



AGENDA OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, IOWA
TO BE HELD AT WASHINGTON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
NICOLA-STOUFER MEETING ROOM
115 W. WASHINGTON STREET
AT 4:30 P.M., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2013

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call

Agenda for the Special Session to be held at 4:30 PM on December 11, 2013 to be approved as proposed or amended.

PRESENTATION FROM THE PUBLIC - Please limit comments to 3 Minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Facilitated Goal-Setting Session with the University of Iowa Institute of Public Affairs

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Department
City Administrator
City Attorney

MAYOR & COUNCILPERSONS

Sandra Johnson, Mayor
Merle Hagie
Mark Kendall
Bob Shellmyer
Bob Shepherd
Fred Stark
Russ Zieglowsky

ADJOURNMENT

Illa Earnest, City Clerk

WASHINGTON GOAL SETTING - 2013

Focus group participants (November 14-15, 2013): Steve Bohn, Kevin Erpelding, Becky Harkema, Tim Kleese, Mike Kramme, Chris Marshall, Judy McKowen, Kyle Middle, Adam Miller, Rachel Nicola, Danielle Pettit-Majewski, Carol Ray, Pattie Roe, Margie Roth, Erin Rugg, Kathy Salazar, Linda Sturdevant, Linda Witthoft, Millie Youngquist

Department head participants (November 15, 2013): Police Chief Greg Goodman, Fire Chief Tom Wide, Parks Superintendent Tom Widmer, Library Director Debbie Stanton, Maintenance and Construction Superintendent JJ Bell, Water Plant Superintendent Chad McCleary, Wastewater Plant Superintendent Fred Doggett, Finance Director Joe Myers, and City Clerk Illa Earnest.

2012 - On-Going Commitments/Priorities

- Public trust
- Public safety
- Addressing and improving budget/financial issues
- Continuing inflow/infiltration program
- Instituting downtown residential recycling program
- Street repair program
 - \$500K/year: \$250K/year bonding, \$250K/year Riverboat funding
- Facility plan for Water Treatment Plant
- Continuing economic development programs
- Support Main Street project
- Re-prioritize Capital Improvements Program
- Sidewalk Program – new and repairs
- Review solid waste/recycling services

2012 - New Priority Projects, Programs, Policies and Initiatives

- 1 (Tie) Establish and support Task Force consisting of diverse groups to develop options to improve housing stock and provide for neighborhood stabilization & improvement
- 1 (Tie) Development of new industrial park, including West Buchanan Street corridor road improvements
- 1 (Tie) Assist in development process for Wellness Park
- 1 (Tie) Establish commercial fees for electrical and plumbing permits

- 5 Expand and enhance use of TIF to assist in redevelopment of downtown

Major Accomplishments

E = Elected Officials

F = Focus Groups

S = Staff

- Infrastructure
 - Completing Waste Water Treatment Plant (E/S)
 - In-house projects including East Adams/South 12th and Circle Drive water mains, new sewer at South Avenue F & Jefferson, assistance with Oakwood sewer & storm improvements and televising numerous miles of sewer (E/S)
 - Water Facility Plan and moving forward on replacement of ground storage reservoir (E/S)
 - Street improvement projects including South Iowa, East Madison, West Madison, West Tyler & South E, West Main, East Main and East 3rd (E/S)
 - Sidewalk ramps – W Madison, E Washington (E)
 - New sidewalks S Ave B (Halcyon) (E)
 - Water main S Ave B construction (E)
 - R/R crossing resurface (E)
 - Sewer televising by city crew, Hydro-Klean jetting & televising (E)
 - Highland Park storm water Phase II (E)
 - Street assessment policy (E)
 - Ordinance requiring annual review of sewer, water rates (set by resolution) allows flexibility to build funds for pay-as-you-go projects, especially I/I (E)
 - \$80K, 10-year commitment from WCSO for infrastructure in vicinity of new high school (E)
 - TIF districts reconfigured will capture larger increment to reinvest in infrastructure in those districts (E)
 - Major and minor site plan development code should reduce storm water runoff issues for future projects (E)
 - Completing West Side Sewer (S)
 - New engineering relationships with V&K and FOX- these are working very well, and allowing more work to get done and with greater success (S)
 - Continuous city-wide improvements as driven by capital projects planning (S)
- Housing/Residential
 - Housing task force provided council with specific ideas for improving Washington's housing stock (E/S)
 - Oakwood Village subdivision TIF, development agreement (E)
 - Policy for LMI redevelopment approved Aug. 2013
 - Removal/proceedings on a few troubled residential buildings and successful drug taskforce operations leading to arrests (S)
- City Facilities:

- Purchased lot east of city hall and demolished house for expanding fire station & city hall options, then commissioned Municipal Building study with plan to move forward (S)
- Completion of a long-term plan for the Library (S)
- Economic development:
 - Progress toward new industrial park (E/S)
 - Urban Revitalization plan w/tax abatement schedule, all classes of property (E)
 - Land swap school 90 (E)
 - N Ave D cleared two lots, will tackle third (E)
 - N 2nd cleared lot for redevelopment (E)
 - Major restructuring of tax increment finance districts to facilitate future economic development efforts (S)
- Significantly improved treasury fund balances and involvement by city staff to control spending: non-GO bond funds at 6/30/11 were \$1,481,018, but increased to \$5,575,599 at 6/30/13 (E/S)
- Completion of comprehensive plan (E/S)
- Improvements in safety policies, procedures and equipment (E/S)
 - New leaf vac, replaced street sweeper
 - Wash PD/County TAC10 data base system
- Downtown recycling pilot project launched (E)
- Biodiesel process water and septic hauler producing income for WWTF (E)
- Not a city project, but new Kirkwood site under construction and new high school on line (E)
- Residency requirement softened to expand employee candidate pool (E)
- Tuition reimbursement policy updated (E)
- Self-insurance for part of health insurance costs (E)
- Soccer fields off West 18th (E)
- Reviewed and approved building code fees (E)
- Continued rehab of downtown historic buildings (S)
- Strengthening relationships with outside entities (including the YMCA, University of Iowa, Washington Community School District, County Board of Supervisors, and individual residents) (S)
- Annual evaluations of City employees (S)
- Several very successful new hires for full-time positions, improving an already strong team (S)
- Excellent working relationships/cooperation between departments (S)
- New City Administrator providing excellent leadership and direction (S)

Issues/Concerns

- Infrastructure
 - Continued Infiltration/Inflow investigation and reduction efforts (E/F/S)
 - Continued street improvements planning and reconstruction (F/S)
 - Plan pay-as-you-go projects (E)
 - Annual review of water & sewer rates may allow lowering some (new IFA amortization schedule) so we can raise water to pay for pending improvements (E)
 - ✓ Communicate more exhaustively so users don't experience sticker shock over expenses and corresponding utility rate increase
 - Implement airport improvements (F/S)
 - Lack of curbs and gutters in certain areas (F)
 - Sidewalks – continue to offer Repair 50/50, incentive to build new? (E)
 - Lack of sidewalks for pedestrians and runners (F)
 - Sidewalk conditions – repairs needed (F)
 - Take advantage of innovative approaches to storm water management (Rainscaping Iowa) (F)
 - Lots available in industrial park, possible RISE grant for Phase I road. After design of storm water retention, consider sale of flood plain 25 acres, manure mgmt. plan (E)
 - EDR replacement should give better water quality, but isn't a real fix as DNR identified us as “risk of catastrophic failure” – worst case scenario total crash of computer or stacks before our CIP schedule (E)
 - Drainage/flooding problems in north Washington (F)
 - Storm water drainage issues throughout town (F)
 - Opportunity – roof gardens downtown (F)
 - Age of infrastructure (S)
 - Build new water ground storage tank (S)
 - Operational life of the water treatment facilities (S)
- City Facilities/Equipment:
 - M&C Building lighting issues (E)
 - M&C truck replacement issues (E)
 - Fleet maintenance & replacement schedule (E)
 - New municipal building concept/options (S)
 - Condition and operation of city vehicles & equipment (S)
 - *Trends*: Increased use of recreational trails & facilities (due to increased focus on health) (S)
- Housing
 - Continued implementation of housing task force recommendations (F/S)
 - Quality/age of rental housing stock (residents may be unable to keep up with demands of older buildings) (F/S)
 - Increased need for affordable but attractive residential rental space (F/S)
 - Need rental inspection code that balances needs of tenants, landlords and community (E)
 - ✓ Public forums during development
 - ✓ Phase in inspections
 - ✓ Fund staff – ½ time position

- Council set priorities how to spend LMI funds – downpayment assistance, CDBG rehab, dangerous building demolition for LMI redevelopment, incent LMI multi-family project (E)
- Nuisance abatement staff time & budget (E)
- Funding dangerous building mitigation (E)
- Dilapidated housing around town (F)
- Meth houses/meth use (F)
- Neighborhood pride – build volunteer base for housing projects and raise awareness of responsibility and opportunity to assist neighbor in need (secondary outcome – build interest in service clubs; easier to organize and implement other community projects) (E)
- Revitalization of houses on Madison and Washington Streets (F)
 - Comment from another focus group – don’t single out specific areas of town (F)
- Energetic housing taskforce members (S)
- Where will the next new housing development be located (after golf course area fully developed)? (F)
- Economic development
 - Recruit developer for 207-209-211 S. Marion – incentives? (E)
 - Need to get lots in Industrial Park to shovel ready condition – will have opportunities to obtain additional business (E)
 - Possible buyer for Industrial Park lot (hopefully soon) (E)
 - Need for economic development (F)
 - Complete industrial park improvements (F/S)
 - Lack of economic development assistance programs for existing businesses (F)
 - Lack of good paying jobs (F)
 - Economic development – lack of marketing (F)
 - Need to promote/educate/market Washington’s history, heritage, resources to the community and surrounding areas (F)
 - Hotel-motel tax could be used to promote/market tourism (F)
 - Corridor identity – has pluses & minuses (F)
 - Lack of industry and jobs that come with manufacturing. Need to attract new homes or property tax revenue making structures to town (S)
 - “Buy local” trend (S)
 - Need more local retail shopping opportunities (F)
 - Facilities for rec/sports tournaments will bring people, \$ to town (F)
 - New High School Auditorium will bring people, \$ to town (F)
- Budget/Finance
 - Need to continue to address and improve city’s financial condition (F/S)
 - Need to establish and maintain reserve funds (F/S)
 - Need to increase tax base (economic development) (F)
 - Property taxes high (F)
 - Need to look at alternative investment opportunities for city funds (F)
 - Opportunities: finances! (S)
- Parks/Recreation/Wellness
 - Wellness Park (E/F/S)

- Continue to lease for farming until private fundraising moves project forward
 - Need to move forward
 - Need to get key groups working together
 - Potential impact on existing rec-related businesses
 - Soccer field @ Wellness Park?
 - Need more cooperative relationships/improved communications between city and community organizations – to move projects forward (F)
 - Need soccer field (F)
 - Need to focus on walkability – sidewalks, trails (F)
- Downtown
 - Central Park is deteriorating – from additional trash on ground to drug deals. Park is center of downtown and should be point of pride (E)
 - Downtown preservation/building codes (F)
 - Make it easier for people to restore buildings and attract businesses, people (F)
 - Downtown businesses – keeping storefronts occupied (F)
 - Next phase of downtown streetscape (F)
 - Current downtown parking is dangerous, esp. w children (F)
- Staffing
 - New utility clerk take on task of newsletter – help educate residents about upcoming CIP, taking on debt, new programs, etc. Can help improve public relations (E)
 - Replace two office administrative positions due to retirements - administrative assistant and finance director (S)
 - Re-organize duties of office staff to improve efficiency (S)
 - Keeping consistency during turnover in City Hall (S)
 - Increased demands on police department and Building & Zoning Administrator without additional funding (S)
 - M/C still short a position (full-timer went to WWTF 10 years ago) (S)
- Citizen Engagement/Demographics
 - Significant portion of the community/diverse groups/ don't feel connected/engaged in community affairs (F/S)
 - Hispanic population growing especially w/ young families that are connecting more with the rest of the City (S)
- Public safety
 - Pedestrians at night – need more street lights (F/S)
- Other
 - Need to continue to build relationships with other jurisdictions, non-profits – County, school district, Y – share resources for efficiencies (E)
 - Increased communication with Kirkwood to make sure they do not have any additional needs we are not fulfilling (E)
 - Each employee should pay a portion of their medical insurance premium (E)
 - Advertise for board & commissions, adopt formal policy for gender balance (E)
 - Safety: “Best Practices” achieves better premiums for work comp (E)

2012 - Strategic Leadership Focus Areas

City Council and Mayor

City budget/finance
Economic development and growth
City infrastructure/facilities
Parks/recreation/wellness

2014 - 15- Strategic Leadership Focus Areas

Focus Groups

Economic development and growth 14
City infrastructure/facilities 12
City budget/finance 8
Housing and community development 8
Parks/recreation/wellness 8
Downtown 4
Public safety 2
Community appearance/image 1
Land use/development 0+0

Department Heads

City infrastructure/facilities 9
Economic development and growth 7
City budget/finance 6
Public safety 2
Land use/development 2
Housing and community development 1
Parks/recreation/wellness 0
Community appearance/image 0
Downtown 0

2013 - On-Going Commitments/Priorities (per Dept Heads)

- Public trust
- Public safety
- Addressing and improving budget/financial issues
- Continuing inflow/infiltration program
- Continue Street repair program
 - \$500K/year: \$250K/year bonding, \$250K/year Riverboat funding
- Facility plan for Water Treatment Plant
- Continuing economic development programs
- Support Main Street project
- Re-prioritize Capital Improvements Program
- Sidewalk Program – new and repairs
- Review solid waste/recycling services?
- Make a decision regarding implementing Task Force recommendations to improve housing stock and provide for neighborhood stabilization & improvement
- Make a decision regarding rental housing inspection
- Development of new industrial park, including West Buchanan Street corridor
- Assist in development process for Wellness Park?
- Expand and enhance use of TIF to assist to promote development
- New water ground storage reservoir
- Airport runway relocation
- Municipal building facility plan

New City Programs, Policies, Projects, and Initiatives for council consideration

- Begin work on Wellness Park (E/F/S)
 - Continue to partner with YMCA to build to fullest extent – contribute land or continue to expand on rec programs they run for us
- Continue infiltration/inflow program (E/F/S)
 - Prioritization and annual financial commitment similar to \$500K annual street paving initiative
- Implementation of Housing Task Force findings, including rental inspections if approved by Council (F/S)
- Continue to address and improve city's financial condition (F/S)
- Continue to support Main Street programs (F/S)
- Downtown upper level revitalization high priority (E)
- Study parking in business district (E)
- Market 207-209-211 S. Marion, house lot on N. 2nd, floodplain (E)
- Programs to assist existing businesses to grow and expand (e.g., low-interest loans) (F)
- Develop comprehensive marketing program for Washington (F)
 - Use technology to provide virtual tours, information, greetings
- Develop economic development marketing program (F)
- Forum for landlord at some point during rental inspection code development – include police discussion of meth and how landlords could end up with “dangerous building” for which city will hold them accountable (E)
- Develop additional partnerships with Habitat and ECICOG (E)
- Process for LMI redevelopment lots (E)
- Continue to investigate rental housing codes (F)
- Enforce ordinances already in place (F)
- Housing rehabilitation program (F)
- Program to revitalize houses on Madison and Washington Streets (F)
- Program to encourage property owners to upgrade properties (F)
- Incorporate Rainscaping Iowa program for city development codes/policies (F)
- Maintain/improve existing parks, esp. Sunset Park (F)
- Continue to support airport – runway relocation project (F)
- Implementation of Comprehensive Development Plan (F)
- Work with County Public health to develop program to promote walkability – sidewalks, trails, etc. (F)
- Provide “Welcome to Washington” packets for new residents – info on city services, programs, policies, local businesses, etc. (F)
- Provide regular city newsletter to residents (E/S)
- Support High School Auditorium project (F)
- Currently do not have code for “school zone” (E)
- Traffic patterns short- and long-term in school zone (E)
- Sidewalks in school zone, opportunity to reapply? Incent property owners or pay 100% as done near Stewart. Have forum, develop plan (E)

- Revisit sidewalk inspection by quadrants vs voluntary signup (E)
- Improve water plant treatment facility and water quality (S)
- Trail to connect to new Kirkwood regional facility (S)
- Look into a street lighting program to brighten up dark spots (S)
- CIP (E)
- Commit to Capital Equipment Replacement Plan process (S)
- Continue to address space needs assessment and how to resolve space issues for Public Safety (E)
- Review all city fees and fine (except civil infractions) (S)
- Ensure competitive wages for city employees (S)
- Develop equitable pay scale “steps” across City departments (S)
- Add staff to P&Z Department to allow for increased code enforcement needs (S)

2012 - Organizational Effectiveness

- Develop existing employees – leadership/supervisory/technical – to replace retiring department heads and other key employees
- Continue to encourage council development through conferences, Municipal Leadership Academy, etc.
- Build liaisons/relationships with state legislators
- Build liaisons/relationships with other local government officials and community organizations
- Update city web site –investigate e-government applications
- Investigate televising council meetings
- Strive for “Best Practices” standing for employee safety
- Communicate priorities to Boards, Commissions, staff and public
- Council orientation program
- Prepare for staff turnover (city administrative staff will have turnover in next 1 -2 years and nearly entire office turnover within 5 – 7 years)
 - Review and update job descriptions
 - Be open to approaching staffing in different ways
 - Look at cross-training
 - Look at transitioning in a 20-hour position to supplement office staff
- Update employee manual
- Explore opportunities for enhanced reporting to aid City Administrator and City Council in their decision-making

2013 - Organizational Effectiveness

- Ad Hoc Housing Committee up and running, and then reviewed to see what works and what needs changed, this is a great opportunity to leverage volunteers (E)
- Figure out how to get better publicity - we just burned a house to allow another lot for development at the same time taking care of one of our nuisance homes but nobody knows about it (E)
- Mayor or Brent consider writing a monthly column, similar to what Dr. Jorgensen has done with the school, that level of communication has made the school appear much more transparent (E)
- Consider going back to a committee structure with the goal of the committees giving recommendations to the full council and the ultimate goal of reducing the length of council meetings (E)
 - Three hour meeting cause irritation to Council members and staff and in the longer term serve as a deterrent to others considering running for the position
- Compliments to administrator for weekly update-please continue (E)
- Quarterly newsletter (E)

- Citizen academy to develop better understanding of functions of city depts (E)
 - Would staff have time or would evening programming for citizens be undue burden? Aids city's public relations efforts, increase public engagement (citizens willing to serve on boards, commissions, run for office)
- Excellent material in new council handbook, make portions available for public consumption on website (E)
- Consider new website format. Is there value in E forms, E apps (E)
 - Occasionally council have not received emails through the website. Fix so citizens to contact multiple persons with a single email
- Set up council "operating rules" (E)
 - Mini-course on Robert's Rules through ILC?
- Better IT at all council sessions so public can "follow" as opposed to dozens of hard copy agendas & handouts (E)
- Mayor to start some form of office hours (E)
- Mayor to start some form of communication like CA updates (E)
- Establish protocol and IT necessary for off-site participation in council meetings (camera, google hangout, whatever) (E)
- Council needs to be more visionary – not just focus on nickels and dimes (F)
- Current City Council has been much more helpful in promoting development projects than previously (F)
- City Administrator Brent Hinson is doing a great job (F/S)
- Review and update City Personnel Manual (E/S)
- City council meetings need to be constructive, stay focused and follow agenda in a timely and efficient manner. (S)
- Council member/staff relations (S)
 - Need to find ways to develop constructive relationships, trust & consistency from council
 - Council should respect the knowledge and abilities of the staff and treat them accordingly
 - Eliminate atmosphere of "gotcha"
- Mayor and City Council should encourage staff by supporting the hard work done, participating in the annual employee recognition luncheon, supporting us in public comments and in dealings with the public, and seeking our advice when an issue comes up in our department or in our areas of expertise. (S)
- Let the City Administrator manage city staff - no micro-managing by members of the city council. (S)
- Continue and expand City safety programs (S)
- Work as a team instead of individuals doing behind the scenes work (S)
- Follow proper chain of command (S)
- Encourage staff cross-training where appropriate (S)
- Looking forward to the new City Attorney and the skills he will bring to the table (S)