

City Council Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2010

City Council 2010 Goal Setting Workshop

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

Staff present: City Manager Robert Belmore, Police Chief Dean Crombie, Fire Chief Don Messier, Director of Development Services Craig Wheeler, and Director of Finance and Administration Scott Smith.

The meeting was held in the City Hall Council Chambers. Folks started arriving at 8:30 for coffee as well as breakfast cooked by Chief Crombie and Councilor Messier. The meeting was called to order at 9:00am in Council Chambers at City Hall. Manager Belmore facilitated the session. This is a summary of the agenda discussion items.

General Discussion

Mayor Soldati led a discussion on "clearing the decks". The Mayor and all Councilors discussed how City issues were acted upon through Council Committees and eventually voted on at Council Meetings.

CIP 2011 – 2016 (General Fund)

Council reviewed the City Manager Belmore's proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in terms of prioritization and funding for Fiscal Year 2011. Belmore presented his proposed CIP recommendations as well as what he recommended be deferred to another year in the Funding Plan. Belmore highlighted what was listed under Capital Outlay in the Manager's proposed budget. He asked the Council to consider a workshop in the near future to discuss the maintenance of all City assessed value through a cycled inspection program utilizing remaining funds in the Capital Reserve Fund for Revaluation.

Some Councilors mentioned the possibility of placing more CIP funding back into the FY 2011 Budget to include more road maintenance funding. Council asked the City Manager to provide a figure on the additional impact on the tax rate should all CIP projects listed in for FY 2011 in FY 2011-2016 CIP be funded.

Fire Chief Don Messier was excused from the meeting at 10:45am; Chief Messier thanked the Council for their support and respectfully recommended they continue to fund City Departments adequately in order to complete various departments' missions and to provide quality service to the Community.

City Council Goals – 2010

The Council discussed the February 28, 2009 session's list of goals. The Council agreed that certain goals were no longer valid, had been accomplished, or could be removed from the list.

The following is a summary of the Council's consensus for 2010 Goals (not numbered by priority). It was agreed that some goals would be on-going from year to year.

1. Reuse of Hilltop Elementary School

- Hold an Ad Hoc Committee & City Council joint workshop to discuss consultant's report and committee work.

2. Riverfront Development

- Repair and opening of Pedestrian Bridge over the canal.

3. High Street Infrastructure

- This will be an on-going item until all necessary work is completed. Staff will continue to pursue grants and special funding opportunities.

4. Improve Image of City

- Vision 2020 Committee will continue with appointments this August.
- Master Plan update is moving to the Planning Board for final approval.

5. Tax Rate Stability

- Fund CIP over 6-years of Plan.
- The use of Fund Balance and other revenue was discussed.

6. Sidewalk Plan / Streetscape

- Engineer is in final stages of issuing a Draft sidewalk plan for review.
- Establishing a capital reserve fund is recommended in FY 2011.
- School / City Task Force should continue to apply for "Safe Routes to School Grant" for sidewalk improvements and other program benefits.
- Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District study funding: Belmore suggested staff hold a workshop with Council to gauge support, finalize an approach and then secure a firm number for any needed consultant assistance in implementation for FY 2012.

7. Community Information Development

- Expand on the continuous improvement of the Website by seeking more community feedback.
- Cable Committee in final stages of franchise renewal negotiations and will be pursuing a PEG expansion – two additional channels: one for the school and one for true community use.
- Finalize the launching of Web re-broadcasting of Council Meetings from City website.

8. Review of City Policies and Ordinances

- Finalize Drafts on revisions to water and wastewater Ordinances recently submitted to the Public Works and Environment Committee.
- Finalize a Plan to eliminate the resident tax to allow m/v registrations via E-payment process.
- Surplus Property: The administrative code should be reviewed to update it to today's environment to allow surplus city property to be disposed by way of e-bay and other mediums, and to consider allowing City Manager authority to act within a certain cost threshold.

9. Business Friendly Environment and Marketing of the City

- Joint efforts of city staff and Economic Development Committee.
- Staff outreach to businesses: a program of various information mediums to explain City process for permits and approvals to complete work on property or to open a business for companies/businesses now here or who might want to relocate in the City.
- Implement steps /action plans for a softer, more educational approach to code compliance.

10. Housing and Code Compliance

- Consensus to expand Economic Development Committee's charge to include a housing code/property maintenance component through a revision to City Ordinance on Council Committees (Chapter 6).

11. Support of Local Business

- Consider "buy local" initiatives.
- Discuss possible change to City purchasing policy to favor local businesses and service providers in bidding and general selection process.

12. Sustainability Initiative

- Mayor to appoint a City Committee to explore these types of initiatives.

The Goal Setting Work Session was adjourned at 12-noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert M. Belmore
City Manager
March 31, 2010