

**MINUTES
BREVARD CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
February 10, 2012 – 8:00 AM**

Annual City Council Retreat –Day Two

The City Council of the City of Brevard met for their annual Council Retreat on Friday, February 10, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. in the Counseling Center at Schenck Job Corps with Mayor Jimmy Harris presiding.

The following elected officials were present: Mayor Jimmy Harris, Mayor Pro-Tem Mac Morrow, Council Members Wes Dickson, Maurice Jones, Charlie Landreth and Rodney Locks.

Staff Present: City Manager Joe Moore, Fire Chief Craig Budzinski, Assistant Planning Director Brad Burton, Finance Director Jim Fatland, Planning Director Josh Freeman, Water Plant Operator Buck Egerton, Bldg & Grounds Director Lynn Goldsmith, Police Chief Phil Harris, Human Resource Director LeAnn McCraw, Waste Water Plant Operator Emory Owen, Executive Assistant Jeanette Owen and City Clerk Desiree Perry.

Press: Derek McKissock, Transylvania Times

Others Present: Retreat Facilitator Angela Owen, TC Board of Commissioners Mike Hawkins and Larry Chapman, Heart of Brevard Executive Director Madrid Zimmerman, Brevard College representative Mr. Ken Kolb, and Schenck Job Corps students Ryan Lytle, Joseph Jarnigan, Cody Kilgore, Brandon Soto and Justin Cooper.

Retreat Called to Order – Mayor Harris welcomed all present and called day two of Council's annual retreat to order.

Agenda – Mr. Locks moved, seconded by Mr. Jones, the Agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Part Three: Neighbors and Neighborhoods

1. Non Profits

Using the City's seal as an illustration, Mr. Moore noted upon the City's seal are "forest, waterfalls, recreation, arts, education, recreation, flowers, opportunity and industry". While the City has most within its corporate limits, we do not have a forest or waterfalls; however, these are a very real part of our community and identity - our Branding. Non-profits and special events often support our branding, such as the White Squirrel Festival's tie to music and the Art Walk's support of arts.

Support Consideration - While discussing support of non-profits and special events, Council was asked to consider what will be achieved by doing so. Does the event or non-profit support the City's branding? Does it support and foster economic development, enhance quality of life, and in keeping with the goals of the vision and strategies? Non-profits that are provided support should have a charge be put forth to them, such as you are charged to (fill in the blank). Doing so will enable Council to explain and defend their decision to support a non-profit, as example, Heart Of Brevard, Chamber of Commerce and TC Arts.

Discussion/Comments:

- Question should be, do they (non-profit) satisfy economic development or quality of life? If Council can answer yes to either one of these, then we can focus upon the "how".

- Consider if non-profits are duplicating. Can they do it better than we can? Do we want them to do something that we can't do ourselves? Does the non-profit fit into the City's vision?
- When looking for organizations to help the City with its mission, non-profits are a place we can look, provided their vision aligns with the City's.
- Interdependent. Examples being TC Arts as it allows creative people to come together. Former Garden Club put the first woman Mayor in the City, had a strong influence as shown in the City's seal including "flowers", and, that non-profit was instrumental in the City establishing the Building and Grounds department.
- Whenever City supports a non-profit, we have a responsibility to articulate to the public as to "why" we have supported it.

Heart of Brevard (HOB)

- Acknowledged Heart of Brevard's contribution to the City's as an organization that promotes Brevard's downtown and as a gathering place, organize festivals and enhance economic activities in the downtown.
- Expectations of HOB included to promote the downtown - attract businesses to come and setup shop and to promote businesses that are already here; help gather the "common voice"; an organization that thinks outside of the box and take risks - such as the event that included derby cars going down the hill; HOB creates synergy for downtown businesses. Expect HOB to continue to nurture the culture that has proved to be attractive to the community.
- Important HOB's 5-year plan mesh with the City's vision, goal and strategies showing to the City and public that we are going in the same direction.
- TASK: Ask HOB Board of Directors to share with the City their mission and how they believe it meets the City's.
- TASK: There should be performance measurements. Tasked the City Manager to work with the HOB to come up with performance measures.
- Discussed value of performance standards for special events, like the White Squirrel Festival, and if entering into a contract for a special event should be considered - a contract would lead both parties to evaluate the terms.

Chamber of Commerce (CC)

- Chamber can call businesses together, like Blue Ridge Community College, Music Center, Brevard College, and the Hospital for networking functions.
- Amount City provides to Chamber of Commerce is more like membership or sponsor dues.
- Chamber is impartial and has the ability to gather together elected officials, business, educational and health services representatives together to discuss topics important to our community.
- Chamber serves as the Visitor Center for both the City and County.
- In order for the City to be successful, we need a successful Chamber.
- Discussed value of contracting with the Chamber for workshops on City issues, as a resource to gather information, and to perform surveys for the City.
- Consensus: The dollar amount the City currently provides to the Chamber is more like membership dues rather than contract for services. However, if the City were to sponsor a Community Coordinator it would require more investment from the City and a contract would be in order.
- The City, as a member of the Chamber, understands if they were to ask the Chamber to facilitate workshops, etc., the City would pay for them to do so.

~~ 9:45 - 10:00 AM - Break ~~

TC Arts

- Arts Council is aligned with our branding statement as they celebrate our heritage, culture, and draw people to Brevard through various arts.

- TCArt has become the umbrella for artists as it promotes a variety of arts throughout the City, County, schools and region.
- Promotes and organizes about 200 art events a year.
- Arts is a critical component for our City. Various mediums of art can articulate the esthetic beauty of our location that cannot be articulated in any other way.
- As we recognize recreation, arts and music are important to everyone, there is a need for a Community Coordinator to connect all - the Heart of Brevard, Chamber of Commerce and Arts Council.

Economic Development

- A common thread throughout retreat discussions has been economic development.
- What is and is not working to promote economic development?
- Business attraction, business creation and business growth.
- Economic development is a big mission. Does the City want to assume more leadership in the role, have more voice, to insure downtown and City interests would be considered? County may not focus their efforts and foster what the City needs.
- Delivery for economic development better suited by a public or private entity?
- Perhaps the City has not clearly articulated to the County what was desired when the economic development advisory began. Limited staff.
- Communicate clear expectations.
- Resource allocation and how to do that - financial and people.
- Each entity measured for success - how?
- Regional focus.
- How do we do this with all of the economic developers? Not sure exactly who is doing what. Who are the economic partners?
- Tourism Development Authority - When initially established understood money would be provided to the City; however, this has not taken place. No formal agreement was established.
- Occupancy tax increase should be considered.
- Economic Development is important. City is helping County gain by means of sales tax revenue (70%); what is the County providing to the City in return?
- Education is important to our community and is part of fostering economic development.
- Beneficial to participate with Rosman and the County as economic development is a county wide interest.
- HOB, CC and TC Arts - Consider them as economic partners rather than non-profits.
- Non-profit financial considerations should be measured by first verifying if supporting will help the City in accomplishing its mission and vision. Then, determine if it a service the City should provide or that someone else should provide.

~~ 11:15 - 11:30 AM - Break ~~

2. Special Events and Festivals - Does it help fulfill community development vision. If so, how?

- Have about 15 festivals of various sizes, scope and scale that City services are delivered.
- Important to realize a significant investment of City staff time and resources are provided for special events, and, as they are an investment we need to therefore invest wisely.

White Squirrel Festival

- Brings people together. Festival is a way of inviting folks to our community.

- Is a showplace for our town; provides music, art, gathering of residents as well as many come from out of town to enjoy the Festival.

Assault on Carolinas

- It's a showcase for cyclists.
- Continues to grow, especially since bringing the event from the High School to downtown.
- Participants come from all over the USA and Canada.
- The Assault is a Rotary fund raising event. To what level should the City provide support?
- Should consideration be given to identify it as a City sponsored event?
- Festivals are very expensive. Important to know for any given festival what the costs are for the City with respect to staff (Police, Fire, Public Services and Planning) and materials. To be budgeted.
- Task: Staff was asked to provide Council a recommended structure for special event sponsorship.

~~ 12:00 Noon - 1:00 PM - Lunch Break ~~

Mayor Harris introduced Ms. Tammy Wentland, Center Director for Schenck Job Corps, and expressed to her appreciation for the hospitality she and the Job Corp staff have extended to Council members and City staff throughout the Retreat.

3. Community Development Strategy

Public Involvement Process Summary - Josh Freeman shared the raw results from the Community Development Survey input sessions held and business survey. (Copy on file.) Shared a strong sense of community was the central theme, along with: Rich arts and culture, educational resources, mountains, wood and water, natural beauty, outdoor recreation, active lifestyle, small town realness, family (heritage, proud of long history, best place to raise children), Safety (feels Brevard is a safe place with its low crime rate, peacefulness), diversity, and Farmers Market is valued by many. Quality of Life survey results included: Bring jobs, expand recreational opportunities (neighborhood level & underserved areas, indoor facility like YMCA, more trails and bike paths), invest in education - City serve as an advocate, improve broadband/wi-fi (perception broadband is insufficient to meet long-term needs, desire for better access to telecommunication carriers, offer free wireless in downtown, improve and expand sidewalks for pedestrians, provide more amenities for young families (music venue, all-day daycare, "family style" restaurant), and improve dialogue and information exchange between the City and County.

In looking at the results received, Council noted the City's message and vision is getting out as the survey results show participants identified a strong desire for arts, music and outdoor recreation. Further noted the importance for the City to communicate to the public what it is the City provides, what it is that the City does (and doesn't do or provide), and to share the City's values and goals. In doing so may prompt citizens and groups to step up to see what they can do to plug in.

Council reviewed with staff the results and discussed the low participation rate by citizens and businesses and ways to generate more feedback, such as:

- Staff go out into the community to speak with various groups and organizations.
- Update the City's website and consider sending newsletters may encourage more involvement.
- Consider using the City's website to serve as a way to direct people to the appropriate office or service provider and not just to City offices and services (ie. links to Board of Education, County offices/agencies, etc.).

- Low participation seems to be an information issue. As mentioned earlier in the Retreat, perhaps an organization like the Chamber of Commerce could help facilitate discussions.
- Suggested the "Magic Moments" presentation Mr. Moore shared earlier in the Retreat would be a very good tool to share and help educate folks on our history and vision/goals.
- Move some Council meetings out into precincts showing the City's willingness to come to the folks within their own neighborhoods.

Vision and Enhance Quality of Life Strategy Statements Amended

Council discussed the Vision statement and whether "*....where our children can live, work and play*" should remain. Discussed changes to the Strategy: Enhance Quality of Life statement. Following discussion, Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Mr. Landreth the vision and second strategy statements be changed to read as follows:

Vision: Brevard is a safe, friendly, family-oriented city with small town charm, outdoor recreation, arts & culture that bring investment opportunities, environmental consciousness and economic diversity.

Strategy: Enhance Quality of Life: Enhance the quality of life in our community by bringing people of all ages together through physical connections within our community and to our natural assets of woods and water and personal connections to each other and to our cultural/historic assets of music, arts, and outdoor recreation.

Motion carried unanimously.

~~ 2:25 PM - 2:35 PM Break ~~

Part Four: Follow Through and Feedback

Vision, Compelling Imperative, Wants/Needs and Strategies - do they match up? Based upon Council's input throughout the past two days it's been said in a variety of ways, "yes". Council's comments and participation has provided staff with information that can be used as budget preparation begins to take place.

Education

Ties into a City strategy. While we are not to do education, Council is not prohibited from having dialog with others on this subject. How can we work together and to talk about education and work force development? (Public, College, Job Corps)

Partner with perhaps the Chamber of Commerce who can help to bring together the proper groups. Doing so will elevate the value to the community under this approach - could start with job skill, work force development and then education in general terms.

Recreation

Passive recreation City is doing very well. Active recreation, including Bracken Mountain coming on line, is of concern as the City does not have the staff or a recreation department. Need to decide what is important to us, decide what and how we will provide, and what we need to pass on. Everything we've been doing is a great project in its own right; however, need to look at our Vision and prioritize what is important and plan accordingly. Do we partner with another provider, as example, another to take on the ball fields? We don't have the time and resources to do all.

Does Council desire to have a workshop designated for this topic? Unanimous consensus: Yes

Education representatives need to be invited for their input on recreation.

Farmland Protection

A way to introduce interdependence with the County through agrarian land use. County Farmland Protection Board has worked the last two and one-half years on the document that has been adopted by the County. City has been asked to adopt and to support elements we can help to carry through, like support a farmers market.

Economic Development

Discussed the importance of having a primer in economic development. Effective economic development requires multi-jurisdiction cooperation. Protocol needed so that the City will be aware of, and have opportunity to participate in early on, when business development potentials are being discussed. Sharing information is key; unfortunately, getting together with others in the same room to openly discuss matters "around the table" has been difficult to do.

City has the potential to shape the tone of discussion and attitudes of our community; however, we are not doing that, we are just getting feedback. How the City presents its message is important. This was illustrated as Mr. Freeman shared the Community Development Strategy survey results showing the City's branding comments are getting back to us.

Does Council desire to have a workshop designated for this topic? Unanimous consensus: Yes

Thinking Outside The Box

At the beginning of the Retreat Council was asked to give thought to ideas or projects they would like to share with one another and staff as potential future discussion or action items. They offered the following:

Mayor Harris

1. Cleanup of the Fanning property near the Middle School.
2. Water feature with pavers and decorative iron fence placed on the West Main & Caldwell St. Clemson property (private support potential).
3. Mobile audio equipment.
4. Natural gas or bio fuel for vehicles.
5. Special Pickups that City would do as they notice items placed and then charge it to the customers water bill. Items remain placed at the front of property entirely too long before the customer calls and arranges for the City to pickup.
6. Bike racks
7. Paths to Bracken Mountain
8. Picnic sheds at Franklin Park. Could it be a project that Job Corp could help with the labor?
9. Private dollars for "wrought iron musical notes" mounted to the mast arm of the traffic signals that would bring out a marketing distinction. (Would need NCDOT approval).
10. Debt Policy (not just bonds) to provide disciplines.
11. Parking lots in the City. Allow parking for the day or for several hours for a fee.
12. Impact Fees - Provide opportunity for businesses to pay it over time rather than all upfront.
13. Discretionary budget for City Manager for a reasonable amount of funds without having to come to Council.

Wes Dickson

1. Attention to the Pisgah Forest area as it is the entrance to Brevard and brings in revenue. Making entrance to our City more attractive will benefit both Brevard

and Pisgah Forest. Encourage folks to stop and visit this area of our City. Traffic calming would be helpful.

2. Change from overhead to underground power lines whenever and wherever possible.
3. Parking for various City events.
4. Gathering place - let parking double as a gathering place.

Maurice Jones

1. Reinvestment into the Rosenwald Community.
2. Provide Mary C. Jenkins Center some assistance.
3. Tannery and Railroad Avenue - make these areas beneficial to both the folks living there and to the City.

Mac Morrow

1. Pursue getting Southern Railroad property at Railroad Avenue for public use / park.
2. Night Sky Initiative
3. Old tarnished and dilapidated signs at the entrances of Brevard need to be improved or removed.
4. Pinnacle Road maintenance. Secondary road monies with bike lane and pavement up to Bracken Mountain.

Charlie Landreth

1. Safe Routes to School - need to pay attention to the topic in the Transportation Bill that is currently in Congress.
2. Trails
3. Expressed gratitude for the quality of preparation the Manager and staff provided for the Retreat.

Rodney Locks

1. More or better Brevard signage. I-26 signage says "Brevard College", does not promote Brevard, tell one how far away (miles) it is, etc.
2. TVA charging station for electric cars.
3. Affordable Housing - Like to get various policies into the same package with the same message. English Hills, Broad River Terrace, Laurel Village, The Cottages of Brevard...these capture where we are today.

Wrap Up and Closing Comments

Council expressed appreciation for the use of the facility, for the Manager and staffs preparation, and for the Facilitator's skill in keeping conversations on task. Council asked staff for their comments and perspective on the Retreat.

Staff shared they too benefit from the Retreat as they have opportunity to hear Council's thought process and direction, and, gain understanding in various projects that may or may not be specific to the department they work in. Suggested consideration be given to, in addition to providing a Retreat Facilitator, to provide additional assistance as several City staff members cannot listen and participate in the Retreat as they are working to capture notes, parking lot discussion and ideas, etc.

Ms. Owen commended Council members for their active participation and good engagement from everyone as they sought clarity on all discussion items. She expressed appreciation for Mr. Freeman, Ms. McCraw and Mr. Burton as they helped throughout the Retreat to capture notes.

Parking Lot Items: Throughout the two day retreat, staff compiled a listing of items or subjects Council identified for future discussion.

Mr. Locks moved, seconded by Mr. Dickson, Council adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. At 4:09 PM the annual retreat was adjourned.

Jimmy Harris, Mayor

Desiree D. Perry, City Clerk

Minutes Approved: May 21, 2012