

City Council Meeting Minutes  
February 19, 2011

City Council 2011 Goal Setting Workshop

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Present: Mayor Lincoln Soldati, Councilors Brian Tapscott, Michael Watman, Dale Spainhower, Jonathan McCallion, Denis Messier, Dale Sprague and David Witham.

Absent: Councilors Robin Jarvis and Martin Pepin.

Staff present: City Manager Robert Belmore, Police Chief Dean Crombie, Fire Chief Fred Butts, Director of Development Services Craig Wheeler, Director of Finance & Administration Scott Smith, and Director of Public Works & Utilities Tom Willis.

Folks started arriving at 8:30 for coffee. The meeting was called to order at 9:00am in Council Chambers at City Hall. Manager Belmore facilitated the session.

Belmore mentioned having a Vision statement, about what we aspire to be tomorrow, and he read the Vision completed by the 2020 Committee: *Somersworth will be a vibrant and highly sought after community in which to live, work and play that celebrates its history, culture, diversity and industrial roots.* Councilors and the Mayor discussed what purpose the City/City Councilors serve and what a Mission statement might include as core values:

- Trust - with each other and with the Community, being reciprocal in nature;
- Respect - fostering differing views;
- Serve - serving the Public needs.

Belmore handed out worksheets and asked everyone to take five minutes or so to list goals for 2011. He suggested “smart” goal guidelines: goals to be clearly defined, have objective standards of measurement, be achievable and relevant to our work, and lastly, include benchmarks or timelines for completion. The Council reviewed the previously set goals for 2010.

The following is a summary of the Council’s consensus for 2011 Goals (not numbered by priority). The Council modified the prior list and added goals, timelines and strategies.

**1. Reuse of Hilltop Elementary School Property**

- Council to decide by June 30, 2011 on future disposition of property.

**2. Riverfront Development**

- Pedestrian Bridge over the canal will be opened in the Spring. Planning Board will be most likely forwarding a proposal to create a new Millyard District to the Council following a public hearing; the new zoning district opens up the development potential and provides more allowed uses along the mill riverfront area starting from the boundary of the present Historic Mill District.

### **3. High Street Infrastructure**

- Discussed resurfacing of High Street from South Street to bridge which includes overlay, cold pavement planing or grinding process for next FY. Start the process for a complete engineered reconstruction plan.

### **4. Improve Image of City**

- Vision 2020 Committee continues.
- Master Plan update process continues.
- High Street improvements to include TE Grant and Bridge improvements works towards a better City image.

### **5. Tax Rate Stability**

- Approve CIP (capital improvement plan) items earlier than the actual FY budget process; Council to review a “priority” list of CIP items for each fiscal year such as police cruisers to allow for timely State bid ordering.
- Complete a Council review of priority CRF (capital reserve fund) proposals.

### **6. Sidewalk Plan / Streetscape**

- Finalize a city-wide sidewalk improvement plan; and decide on the Manager’s recommended CRF proposal for FY 2011.
- School / City Task Force should continue to apply for “Safe Routes to School Grant” for sidewalk improvements and other program benefits.
- Council will hold a workshop to discuss the possibility of a Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

### **7. Community Information Development**

- Continue improvements to the Website.
- Cable Committee: franchise agreement renewal proposal currently sits in hands of COMCAST.

### **8. Review of City Policies and Ordinances**

- Drafts revisions to water and wastewater Ordinances are completed.
- Resident tax – rescinding poll tax is moving forward to Council Finance Committee for consideration (will allow m/v E-Reg).
- Consider more paperless City transaction efforts.

### **9. Business Friendly Environment and Marketing of the City**

- Continue efforts.

### **10. Support of Local Business**

- Continue “buy local” initiatives and options; City purchasing policy does now incorporate preference for City and State located businesses.
- Discussed Banks/Financial Institutions used by City and preference for Banks giving back to the Community. City Treasurer uses Citizens, Laconia Savings, Profile and NH PDIP; Trustees of Trust Funds use Bank of America.

**11. Sustainability Initiative**

- Mayor's Resolution to establish City Committee before Council now.

**12. Regionalization**

- Regionalization efforts should be pursued through County initiative, Tri-City initiative or some other effort that maximizes an economies of scale concept.

**13. City – School CoOp**

- Discussed pursuing opportunities to combine or consolidate city and school department services and functions.

**14. Downtown One-Way Traffic Pattern**

Reopen proposal to change downtown traffic pattern:

- ✓ Complete a survey of downtown and other potentially affected businesses, residents in area and on the Hill, and other partners such as COAST, WMI, AMR, School Buses, etc.;
- ✓ develop criteria to assist in decision making;
- ✓ fine tune estimated temporary and permanent costs for traffic signals and line striping;
- ✓ 90 day trial period;
- ✓ Economic Development Committee and/or Ad-Hoc Committee to assist Council in tasks.

General discussion took place on a variety of issues, including:

- How the proposed housing ordinance (Ch 24-A on multi-unit rentals) might work in conjunction with the new State Law requiring landlords to register contact information at the City Clerk's office;
- Traffic signal synchronization along the major corridors;
- Employee benefits and contract negotiation points;
- Continued efforts on business outreach and retention.

Goal Setting Workshop was adjourned at 11:31am by consensus.

Respectfully submitted,

*Robert M. Belmore*  
City Manager  
February 22, 2011