



City of Greensboro

Melvin Municipal Building
300 W. Washington Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

Thursday, February 12, 2015

12:00 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call to Order

This City Council work session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 12:10 p.m. on the above date in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building with the following members present: Mayor Nancy Vaughan, Councilmembers Marikay Abuzuaier, Mike Barber, Jamal Fox, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Yvonne J. Johnson, Zack Matheny and Tony Wilkins.

Also present were City Manager Jim Westmoreland, City Attorney Tom Carruthers and City Clerk Betsey Richardson.

2. Presentations

[ID 15-0070](#) M/WBE Program Update

City Manager Westmoreland provided the history for the item; spoke to the work of staff on the item; stated that Ms. Carter was here to provide an update on the program; outlined what had been accomplished; provided an initial report and goals; and talked about what the City would do moving forward.

M/WBE Manager Gwen Carter provided a PowerPoint Presentation; spoke to achieving the plan's objective; reviewed the program objectives; provided the makeup of the M/WBE staff structure; emphasized the office located in Room 149 was fully operational; spoke to an upcoming specialist coming on board; outlined the duties and responsibilities of the staff; workshops that would be hosted; provided the roles for the Goal Setting and Coordinating Committees; and outlined the annual aspiration goals for the City's M/WBE Program. Ms. Carter outlined the different goals for the different programs; added that the goals were based on the recommendations of the study consultant; and spoke to the differences between the Professional Services, Goods and Other Services and Construction Services Utilization Analysis. Ms. Carter addressed concerns of the low participation in construction services due to the number of contracts awarded to the Water Resources Department which had limited M/WBE contractors; stated the Department would be working to make some changes to increase those goals over the next several years; recognized the accomplishments of the Department; provided an update of development of strategies to provide outreach to stakeholders; stated the City would be hosting project specific workshops; spoke to a major Water Resources project in the works; and enhancements to the good faith efforts process.

Councilmember Wilkins asked about the 2 and 3 percent MBE and WBE figures in the construction services prime analysis.

Ms. Carter explained that it had been determined that almost 60% of projects were made up of things that M/WBE and MBE did not have the capacity to perform; elaborated on the projects having major equipment purchases; and spoke to the ability of skilled workers to work on some of the equipment that was a significant factor in the project.

City Manager Westmoreland interjected that approximately \$22 million was out of range of M/WBE participation as a result of the equipment and work involved.

Councilmember Hightower inquired if there was a resolution for that; and spoke to the need for a shared skill set.

Ms. Carter responded that she had spoken to the Water Resources Department about meeting with M/WBE regarding Water Resources projects; stated she would have staff explain the process for projects to the

contractors; emphasized that a lot of the projects involved specialties which M/WBE were not experienced in; and reiterated that staff had requested Water Resources to break the projects down to allow contractors to prepare themselves to participate. Ms. Carter outlined the mentor protégé program to assist people with developing skills for future projects and to better understand some of the complexities of the project.

Councilmember Hightower asked about the annual aspiration goals for professional services with regard to reaching a broad category of services.

Ms. Carter outlined the process for certification by HUB; stated staff had begun outreach to some of those contractors; and referenced projects that had been done to date.

City Manager Westmoreland emphasized that the City would continue to move forward with Ms. Carter and her team; would continue with outreach to get more contractors involved in the program; stated that over the course of the last year, the City had seen more opportunities to provide contracting for M/WBEs; emphasized staff would continue to improve the program through Ms. Carter and the Legal Department; added that the program still needed some improvements; and outlined the process for the establishment of the Coordinating Committee.

Discussion took place regarding the inclusiveness and size of the Coordinating Committee; how often they would meet; commitment level and purpose for the committee; and speculation around rebidding several projects.

City Manager Westmoreland responded that the committee would be made up of business and community members; that he would follow up with Council for their feedback regarding the roles and responsibilities of members; that the committee would initially meet monthly and then move to quarterly meetings; and added that he felt comfortable with where the City was now and going forward.

Attorney Carruthers spoke to the reasons for rebidding the High Point Road project as a result of the North Carolina Department of Transportation requirement; spoke to State funding being used for the project; and the need to follow State guidelines.

Ms. Carter spoke to the analysis to look at the level of M/WBE; added that staff found that, based on their initial approach, that the number of M/WBE was limited based on the contract requirements; spoke to those limited by not having highway licenses; and stated it was in the best interest of the City to use the formats that it did.

Councilmember Wilkins inquired as to the M/WBE process used by Guilford County; and stated he would do an information request.

Brief discussion took place regarding if Guilford County had a M/WBE program; and the process that they used.

City Manager Westmoreland stated he would provide an answer on the County's process for Council.

(A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation is filed in Exhibit Drawer X, Exhibit No. 4 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes)

ID 15-0166 Restroom Evaluation Update

City Manager Westmoreland recognized Assistant City Manager David Parrish for an update.

Assistant City Manager Parrish informed Council that staff had researched the type of existing restrooms at the City's existing facilities; stated there were currently seven family restrooms; that staff had also looked at single stall restrooms that could be converted to family restrooms with a change of signage; and outlined the restroom facilities at the Greensboro Coliseum Complex.

Discussion took place regarding use of the restrooms by the public; importance for parents to have a facility to take their children; the process used for the count by staff; leaving the restrooms under the purview of City staff; and the need for Greensboro families to have family restrooms.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff discontinue the project; emphasized that the City had not heard any complaints from citizens; asked Council to stop any funding to go back and make changes; and stated he

supported accommodations going forward.

Assistant City Manager Parrish responded that he was not planning on instructing staff to make any physical changes; and that the City would replace signage which was inexpensive.

ID 15-0116 City Council Priority Setting Session

City Manager Westmoreland announced that the final item was to have dialogue with Council to set priorities and things they would like to accomplish in the upcoming year; added that discussion would take place regarding Council's focus over the course of the year; stated staff found good value from last year's discussion; and added that the discussion assisted staff in aligning the process for Council priorities. City Manager Westmoreland recognized Assistant City Manager Mary Vigue and Organizational and Training Development Manager Tiffany Brown to facilitate the process to see if staff could get a consensus on Council priority items.

Assistant City Manager Vigue reviewed a slide outlining the five MAP goals; stated Ms. Brown would provide a handout for the priority setting session; and provided the background of how MAP worked through Departmental Work Plans.

Councilmember Wilkins voiced agreement with the request for Council to reprioritize some of the items; and asked if there was a representative from the Finance Department present.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson voiced that it would be helpful for Council to have an analysis of the challenges in the areas where the City felt it was not doing well; and asked for Council's perspective on the challenges as well.

City Manager Westmoreland responded that those could be identified from an organizational perspective; and would be provided to Council.

Ms. Brown provided her background as Learning and Development Manager; spoke to guiding the process for the meeting; and reviewed the handout she had provided to Council.

Councilmember Barber left the meeting at 12:56 p.m. and returned at 12:57 p.m.

Councilmember Wilkins stated he had some questions for the Finance Department; inquired about the process for loans; asked if there was a structure in place for loans by the City; and voiced importance in having some type of structure to ensure a loan request had been through the process prior to coming before Council.

Assistant City Manager Vigue responded that it depended on the type of loan as to whether they were structured or not.

Councilmember Wilkins interjected that he wanted to mention while Councilmember Barber was present that the Council had reviewed in a prior work session a way to reduce the property tax rate by five cents; assign it to user fees; asked if anything had been done since the discussion; and if a majority of Council that wanted to look into that.

Mayor Vaughan asked that a decision by Council wait until a decision had been made by the Guilford County Legislative Delegation.

City Manager Westmoreland suggested that staff bring an update to Council on the six month status from a financial perspective at a work session; spoke to the property tax; spoke to a threshold number; and the impact to property owners with values over and under \$300,000.

Discussion took place requesting the item be kept on the table; the proposed sales tax redistribution; timeframe for an analysis to be done; an analysis example from last year; the need for fees to cover costs; benchmarking Greensboro against other cities with similar services; identifying places the City could increase revenue; the fact that Greensboro was one of the few cities that supported Libraries and Parks and Recreation; net effect on the program; and having Dr. Judd present at a work session.

City Manager Westmoreland informed Council the issue would be discussed at an upcoming work session.

Discussion continued regarding information provided by Dr. Judd; getting true data for Greensboro; and the creation of loan pools for the City.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson voiced concern with providing funding to some groups and not others.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for the City to eliminate lending money which was not a function of local government; the City being approached when businesses could not get loans from banks; concern with putting taxpayer money at risk; members being approached for grants; and the need for CDFI to assist small businesses.

City Manager Westmoreland verified that Council wanted staff to find a way to get the organization out of the business of providing loans and grants to businesses; and to identify other resources that could assist in the process.

Mayor Vaughan suggested a process similar to that of Partners Ending Homelessness which would take the City away from making loans and grants but one where the City could partner with entities that had the ability to do that.

Ms. Brown reviewed the MAP goals; and asked Council where the focus of Goal #1 - Promote Economic Development Opportunities and Job Creation should be.

Councilmember Matheny stated his focus was around the airport and the construction of the bridge to vacant acreage; referenced Economic Development Committee meetings; the strategic investment at the airport; need for infrastructure; creation of the MegaSite; spoke to the loss of jobs in the area; and the creation of an empowerment zone in East Greensboro.

Councilmember Hightower left the meeting at 1:09 p.m. and returned at 1:19 p.m.

Discussion took place around the investment and construction of the McConnell Center in East Greensboro; ability of the City to partner with shovel ready sites; having written goals; and email traffic with Samet Corporation.

Councilmember Hoffmann reiterated the emphasis at the airport which could equal the potential for 18,000 jobs and more than \$14 billion in investment.

Councilmember Barber provided Council with a proposed alternative bill for Senate Bill 36; provided the history of the makeup of the Greensboro City Council; action that had been taken in 1969 and 1983; and added that the proposal emphasized that the people of Greensboro should decide on the makeup of Council.

Mayor Vaughan stated that a resolution would be prepared for the February 17th Council meeting. City Manager Westmoreland confirmed that would be done.

Councilmember Barber left the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Ms. Brown asked about the focus for Goal #2 - Maintain Infrastructure and Provide Sustainable Growth Opportunities.

Councilmember Fox interjected that for Goal #1 he would like to see the City look at 8 in 80; asked that Council look at the utilization and repurposing of abandoned buildings; access to fresh foods; and referenced his trip to Cleveland.

Assistant City Manager Parrish stated staff would look into utilization of abandoned buildings.

Discussion took place regard the focus on providing fresh foods to all; use and balance of the Economic Development Bond Fund; and the need to fund projects in East Greensboro.

Mayor Vaughan spoke to meetings regarding fresh food; and added that she would keep Council up to date as to future meetings.

Councilmember Matheny left the meeting at 1:26 p.m. and returned at 1:29 p.m.

City Manager Westmoreland provided information on the timeframe for use of Economic Development Bond Funds; and the type of projects the funds were used for.

Discussion took place around Goal #2 regarding the need for additional mega sites; seeing Goal #1 and #2 intertwined; using infrastructure as a tool and knowing how it would work; opening up the Highway 421 corridor with the installation of infrastructure for the Randolph County MegaSite; the City having some of the lowest water rates; a request for Dale Wyrick to provide an update on the street conditions; impact of deferred maintenance on the City's street system; and quality of some City streets versus others.

Assistant City Manager Parrish provided an outline of how improvements were made and interconnected.

Additional discussion ensued regarding looking at City structures and facilities in need of repair; and a Request For Proposal (RFP) for the MMOB elevator replacement.

City Manager Westmoreland emphasized that the City had touched on a lot of growth and development taking place Downtown; spoke to the need to look at the infrastructure compliment adjacent to the areas being improved; emphasized the need for the City to get it right; and to focus on how it took care of and maintained what the City had.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson spoke to the challenges over the years; to projects that had been lost as a result a project being a priority for one Council but not a succeeding Council; emphasized the need to take care of City structures; and to look outside of the box in resolving things.

Ms. Brown asked for input on Goal #3 - Promote Public Safety and Reduce Crime.

Discussion took place around doing a good job in reducing crime; timeframe for hiring a new Police Chief; whether Council would be involved in the hiring process; how many applicants the process had been narrowed down to; a request to receive the numbers per capita that was spent on public safety; whether or not dollars had been cut from public safety over the past year; and what type of additions and/or reductions had been made to public safety.

City Manager Westmoreland assured Council the numbers would be provided to them.

Additional discussion took place regarding when the Police Headquarters would be completed; complaints from the public about discourteous police officers; the possibility of additional training for police officers on how to treat people under stressful situations; the need for officers to be more courteous; for diversity in the City's public safety realms; and difficulty in attracting minorities for police officers and fire fighter positions even in majority minority cities.

Councilmember Hightower voiced concerns with distrust in the community regarding policing; the need for Council to have the same goals and missions on how to protect the City; the need to eliminate distrust; to get officers to interact with the community; and for police to know how to police.

Councilmember Fox referenced the need to stop building separate silos; and to combine City facilities within the public safety realm to be more collaborative.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter spoke to strides in neighborhood oriented policing; stated that the community had embraced that process; voiced the need for customer service to be across the board in all City Departments; and the need to be mindful on why different communities were fearful of the police.

City Manager Westmoreland stated that an upcoming work session would involve police and community relations; spoke to different engagement groups to talk about other ideas and strategies to be implemented to find ways to build trust between the Police Department and the community; and spoke to steps the City was taking on improving customer service throughout the organization.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter voiced appreciation for what the City was doing to reach hidden neighborhoods and citizenry.

City Manager Westmoreland stated that part of the process would be for staff to ask for ideas on how to reach those populations; and emphasized the City wanted to find ways to engage the community at a different level which would take intentional interactions.

Councilmember Wilkins stated he had been consistent on his support of public safety; that he felt very passionate about public safety; state public safety employees were underpaid and underappreciated; and referenced a political element and process which could play a role in funding public safety.

Councilmember Matheny interjected that Council as a whole was passionate about public safety; referenced cuts several years ago; and spoke to the difference of administrative cuts versus cutting officers.

Councilmember Wilkins spoke to the research he had done regarding the need for twenty-four additional firefighters.

Council discussed adopting funding to provide the additional twenty-four firefighters; and discussions that had taken place regarding the shortage.

City Manager Westmoreland reminded Council that this would be good dialogue to have when the City was getting ready to get into the Fiscal Year 15-16 budget process; that Council set the priorities for that process; and that it was good to know what Council was focused on.

Councilmember Hightower voiced concern that public safety employees tended to be above all City employees; added that their services tended to be supported more than others; spoke to the need to be mindful of the additional resources public safety had; confirmed that Council had agreed to fund additional fire facilities; emphasized that she was not a proponent to have a big party for the public safety staff; and added that money should be spent wisely.

Councilmember Fox cautioned Council of the importance in being mindful that it not pit departments against each other because of the message that could be sent to remaining staff.

Ms. Brown asked for Council's focus on Goal #4 - To Achieve Exceptional Customer Service and a Diverse City Government Workforce.

Council spoke to having a true customer service initiative for employees at the City; bringing back rewarding an employee when they came up with an exceptional idea or cost saving measure; having a conversation with Coliseum Director Matt Brown who provided exceptional customer service; doing a better job for outreach when posting job positions; the need to reach out to the faith community to identify ethnicities within the City; and having support groups to assist in reaching different communities.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to initiatives and programs being developed within the organization.

Mayor Vaughan declared a recess at 2:00 p.m. Council reconvened at 2:15 p.m. with all members in attendance except Councilmember Barber.

Ms. Brown requested Council input on Goal #5 - Ensure Fiscal Stewardship, Transparency and Accountability.

Councilmember Hightower requested the budgeting process be made easier and more transparent in order for folks to understand the process.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson voiced importance in ensuring stewardship; and added that stewardship was more than money.

Councilmember Fox voiced the need to be accountable and transparent; and the need to communicate effectively

to the citizenry more than one time a year about both strategies and numbers.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter suggested that the budget process be explained in laymen's terms to the public.

Councilmember Matheny stated there were ways the City could become more efficient; voiced the need to look at that and maintain efficiencies; spoke to the need to replenish funds to ensure the City had funds if the economy took a downturn; and added that he was looking for staff to come forward with proactive strategies. Councilmember Matheny asked that staff inform Council what needed to be improved upon; where the City was lacking; and asked that Council hear from staff who were involved in the organization on a daily basis.

Discussion took place regarding listening to Council's ideas; the need to hear from staff for recommendations; confirmation that Council was asking the City Manager to maintain the current property tax rate; projects on Council's list; and the need to invest in Bryan Park to make it a more competitive venue.

City Manager Westmoreland stated staff would bring back information regarding the status of the City's expected revenues; where the City was in the current budget year; and receive direction from Council.

Councilmember Matheny suggested a top ten list of issues; referenced the second phase for several area parks; private and public funding; the need to have a good Downtown; and the need to create significant efficiencies.

Ms. Brown confirmed that Council had captured some things; spoke to the next level of the process; and asked if Council had any final thoughts.

Councilmember Fox voiced the need for the City to have a strategy for housing and affordable housing units or multi-family units in the City.

Mayor Vaughan stated the City had been in conversation with a multi-national company who was looking at assisting municipalities; was looking at City departments on a pro-bono basis; and looking at the processes.

City Manager Westmoreland interjected that staff was following up with them; and hoped to have a project regarding long term housing issues forthcoming.

(A copy of the handout is filed in Exhibit Drawer X, Exhibit No. 4 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes)

3. Adjournment

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Fox, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

THE CITY COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 2:30 P.M.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR