mayor Martinez adjourned the retreat at 4:10 p.m.

Strategic Plan

Envision ☆ Believe ☆ Achieve



2014 COUNCIL PRIORITIES

1. **Neighborhood Improvements**
 - Residential Roads
 - Utilities & Drainage
 - Lighting & Sidewalks
 - Park Maintenance & Enhancements
 - Code Enforcement & Cleanliness
2. **Water Policy**
 - Continue Water Supply Development
 - Educate the Public on Water Supply & Strategy
 - Align Water & Wastewater Strategies
3. **Economic Development Policy**
 - Create Policies that Shape our Economy by Targeting Desired Business Niches
 - Develop Area Specific Plans Using Tailored Incentives, i.e. Creating a Vital Downtown
 - Expand Diversity of Businesses
 - Retain & Grow Existing Businesses
4. **Quality of Life & Long Term Planning**
 - Strengthen the City as a Place to Live & Raise Children
 - Nurture the Environment While We Grow the Economy
 - Improve Downtown Safety
5. **Taking Care of Our Assets & Resources**
 - Execute Major Road Reconstruction & Maintenance Plans
 - Implement City Facilities & Property Maintenance Plan