

GASTONIA CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2018 – 5:30 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM – GASTONIA, NC

Mayor Reid called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 2018, in the City Hall, Council Conference Room, Gastonia, North Carolina.

Mayor Reid opened the meeting with prayer and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Ms. Candice G. Owenby, Deputy City Clerk, recorded the minutes.

PRESENT: Mayor Walker E. Reid, III
 Mayor Pro Dave Kirlin
 Council Members: Robert Kellogg
 James Gallagher
 Jennifer M. Stepp
 David Humphries
 City Manager Michael C. Peoples
 City Attorney L. Ashley Smith

ABSENT: Council Member Todd Pierceall

Also in attendance were: Mr. Todd Carpenter, Deputy City Manager; Mr. J. Phillip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager; Ms. Melody Braddy, Assistant City Manager; Ms. Crystal Certain, Director of Financial Services; Ms. Rachel Bagley, Director of Marketing and Communications; Mr. Rob Helton, Police Chief; Mr. Phil Welch, Fire Chief; Mr. Matt Bernhardt, Director of Public Works and Utilities; Mr. Joe Albright, Director of Enterprise Services; Mr. Jason Thompson, Planning Director; Mr. Rusty Bost, Director of Development Services; Mr. Vincent Wong, Director of Community Development and Innovation; Ms. Kristy Crisp, Economic Development Director; Ms. Judy Smith, Assistant Director of Human Resources; and Mr. Chuck Dellinger, Director of Parks and Cultural Service.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO EXERCISE

Mayor Reid recognized Mr. Michael Peoples. Mr. Peoples stated the Strategic Plan meeting is separate from the Budget Objectives meeting. This Strategic Planning meeting we will look at the past, evaluating what has already been done and then prepare for the February meeting when the actual Goals and Objectives for the next two years will be discussed.

Mr. Peoples noted that a lot of effort and contribution from staff has gone into this review. He stated there has not been a lot of emphases placed on vision and mission statements and core values and adopted Council Goals and Objectives going forward. Other organizations focus on a vision and a mission statement placing it on their letterhead and is something an employee could say what the mission statement is and know what the core values are and what the goals and

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING – JANUARY 23, 2018

objectives of the Council are that lead staff in the right direction to accomplish what Council wants.

Mr. Peoples stated that this is an informal session and staff is available to answer any questions of the Council.

REVIEW OF CURRENT CITY OF GASTONIA VISION STATEMENT

Mr. Jason Thompson, Planning Director, thanked the Planning staff and all the Department Heads for the tremendous amount of effort put into the audit of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. It is important to review the City's Strategic Plan to reaffirm it is an accurate statement of the City's values in that regard. Mr. Thompson read the current Vision Statement: The City of Gastonia serves as a model for civic leadership as we engage our community of dedicated neighbors. We share a collective passion for personal safety, economic vitality, cultural richness, and overall sustainability. Our distinct character is built upon a rich and unique heritage and fueled by enthusiasm for the promise of a bright tomorrow.

Mayor Reid said this sounds good and give us something to work toward covering the three components.

Mayor Pro Tem Kirlin asked staff to continue with the Mission statement to compare the two statements. He would like to elaborate to include people of different races, colors, gender orientations, to be more inclusive in either the Vision or Mission statement.

Mayor Reid concurred with Mayor Pro Tem Kirlin.

Mayor Pro Tem Kirlin asked if it would be appropriate to take this information and be prepared at a February meeting to discuss.

Councilman Gallagher requested examples of Vision and Mission Statements in other Cities.

Mayor Pro Tem Kirlin stated that this could be something to display at City Hall.

Mr. Thompson said staff will bring a list of other municipal Vision and Mission statements at a future meeting.

REVIEW OF CURRENT CITY OF GASTONIA MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Thompson stated the current Mission Statement (To provide fair, competent, responsive, cost-effective services at the highest level) is very concise.

Councilwoman Stepp suggested that "for all" be added to the Mission statement to be inclusive of all people.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING – JANUARY 23, 2018**CREATION OF CITY OF GASTONIA CORE VALUES**

Mr. Vincent Wong, Director of Community Development and Innovation, stated that core values are the essence of the organization's identity and principles, beliefs and philosophies. Mr. Wong conducted a brief exercise on creating Core Values and asked each Council Member to state their results.

Councilman Humphries stated his results are inclusiveness, accountability, safety, customer service and professionalism.

Councilman Kellogg stated his results are inclusiveness, accountability, safety, communication and trust.

Councilwoman Stepp stated her results are accountability, safety, fiscal responsibility, public service, and honesty/integrity.

Mayor Pro Tem Kirlin stated his results are inclusiveness, sustainability, accountability, transparency and honesty/integrity.

Councilman Gallagher stated his results are safety, fiscal responsibility, honesty/integrity and open mindedness.

Mayor Reid stated his results are inclusiveness, accountability, customer service, professionalism and transparency.

Mr. Wong stated his vision is that we get to a place where the Core Values are short and concise enough to be recited. Mayor Reid suggested staff cut these down to not be redundant.

Mr. Carpenter said staff would create a Core Values statement using these words so that there are sentences behind the words to better explain our Core Values for example: "We will interact with our citizens professionally, respectfully as we engage in our daily work."

Mr. Wong stated that the Vision and Mission Statements and Core Values are the pillars of the core values to help the Council make decisions. The Strategic Plan is a strategy for how we prioritize what the Council would like to accomplish over the next two years. This is a fluid document that can be reevaluated and changed.

Councilman Humphries suggested having a "Residents' Expectations" and "Responsibilities of Employees" (to themselves and to the residents) similar to the Patient Rights and Employee Responsibilities that are displayed at most hospitals.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 4 to Minute Book 107 at Page 36).

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING – JANUARY 23, 2018

AUDIT OF 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mayor Reid recognized Mr. Jason Thompson, Planning Director, for presentation. Mr. Thompson reviewed the difference between a Comprehensive Plan and a Strategic Plan stating that Comprehensive Planning is a broad, public participation based process of establishing a vision and Strategic Planning is more specific or strategic in accomplishing or implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 4 to Minute Book 107 at Page 37).

DISCUSSION OF 2018-2019 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mr. Thompson will be sending an electronic draft of the Goals and Objectives to Council for review and prepare comments prior to the February 27th Strategic Planning Meeting. Mr. Peoples stated that staff’s goal is to collect information from the Council and develop a list of Goals and Objectives moving forward at the February 27th meeting.

Mr. Peoples said there has been some discussion about what you do once you get to the Goals and Objectives and noted that another city developed a front and back page which includes the Vision and Mission Statements and Goals and Objectives that makes for easy reference. This also helps to keep staff focused on the goals and objectives of Council.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 4 to Minute Book 107 at Page 38).

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Reid adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Mayor Walker E. Reid, III

L. Ashley Smith, City Attorney

Candice G. Owenby, Deputy City Clerk

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