

Des Moines City Council Retreat

Des Moines Activity Center
Des Moines Creek Room
2045 South 216th Street
Des Moines, WA 98198

MINUTES

March 29, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bob Sheckler at 9:10 a.m.

ROLL CALL - Present: Mayor Bob Sheckler, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Sherman, Councilmembers Dave Kaplan, Ed Pina, Carmen Scott, Scott Thomasson, and Susan White. Also in attendance was City Manager Tony Piasecki; Chief of Police Roger Baker; Finance Director Paula Henderson; Park, Recreation, and Senior Services Director Patrice Thorell; Planning, Building, and Public Works Director Grant Fredricks; Harbormaster Joe Dusenbury; and City Attorney Pat Bosmans

An outline of the City Councils' "Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives for 2008 and future years." was given to all attendees. This outline was originally drawn up in 2006.

City Manager Tony Piasecki led a discussion regarding potential changes to the Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Goals and Strategic Objectives that resulted in the following:

- Vision statement: Change to: "An inviting, livable, and safe community..."
- Mission statement: Change to "We protect, preserve, promote, and improve the community by providing leadership and services reflecting the pride and values of Des Moines citizens."
- Values: Change this heading to read Values and Goals and make the following changes:
 - o Combine 3 and 8
 - o Combine 4 and 9
 - o Combine 2 and 7
 - o Combine 6,12 and 13
 - o Remove 20
 - o Remove 17
 - o Remove 14
 - o Remove 11
 - o Remove 18
 - o Leave 15 and 19

A break was called at 10:08 a.m. and the meeting was reconvened at 10:16 a.m.

Discussion continued regarding City Councils' Strategic Objectives for 2008 and future years

The City Manager started the discussion by suggest that strategic objectives should be viewed as a three year plan that is updated every year. Instead of bringing motions to prioritize the objectives, a dot process will be used. Each councilmember will receive 5 dots of 4 colors to prioritize the objectives in which year they should be done. The different colors would represent different years.

This plan was revised so that each Councilmember received 12 dots to place on the board next to what they see as the priorities for 2008.

Council then went over all the Strategic Objectives one by one, removing some, re-writing others, and adding new ones.

A break was called at 11:27 a.m. and the meeting reconvened at 11:40 a.m.

The Council discussed the fact that the premise of this retreat is to prioritize what the Council should be working on for this year and the upcoming year. Discussion ensued on how much time, resources, and funds are required to handle the objectives on the list. The dot system will allow the Council to reach a census to prioritize the strategic objectives.

A lunch break was called at 12:00 p.m. and the meeting reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

During the lunch break, Councilmembers voted with their allotted dots for their choices of priorities.

Summary of Voting on Objectives:

1. Facilitate development of the Des Moines Creek Business Park (13 - 11/2)
2. Facilitate improvement of the Downtown Water System (12 - 11/1)
3. Update the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (10 - 9/1)
3. Review and revise the Zoning Code (10 - 8/2)
5. Implement the Marina Master Plan (8 - 7/1)
6. Review and revise the subdivision requirements in the Zoning Code before completing the review and revision of the Zoning Code (7 - 7)
6. Review and revise the Downtown Element of the Comprehensive Plan (7 - 6/1)
8. Implement the Beach Park Master Plan (6 - 5/1)
9. Explore the "Priorities of Government" budgeting process (5 - 5)
10. Explore the feasibility of passenger only ferry service (3 - 3)
10. Coordinate a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Des Moines' incorporation (3 - 3)
10. Review and revise the Street Standards (3 - 2/1)
10. Update the Parks Comprehensive Master Plan (3 - 2/1)
14. Conduct a Community Survey (2 - 2)
14. Continue working with on the Midway planning effort (2 - 1/1)
16. Continue implementing the Emergency Management Plan (1 - 1)
17. Develop/implement a strategy to promote the City statewide and nationally (1 - 1)

Discussion continued about the direction the Council will take regarding the priorities of the strategic objectives. The higher numbers will give the Mayor a guideline when scheduling Council agendas in the future. The lower numbers do not mean these objectives will be forgotten or ignored. There will be more committees involved to do the detail work and then the committees can present plans to the Council.

The Beach Park Master Plan and the Parks Master Plan were discussed at some length. The Council feels that the citizens need to have input, but perhaps a survey is not the appropriate forum. The knowledge that was gathered from the last Leadership Summit Conference with citizens proved that what the Council thought were priorities were not necessarily those of the citizens. The summit may be the best venue to gathering citizens input.

The City Manager asked Council if there were any recommendations to give to the committee on the Remands List when they rework the work plan; specifically was there anything the Council wanted to consider taking off the list? Council directed the committees to review their remand lists and prioritize them.

On Priorities of Government, Council received submittals from all departments that took into account all of the functions of services of the city and put together the FTE required to perform these functions. The City Manger went over these statistics with the Council and it was decided not to do a complete priorities of government process this year but to ask departments to submit 5% budget reduction packages as part of the 2009 budget process.

Downtown Planning was discussed and the Council was given some questions to answer before the dedicated Council session. The hope is that a conversation will occur with Council to give some policy direction on the process. The strength for downtown is to attract more business and shops, preserve the historic theater, and turn that into an anchor for downtown. Also suggested was to create a hub with the waterfront marina and the beach park for people to come down and enjoy downtown. The threat to attracting residents and tourists would be doing nothing to change downtown. Parking is a big issue in terms of what is there and in terms of what will be needed.

Downtown's strengths are: it's walkable, good size blocks, flat, nice sidewalks, but there's nothing to walk to; however, there are projects and investments happening that will allow for more development. Weaknesses are the water system and need for additional infrastructure. Some of the drawbacks are the size of the lots and the alleyways for developers. One of the things needed is to have a pedestrian friendly connection from the marina to downtown. Possibly redefining the area known as "Downtown" would be an option to attract more tourist dollars. Downtown is not over developed which is a plus because people like the small town feel of it now and possibly having the buildings refurbished and used to keep the homey feel. Citizens should be allowed to voice their opinions on the development of downtown. One of the disadvantages of downtown is that there are no municipal buildings such as a post office, police station, or fire department. Parking is also a huge issue downtown. Making one-way streets into and out of downtown was an option discussed, but more study would be needed.

An inventory of the downtown properties that could have the potential for development would be handy for the next Saturday meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lady of Letters, Inc.