

2016 LONGVIEW CITY COUNCIL RETREAT

Saturday, February 6, 2016 – Longview City Hall 2nd Floor Training Room, 8:00 a.m.

Council Present: Don Jensen, Mayor, Mike Wallin, Mayor Pro-Tem, Councilmember Mary Jane Melink, Councilmember Ken Botero, Councilmember Chet Makinster, Councilmember Scott Vydra, & Councilmember 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.

Facilitator Lloyd Halverson welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation to be able to return. Lloyd commented on the prior year's retreat and the successful time spent in working several initiatives, to include: Police and Fire/Paramedics.

Agenda Review / Summary of Councilmember Interviews:

Lloyd – The agenda is indeed just a summary. What do you want to get done with the retreat, where at the end you own it? The apparent highest priorities are:

- Deal with street needs and solutions
- Less interest in reviewing/refreshing the City Vision/Mission
 - Lloyd believes this is very important and will come to you
- Economic Development Program – Key staffers will be here with us today (John Brickey/Joe Phillips).

Things Council is most proud of:

- Washington Way Bridge
- Downtown Streetscape
- Budget
- Police staffing and Street Crimes Unit
- Water issues being address
 - Drew mixed comment
- Working together during recent storms

Things Council is critical of:

- Projects take too long
- Start losing momentum
- Disappointed we didn't get to street infrastructure. Fell of the work plan but nobody's fault
- Work Plan is Staff driven and feels Council should be more involved in the development of the plan
 - Can the plan be reduced to eliminate the "Administrative" pieces?

Ken – What is the role of Council?

Lloyd – Council tells them what to be done. City Manager/Staff get it done.

Scott – Are we not advocates for our citizens? If citizens are having an issue with the Staff, is it not our obligation to address the citizens' concerns?

Chet – There is a fine line in being an advocate for an individual citizen and what's best for the community.

Lloyd – Provide a scenario in which you believe Council should be addressing citizens' priority issues. There should be further discussion of what is Council driven and what is staff driven.

Don – Council may want to say, this is where we want to focus.

Things Department Heads are most proud of:

- Budget – All the way down the line. Not just management but all staff is diligent in spending tax dollars wisely.

What does Council do to let Staff know they are appreciated?

- That there are no surprises

Don – One thing, during the hard times we didn't lay anyone off.

Mary Jane – Need to establish a baseline on how we address issues in the public and a means for addressing them.

Chet – In the situation we are talking about, homework wasn't done. Statements were made that were very uncalled for and very embarrassing.

Lloyd – That issue had more emotional freight than most anything discussed in the interviews.

Steve – In my opinion, there were surprises by Staff when that was brought up at the Council meeting.

Ken – Things being brought at Council meeting that are a surprise is an issue.

Don – I think it is exactly the issue...Surprises.

Mary Jane – I don't think it's appropriate to belittle the Staff or anyone publically.

Mike – It is really valuable that we talk about this today and, but not for the surprise, it would have never happened. Same as with Ken and I, we should learn from what we've done.

Scott – I didn't see the issue as a big deal. Did staff believe they were being attached?

Lloyd – At least one Staff member did.

Chet – It's important to know that when you address issues it's not taken personally.

Kurt – We are here to support the Council and provide for the community. For example, if you believe you don't have enough information, ask to take this topic off the agenda so staff could provide that additional information.

Don – It makes me feel good that we can bring this up without taking it personally.

Lloyd – I think the discussion is productive as is acknowledging and addressing it.

Dave – Staff really do aim to please. We really do want to accomplish what Council wants and attempts to meet Council's goals.

Brief Summary

Lloyd – I believe there is discord within this organization but this last hour of discussion has provided me with hope.

Mary Jane – Give us recommendations on how we can address this. We're not there yet. how do we get there?

Lloyd – Council, give the overall direction of what needs to be done and stay out of how it gets done.

Chet – I believe the retreat should be two days so we can drill down into some of these things.

Scott – Communication with Council re: specific issues with boards - let Council know if they have input regarding the direction of a board.

2015 Accomplishments

Dave – My impression is that you don't want to spend much, or any, time at all on the 2015 accomplishments. If there are other issues that need clarification, now is the time to ask. One thing is that we wanted to send out our accomplishments in the Utility Flyer report card.

Scott – If you're going to spend money on a report card, would you not want to solicit a response from citizens? Change on a regular basis. If you pick the top two or three accomplishments, you will get more feedback.

Ken – You could send out information quarterly and receive feedback.

Dave – Agree that less is more. Make sure we include a why in where we can receive comment.

Steve – We could include accomplishments on our website.

Scott – How about we educate them and get their input?

Dave – Signs on projects of how they are funded and what they are for (Stromwater vs. beautification). For educational purposes.

Dave – Got the message but want to hear from Council of those issues that are important or what you hear.

Mike – **Page 15, Slide 29.** This is what we had for 2015 but are putting into budget process for the next budget cycle.

Kurt – Dashboard. We provide a ton of information but don't receive very much feedback.

Mike – There is a lack of public relations (so to speak) informing citizens and engaging them in the process. Missing the official work from the City.

Dave – We are working this into the next budget cycle. Our job is to present to Council a proposal.

Scott – Focus on the top two or three issues.

Steve – Get feedback when it affects them and provide them additional information of the process.

Ken – Maybe we should report on the deliverables every six months.

Mary Jane – Could that go back to Kurt's dashboard and/or other means of communication?

Kurt – We can certainly update the deliverables on a quarterly, or six month basis and report.

Dave – There may be a time later in the agenda to discuss this during the workshop discussion.

Lloyd – Maybe a check-in to see how we're doing. Work on the framework of the budget.

Mike – There are several concerns with the 2015 Accomplishments:

Slide 74, page 37 – Is it too late to start the RA Long project?

Kurt – There are thing that we will accomplish on this project.

Ken – If we can't get that accomplished we need a Plan B.

Mary Jane – The biggest issue is why did the bids go out so late?

Dave – The Engineer that was on the Washington Way Bridge and Tennant Way project did not have time to start the RA Long project.

Chet – This is an instance where Staff should let Council know why.

Mike – **Page 30, Slide 60** – No progress this last year. Is this a priority for Council, Staff? If not and if citizens are not willing to improve (LID) then I question if we should actually annex these areas.

Dave – This is important, at least to Mike, to either have on the work plan or not.

Kurt – Council will want to discuss how an LID works (\$2k/lineal ft.)

Steve – We need to start actively pursuing LID's. There's a long term benefit to annex West Longview.

Lloyd – Definitive opinion regarding validity of LID process.

Dave – We need to have a realistic time line for getting this complete.

Mike – Why was not addressed?

Dave – The water took priority and we simply didn't have staff time.

John – Staff is here to support the LID process but there is not a lot of support by citizens.

Mary Jane – If we didn't have staffing to accomplish tasks, we should have a discussion on whether we want to support the plans.

Mike – **Page 38, Slide 75** – Should we re-align staffing to address projects? There was nothing done. Do we re-prioritize or just limit our plans.

Ken – Isn't that an administrative decision?

Chet – We need to prioritize and drill down on what we can get done both financially and staffing.

Scott – Here's what we want done. Staffing to determine whether we have the tools and Council to determine if we're willing to support.

John – The work plan is what we do beyond our day-to-day business.

Mike – **Page 46, slide 96** – Pathways 20-20. Is this something Council is interested in?

Ken – I believe this is something that is important.

Review/Confirm Strategic Initiatives

Dave – The Strategic Initiatives have been established for the last 6 years. I think it's time to address and confirm or throw them out. We should take some time to address.

Mary Jane – They're not in any particular order?

Dave – Water was moved to the top as a symbolic priority. Do we want to prioritize?

Scott – Should the "Improved Transportation Systems" include the wording of "Streets and Roads"?

Chet – We should add another Strategic Initiative and call it "Streets and Roads".

Steve – Need to remove the orange arrow from the Initiatives slide.

Scott – Need to look at the visual aspect of the Initiatives slide.

Mike – Perhaps we should use one of those "cycle" appearing diagrams or a puzzle graphic.

Lloyd – I would suggest you address and/or consider taking a look at the Preferred Vision as well.

Apparent Highest Priority 2016 Work Plan Items

Economic Development

Dave – I am providing you with the new Economic Development Initiatives and will have John and Joe go through them.

John – I have asked Joe to put together the Economic Development Initiatives and go through them strategy by strategy.

Strategy A: Marketing

Joe – **1st Deliverable** – Put a template together for specific projects. Have a template that really sells Longview.

Chet – How is this going to work EDC?

Joe – Will be working from a similar playbook. It will help me sell the City of Longview by bringing interest to us. It's a team sport as well as a competitive sport.

Scott – What I'm not hearing is do we reach out to them after the 1st inquiry? Do we reach out to them again? Do we count them?

Don – The Mayor is not being included in the initial introduction.

Joe – That's what I mean in putting together the "Team".

Joe – **2nd Deliverable** – Marketing, specifically toward the Mint Farm. Working with WREDCO. Investment follows investment.

Joe – **3rd Deliverable** – Engage in commercial real estate markets. There are places and priorities we meet. I plan to be involved with the NAOP organization. Being out there where they (buyers) are.

John – **4th Deliverable** – I have been working on this and it could be a good mixed use. There is potential for businesses with higher use.

Joe – Housing for community economic development. Buildable lands inventory. Using some of those concepts that may be more suitable for re-development.

Mike – What if someone were interested in one of our parking lots? Would we lease or sell and how would that be accomplished?

Joe – We would want to get Council concurrence or understanding of what they want prior to entering into these types of issues.

Council – **Street/Tree Light Deliverable** – Staff should bring this proposal to Council sooner than later and we need to get this done.

Strategy B: Economic Condition Assessment

Joe – **1st Deliverable** – Initiate BRE program. Get out to as many businesses we feel are important, understand what they're doing and what we might do to assist those businesses. If they are having problems, can we triage those issues and help the business owner through the issue. It's a big element in economic development. I would ask Council for a list of businesses that are important to you.

Chet – This is really important that you've identified this issue.

Mike – As an example, Swanson's...are there things we can do to bring together those that are in transition?

Joe – **2nd Deliverable** – Need to add 1st and 3rd Avenues to this deliverable.

Joe – **3rd Deliverable** – Already covered this fairly well. Encourage, support and facilitate Port of Longview development to include Barlow Point property.

Mike – How is our comp. plan now or going to support the development of the Port property?

Joe – You can through zoning. Determine what type and size of use that may be. Example: Warehouse buildings that do not create additional jobs. You can include those businesses you want and exclude those you don't. Economic development is a team sport. We want to get around to property owners or prospective businesses to create a team approach.

Joe – **5th Deliverable** – Maximizing private property development. Getting the property that is the best fit for their business. We need to be working with clients and property owners to get the right (size & location) of property for the business to get the most out of their property possible.

6th Deliverable – Support SR432.

Chet – What was our reputation for our area?

Joe – People looking in Pierce County were not looking in our area.

Steve – Do you feel we can attain the identified deliverables?

Joe – I believe we will be able to at least touch on each of the deliverables.

Steve – Should we include LID's in the economic development work plan?

Dave – We may be able to include that in the “Improving Neighborhood” deliverables.

Street and Road Needs and Solutions

We need to focus on the solution.

Don – we’ve had a consultant to tell us what we need. We need to create some new money to repair our roads.

Chet – We need to find the money but think it’s going to take several years to come up with the money. Would like to bring back services what we’ve lost during the recession but would like to include money for street repair.

Mike – We have one option, Vehicle Renewal Fees. Of the 4 options, three of them are by vote of the citizens and those will not happen. I think the only option is to the Vehicle Renewal Fees.

Kurt – Additional sales tax impacts the local vehicle dealerships.

Levy Lid Lift – Also requires voter approval.

County-wide fuel tax would require voter approval as well.

Lloyd – We could use a revenue package that may include vehicle tabs and CDBG money.

Mike – The idea of a package is a good idea, if we could add tabs and some funding from the General Fund. How can we use multiple funding sources to meet our goal?

Mary Jane – Should we have Staff determine and present their recommendations?

Mike – I think Council should lead this as an initiative of what elements to use in funding.

Lloyd – What I’m hearing is consensus regarding the car tab fee and the Council will work with Staff in developing a “package” of multiple funding sources.

Steve – I’m in agreement with all of this and we need to see all the tools and develop a plan. We need to be looking at every source. If it takes reducing other programs, I’m willing to go forward.

Ken – There are too many elements we don’t understand. We need to put together a committee of Council and Staff to develop a plan.

Chet – I agree with what Mike presented. We need to have a committee and start ratcheting it up. We need to remove some of the projects that are nice but not required to have. When the economy starts getting better we can then fund other “want” projects.

Mary Jane – Why won’t we have Staff bring us the proposed program? This is Staff’s job.

Mike – Because this was on the work plan and didn't get done.

Chet – I can go along with what you're saying but we need to tell Staff to tell us what is important.

Don – I'm looking at the Citizen Summit date. Are you willing to pay more? At one table, they were will to pay more.

Scott – I think it would be collaborative to have a committee work with Staff to have a plan

Mike – We must develop a plan and we need to do it right.

Dave – It is Staff's job to present a plan but a worthy idea to work with a Council committee jointly to develop a plan. We will be getting more revenue as a result of motor fuel tax. We could possibly put capital moneys toward street maintenance.

Kurt – This is a very important issue and a great discussion. Bottom line, we have several projects that are using existing funds and we simply cannot fund the all.

Lloyd – I don't believe Council should be doing Staff's work. Council should be guiding staff on what to do, funding etc. but should work the plan. What is the path forward?

Council – We should develop a committee (Mike, Chet, Steve).

Steve – How long will it take for staff to get information?

Kurt – We can discuss that at the 1st committee meeting.

Citizen Summit

Chet – The police table went very well. Citizens were very positive about our police service. Homelessness and how to handle it was brought up at both of my tables. Street maintenance was also brought up. Citizens participated very well.

Don – We totally changed how we did it this year. How did it go?

Chet – The "hello and introduction" was too long.

Ken – Citizens didn't want to hear of our accomplishments...we see what you've done. They were very proud of the City. The Police Department really needs the added space. The training center and gun range are important. Possibility the Police Department and other agencies can come up with a training center. They talked about the gun range in Castle Rock, now owned by the County. I thought the Citizen Summit was very productive. When we send out applications, we should add what the topics are as some citizens don't care about the topic at the table they were assigned.

Steve – Instantly went to the how can things be done better. School zones were discussed as well as the need for more community trails. We need to educate the community on crossings and bike trails. Safety issues for homelessness. They don't like what Love Overwhelming is doing...NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard). They enjoyed the process. Some didn't have interest in the topic at the table and didn't know why they were put to that table.

Mike – We need to have topic priorities on the application. Fire went very well. There was discussion about capital needs. They bought into and supported the fire station and equipment. We need more education into the schools directly. Emergency Preparedness and the Fire Department should be leading that effort. Thought Economic Development went well. They really broadened my view...beautifying the City rather than how to incentivize industry. They think we need to focus on housing, parks, streets and zoning.

Scott – Fire Department was easy. Homelessness, there is not a single process for addressing homelessness. For over 10 years we are only going with one model. There is frustration from citizens about homelessness.

Mary Jane – Quality of Place. They want more than 1% spent on historic preservation. We do a lot of things well and a lot of things we can do better. There was discussion of the importance of schools being a vital part of economic development. If we don't have good schools, we will not attract more affluent families.

Don – I did not have an assigned table but went around and talked to 4 people. All thought the Summit went great.

Mary Jane – Citizens leave with a better understanding of what the issues are.

Chet – If we put citizens in a place they're interested in, are we getting a good cross section of citizens?

Dave – Do we want one every year. Council said yes.

2016 Work Plan Review, Adjustments and Confirmations

Dave – We now have 8 initiatives. I believe we have a thorough understanding of the Economic Development and beginning of a path forward regarding the Streets & Roads. We haven't talked about the other 6. How many of the remaining 6 do you want to discuss today. Lloyd heard that Council believes the work plan is Staff driven. I am committed to creating a work plan that is "Ours", that we have a joint plan moving forward.

Steve – I'm willing to stay as long as it takes to set a plan.

Don – Skip the work plan for today and reschedule it for March 3rd. If we have time at the end we can come back to the most important ones. All Councilmembers agreed.

Working Together

Lloyd – I want to reiterate a few things about highly performing teams. (handout).

- Team members know and respect their varied roles and competencies
- Have agreement and support strategic long range direction
- Demonstrate high trust levels
- Elected officials are politically strong

Council and Staff present participated in an exercise regarding how you deal with change (handout).

Lloyd – Mutual respect. There is a good tug and pull within the group, which is natural.

Council Committee Assignments

Council – Discussed and made committee assignments (See 2016 City Council/Staff Committee Appointments).

2016 Council Workshop Schedule

Mike – I would like to not have workshops every week. Perhaps combined workshops on Council Meeting nights with a 6:00 start.

Chet – Also, if we had a subject that could be communicated with a memorandum instead of a workshop.

Dave – Staff will work to incorporate a Council Meeting and Workshop schedule.