SPECIAL MEETING\_STRATEGIC PLANNING

CITY COUNCIL

June 20, 2018

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Syracuse, Nebraska met at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday June 20th, 2018 for a special Strategic Planning meeting in the Syracuse City Hall Council Chambers at 495 5th Street. Notice of meeting was given by posting in three places. Mayor Ortiz requested roll call, present were Mayor Ortiz and Council members Henke, Britton, Dettmer, Gigstad. A copy of the posting notice and acknowledgement of notice to the Council is attached to these minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Ortiz opened the discussion on Strategic Planning Work Session for Projects in Motion. City Administrator of Central City Chris Anderson present. The Mayor explained the City has many projects currently being worked on and the City staff and administrative staff are task saturated. The Mayor and Council would like to see how to organize the projects in order for things to be completed. Stilmock explained he and Council Member Dettmer have been working on lists of projects with the intent to sort capital projects versus non-capital projects. Anderson received the results of the Community Wide Survey sent out in 2013 to the public as well as the 2011 Capital Improvement Plan.

Anderson explained they had a similar situation in Central City but instead of a growing community, the town’s population had decreased since the last census; this prompted a plan known as the 2020 Plan. Central City asked where would they like their City to get to and why are they trying to get bigger; what is the ideal place they are trying to get to. Mayor Ortiz explained quality of life is important to him whether it be equal balance of the City’s parks, utilities and participation of the Chamber of Commerce. Gigstad thinks of a town as you’re either growing or you’re dying; a goal he sees is to continue working on growth of population. Central City came up with items for growth such as housing opportunities, replacing as well as building and subdivision development. Central City refers to Vision 2020 more than anything else. Identifying contributing factors to the issues, goals, and strategies are key for the 2020 Plan.

Anderson suggests to look at the must do’s and critical issues versus lower priority projects; create three categories. He likes the Capital Improvement Plan the City has, and mentioned at some point you have to figure out how far the money goes. Ortiz mentioned he is working with Evan Wickersham for an updated Capital Improvement Plan. Dettmer had previously sent lists to Anderson. Anderson mentioned internet is important and that a master list would be beneficial to have for the next Strategic Planning Meeting. Britton would like to separate utility wish list versus tax based wish list. Anderson mentioned the low hanging fruit items are pretty simple to take care of; this is not anything such as well field development; other items can be outsourced. One way to split is to ask ourselves what are maintenance items and what are growth or quality of life type issues. Four categories which will evolve into goals are: quality of life, utilities, infrastructure and operational/governance type issues. Mayor Ortiz wants to know how to best educate the public and the community to help them understand how each project is important even if it’s something you can’t see.

Central City did a 1.5 % sales tax increase in order to help with projects for economic development, sewer plant and downtown revitalization. The community was greatly educated prior. Certain projects such as a bathhouse are good for sales tax increase as well as street improvement. Currently the 1% the City is at is for specifically the pool and sunsets when the pool is paid off. The City would be able to go to 2% but there are more restrictions for that last .5%. Stilmock brought up the grass and brush piles and how much time and money is spent to maintain it; why wouldn’t the City consider having of the sales tax to go towards reducing property tax. Anderson asked if the City has spoken with JEO to have a water study done. Britton recalls a discussion had regarding a water study but it has not been done yet. The issue is still what needs to be done first. Anderson recommends making decisions off of fact or data.

Britton gave Anderson a short summary of where the City is at with the well field. Identifying improvements to the water system is a high priority on the project list; the action steps need to be discussed. The City is still waiting on water pressure information pertaining to the hospital rebuild.

Sidewalks would be considered infrastructure. Central City does not police their sidewalks but their Council actually spoke about starting this at their last meeting. Improvement of quality of life items

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include internet availability for residents and the Aqua Center bath house. Electrical loop work is also an ongoing project summarized by Britton. Anderson said those loops could be tied into economic development and could be considered infrastructure, maintenance or even quality of life. Quality of life can also be broken into a future development category. Other items added to the list to be categorized include Streambank Stability, zoning code, booster/secondary water tower, exposed water lines, demographics of population. Some of the items included on individual lists are more organizational items not so much projects.

Next meeting items include one master list combining items and pulling some items, paved versus non-paved roads, communicate to citizens, League research on listing of sales tax per City, explore sales tax increase (why/purpose/length of collection), where have we been/what has been completed, prioritize within each category.

Tangent issues for Anderson are paved and non-paved roads, role Central City plays in subdivision development financially and push SENDD for grant writing.

While the City waits for funding mechanisms on maybe a higher priority item that has a higher price tag, the City can proceed with some of the smaller projects where the money is accessible. Mayor Ortiz suggested using a weighted system to decide the priority items. Vogt mentioned in 2011, this type of voting was used to list priority projects at that time. Britton mentioned lack of continuity in the Council positions also puts the City in a tough position as opinions vary. Mayor Ortiz would like to come up with a welcome packet for incoming Council members that lays out the various studies and gives a background of where the City is at on development and future plans and projects.

Anderson said when it comes to applying for grants the communities that are most eligible for the money may not exist in 50 years. The opportunities are out there; the key is defining the objectives. The Southcentral Economic Development District in Central City does most of their grant writing and administration. Terry Meier of JEO identifies what grants are available for them.

Mayor Ortiz asked a Council Member to motion to adjourn. Council Member Dettmer moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 P.M., Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Britton, Henke, Gigstad, Dettmer. Nays: none. The next Strategic Planning meeting will be held on July 18th, 2018.

I the undersigned Clerk hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Mayor and Council; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting; kept continually and available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in the said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to the said meeting; that at least one copy of the reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for the examination and copying by members of the public; that the said minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting of the body; that all news media requesting notification concerning time and place of said body were provided advance notification of time and place of said meeting and subjects to be discussed at said meeting.  
  
  
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Clerk Mayor