

City Council Meeting Minutes

**October 30, 2018
City Hall, Council Chambers
749 Main Street
6:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Muckle called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

The following Council members were present:

City Council: ***Mayor Robert Muckle
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Lipton
Councilmember Jay Keany
Councilmember Chris Leh
Councilmember Susan Loo
Councilmember Dennis Maloney
Councilmember Ashley Stolzmann***

Staff Present: ***Heather Balsler, City Manager
Megan Davis, Deputy City Manager
Kevin Watson, Finance Director
Tracy Winfree, Interim Parks & Recreation Director
Aaron DeJong, Economic Development Director
Kurt Kowar, Public Works Director
Rob Zuccaro, Planning & Building Safety Director
Chris Neves, Information Technology Director
Becky Campbell, Interim Library Director
Dave Hayes, Police Chief
Emily Hogan, Assistant to the City Manager
Kathleen Hix, Human Resources Director
Meredyth Muth, City Clerk***

Others: ***Julia Novak, Novak Consulting***

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

Deputy City Manager Davis stated this meeting is to review the proposed framework for the strategic plan; the plan is included in the 2018 work plan. The goal is to create an internal organizational focused plan that would establish a mission, vision, and values for the organization and also establish some priority initiatives. We already have several guiding documents that reflect the City's role in the community and the residents'

community values. This process incorporates that and is focused on input from City leadership, the City Manager, directors, and staff at all levels. The result is this framework that creates a foundation of the organization by defining our vision.

This is one part of the process but serves as the foundation. The next steps are to develop the priority initiatives and the critical success factors. The mission, vision, and values should stay the same from year-to-year and the priority initiatives would change every year to two years and be revisited with the budget process.

Julia Novak, City's consultant, stated this is a review of the work done to date and is designed to create a vision for city government (what it will be known for in the future), the mission that drives the work force, and the values that drive the culture. This is done to align the work of the organization around a common purpose and create internal alignment, but more importantly to build a culture and do it intentionally. The idea is to build on what is good to intentionally create a future that is even better; it becomes a written understanding of what is expected of people in the organization.

Novak stated the plan is intended to answer three questions:

- What do we know to be true today?
 - *Where are we?*
- What do we hope will be true in the future?
 - *What is our vision?*
- How will we get there?
 - *What is our plan?*

Novak noted the framework includes the following elements:

- Vision – the Vision Statement is aspirational, intended to reflect what you hope Louisville City Government will be known for in the future.
- Mission – the role and purpose of City government, frequently expressed in statements about “who we are, what we do, and why we do it.”
- Values – organizational values guide behavior, whether stated or unstated, and are observed when the workforce is “at its best.”
- Critical Success Factors – those “things that must go well” in order for the organization to achieve the Vision.

The process included reviewing numerous background documents including the comprehensive plan, the charter, departmental plans, and more. Input was gathered from interviews with councilmembers, employee focus groups, the management team, and an employee survey.

The management team had a retreat to develop the draft. We are here to review that and get Council input. Next steps are aligning the organizational workplan and identifying the strategic initiatives within the various critical success factors that will advance the organization toward the Vision.

Novak reviewed the questions and answers that all of the various groups were asked.

- What do you want this City Government to be known for? Efficient, innovative, transparent . . .
- Louisville Employees are . . . Dedicated, professional, responsive, caring . . .
- What do our employees do? Provide services, serve residents . . .
- Observed values . . .Customer Service, teamwork, respect . . .

All of the information gathering led to this framework created by the management team.

- **VISION:** The City of Louisville – dedicated to providing the best small town experience.
- **MISSION:** Our commitment is to protect, preserve, and enhance the quality of life in our community.
- **VALUES: I CARE:**
 - **Innovation:** Leading and embracing change and transformation through creative thinking, learning, and continuous improvement.
 - **Collaboration:** Proactively engaging colleagues and other stakeholders in developing solutions through open communication.
 - **Accountability:** Fulfilling our responsibilities, owning our actions, and learning from our mistakes.
 - **Respect:** Treating people, processes, roles, and property with care and concern.
 - **Excellence:** Doing our best work and exceeding expectations with responsive, efficient, and effective customer service.

Novak stated that out of the above came the critical success factors: Financial Stewardship & Asset Management; Reliable Core Services; Vibrant Economic Climate; Quality Programs and Amenities; Engaged Community; Healthy Workforce; Supportive Technology; and Collaborative Regional Partner.

Deputy City Manager Davis reviewed the next steps: Staff will identify specific strategic initiatives to be included in the plan. These priority initiatives are informed by the budget and other initiatives that are ongoing such as the Transportation Master Plan and will be aligned with the work we are already doing. This includes priorities that can be completed in the next 12 -24 months and should allow us to identify priorities in conjunction with the budget process.

She added that in the implementation of the plan it will be important to develop a strategy to use this for internal culture building and organizational development. Some work will be needed to connect this to existing goals and KPIs. In addition, we will need to have opportunities for measuring progress. The hope is the Council will be able to look to this tool as a part of its planning as well.

This final component will be to roll out the plan to staff and show how this integrates the mission, vision, and values across the organization. This will include communicating to the public what this means to them and what the priority initiatives are.

Deputy City Manager Davis noted tonight staff is looking for input on the framework. A final plan will come back in December for adoption.

Councilmember Maloney stated the body of work is good. He asked Novak if in the process she got any disparate inputs or was there commonality across the board. Novak stated there was a lot of commonality. In the SWOT there was consistency with the Council and then again with the employees. She stated it was a healthy look at what is good and what needs work. In describing employees “dedicated” was universal.

Councilmember Maloney stated the word cloud describing employees includes customer service and that does not seem to be articulated in the other sections of the document. He asked if it is to be implied; he would like it articulated as a value.

Novak stated customer service as a value didn’t seem as rich as some of the other words but it is included. Councilmember Maloney stated he would like it clearly articulated as one of our values.

Mayor Muckle stated there are a couple of high priorities such as recognizing our heritage and open space that he thinks should be represented here. Councilmember Maloney stated this could be added to the facility critical success factors.

Councilmember Loo stated she has a problem with the vision; we can’t define small-town experience and we are not the small town we were 20 years ago; we don’t handle problems the way we used to. Small towns don’t worry about the problems we do such as transportation, pedestrian safety, or defining property types. We codify what we are doing rather than handling it on a person-to-person basis. She questions whether everyone understands what “small-town character” means.

Councilmember Loo added that she thinks the “I CARE” is important as is “dedicated,” but she doesn’t see the concept of competence and excellence included. Staff needs to be treated less like family and more like a team and not make allowances for some people’s behavior.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated he thinks many people want the ambiance of a small town with the government services of a big town. We are on the cusp of a small town by population but the expectations of the government are really large; residents desire the services and expectations of a big town. He noted how we define ourselves is important. He would like to not focus on the small town in the strategic plan but make the vision match what residents want which is fairly sophisticated.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated the programmatic goals should be included and it should be clear this plan ties to those. It needs to be clear how the programmatic goals relate to this plan.

Councilmember Stolzmann stated the employee response rate seemed very low. Deputy City Manager Davis stated it was not mandatory but collectively we think we heard from close to half of the employees.

Councilmember Stolzmann noted that in the City Manager hiring process not having a strategic plan was noted. She asked City Manager Balsler if this is getting her the information she needs and meeting the goals she wants addressed.

City Manager Balsler stated these core values are what we talk about all the time and focus on, but we have not articulated these anywhere so this is getting that done. On the issue of small-town, this is cited in every city document we have. While times might have changed, this idea that we have that small-town character is still there. There is an expectation that our employees don't treat this as a city of 50,000 and that is part of our culture. She added the important components are here and it includes her expectations for how employees work and how we define success.

Mayor Muckle stated the vision is perfect. People always say they value living in a small town. This is a consistent thing he hears from residents. We are trying to provide the best small town experience with a very high level of services. He does not feel those two things are in conflict.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated we don't have to take that out, but we do need to qualify it. He noted we want to make sure we aren't branding ourselves as a quaint small town; the kind of place in which business don't want to invest.

Novak noted "small town experience" is used. In addition, each of these eight statements adds a layer of what that experience is and defines our version of the experience.

Mayor Muckle noted this will need to be tied to our programs. We need to recognize that all of the things we are doing in the work plan and in our programs will meet our vision.

Councilmember Loo suggested to add to the core values some items such as "add value," "respect differences," "above all integrity." She wants to make sure it is not so detailed people lose interest after the first paragraph.

Novak stated the values are the I CARE but the group felt it was important to define those values. This information will be used to on board employees, performance evaluations and woven into other systems. But the pithy thing to remember is I CARE. Deputy City Manager Davis stated staff took some time to articulate exactly what these mean to us as an organization.

Councilmember Maloney stated there have been discussions about Council recognizing supporting people taking risks. He asked City Manager Balsler if this addresses that for her. He wants to make sure this supports staff being innovative and taking risk. Mayor Pro Tem Lipton stated it should include organizational risk as well. Councilmember Maloney stated it needs to be ok with the Council that the City Manager and staff can take risks and when they do so they will be supported.

Councilmember Leh stated it is important to have varying levels of generality and also have the right amount of detail. It does need to be concise enough that everyone can use it all the time. The process to get here is critical and so is the roll out of the plan, how it is maintained, enhancing it over time, and holding people accountable. He stated integrating this is critical and as is connecting it to the work plan and programs.

Councilmember Leh stated it is possible to be not a small town but still reflect those characteristics with the personalization of services, being neighborly, safety, etc. He feels the building blocks are here.

City Manager Balsler noted this is the framework and staff will go back to see how to integrate it with the other pieces and make some refinements before the final presentation in December.

Councilmember Keany stated the vision and small town experience is what we want to have no matter how big we get. This is more aspirational as we implement all of our programs and the vision applies to all of them.

John Leary, 1116 LaFarge Avenue, stated he thinks one item that is missing is what are we trying to address; if there is a reason to do this let's define that and address it. It is not clear exactly what the goal is here and how it will be used to change employees. Staff has no role in the political process that will affect these goals. Small town character is a political issue not administrative.

City Manager Balsler reviewed a few other items including some scheduling items and an upcoming public safety campaign.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 7:23 pm.

Robert P. Muckle, Mayor

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk