



# **City of Grand Island**

**Tuesday, February 12, 2008**

**Council Session**

## **Item G2**

**Approving Minutes of January 26, 2008 City Council Special  
Study Session Retreat**

**Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards**

## CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

### MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION (RETREAT)

January 26, 2008

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Study Session (Retreat) of the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska was conducted at the Law Enforcement Center, 111 Public Safety Drive on January 26, 2008. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on January 18, 2008.

Mayor Margaret Hornady called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The following members were present: Councilmember's Nickerson, Gericke, Brown, Gilbert, Haase, Meyer, Niemann, Ramsey, Carney, and Zapata. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Jeff Pederson, City Clerk RaNae Edwards, and Assistant to the City Administrator Paul Briseno.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Mayor Hornady welcomed the council and gave a brief outline of the day's activities and purpose.

#### **10 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE COUNCILS:**

City Administrator Jeff Pederson explained the 10 Habits of Highly Effective Councils as a team building process. Discussion was held on the following 10 Habits:

1. Think and Act Strategically
2. Understand and Demonstrate the Elements of Teams and Teamwork
3. Master Small Group Decision Making
4. Clearly Define Roles and Relationships
5. Establish and Abide by a Council-Staff Partnership
6. Make a Systematic Evaluation of Policy Implementation
7. Allocate Council Time and Energy Appropriately
8. Set Clear Rules and Procedures for Council Meetings
9. Get a Valid Assessment of the Public's Concerns and an Evaluation of the Council's Performance
10. Practice Continuous Personal Learning and Development as a Leader

Discussion was held concerning the budget process, vision, community input, communication, defined roles and responsibility.

#### **ALLIGATOR RIVER STORY:**

The Council worked in groups of four to review an exercise on beliefs, values and stereotypes.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

### **What Does Quality of Life Mean for Grand Island and How Do We Maintain or Foster Its Growth?**

Quality of life issues in Grand Island discussed were: adequate health care, entertainment, safety, educational opportunities, affordable & attainable housing, schools, infrastructure, kids opportunities, jobs, and smoke free community.

### **How Can We Improve Communication Between Councilmember's and Staff to Build a Team that is Aligned Around Common Goals and Objectives?**

The following ideas were presented by council:

- Council to give direction to staff after Study Session
- Council to call staff before council meetings with questions
- Weekly update from City Administrator
- Keep council informed on union negotiations
- Monthly administration report
- Defined formal structure for making request and to allow feedback
- Better training for new councilmember's
- E-mails from department directors to administrator sent to council
- Major issues at staff meetings conveyed to council
- Take advantage of technology
- GITV very important
- Small group briefing meetings on major issues
- City councilmember's as "sounding boards"
- Understanding of meeting procedures

### **How Do We Continue to Accomplish Goals, Improve Infrastructure, and Contribute to a Progressive Community with Constraints of the Budget?**

The following ideas were presented by council:

- Match expense growth with revenue growth
- Partnerships – look at private sector - resourcefulness
- Value understanding "out of sight, out of mind"
- Capital Replacement/expansion – plan for infrastructure
- Cooperate/collaborate with other government entities
- Revitalize government efficiency effectiveness committee – dialogue
- Balanced strategic plan process engage public/staff
- Continuous improvement ethic – look inside/challenge status quo

**LUNCH AND TOUR WITH HALL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS:**

The following Hall County Board of Supervisors were present for the Joint City/County Special Study Session: Jim Eriksen, Pam Lancaster, Bud Jeffries, Bob Rye, Daniel Wagoner, Scott Arnold, Bob Humiston, and Marla Conley County Clerk.

The following City Department Directors were present: Craig Lewis, Building; Jon Rosenlund, Emergency Management; David Springer, Finance; Jim Rowell, Fire Chief; Brenda Sutherland, Human Resources; Dale Shotkoski, City Attorney; Steve Fosselman, Library; Steve Paustian, Parks and Recreation; Steve Lamken, Police Chief; Steve Riehle, Public Works; Chad Nabity, Regional Planning, and Gary Mader, Utilities.

Following lunch, tours of the new Law Enforcement Center were given by Police Chief Steve Lamken and Sheriff Jerry Watson.

**TOP 3 CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEPARTMENTS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS:**

The following Department Directors briefly presented the top three challenges/opportunities for their departments in the next five years:

Building Department, Craig Lewis – 1) implantation of software for inspection programs 2) implementation of new license programs 3) property maintenance issues. Comments were made regarding issues of downtown building safety codes, inspections, sprinkler systems and ISO ratings.

Emergency Management, Jon Rosenlund – 1) staffing 2) adequate alternate dispatch center 3) future funding for replacement equipment and software. Comments were made regarding Homeland security grants.

Finance, David Springer – 1) technological advances 2) provide adequate/affordable health care plan for employees 3) maintain the cities financial strength. Comments were made regarding the upcoming budget, health care costs, investments, meter reading and rate structure.

Fire, Jim Rowell – 1) age of infrastructure - vehicles and equipment replacement plan 2) age of citizens within the community 3) age/retention of employees. Comments were made regarding significant structure fires, ISO and services.

Human Resources, Brenda Sutherland – 1) labor – planning for turnover due to retirements and regular turnovers 2) labor – salaries and benefits 3) labor – union negotiations. Comments were made regarding retaining/replacing employees.

Legal, Dale Shotkoski – 1) labor - union issues 2) labor - internal equity 3) purchasing internal controls.

Library, Steve Fosselman – 1) strengthening the library as a community center 2) additional learning centers within the library 3) costs of running the library. Comments were made regarding a northwest annex, increased database, future of libraries, age of patrons and services to the community.

Parks & Recreation, Steve Paustian – 1) acquiring property for future park development 2) redefining and evolution of the recreation division 3) money. Comments were made regarding development of parks through developers.

Police, Steve Lamken – 1) police community relations 2) staffing 3) technology. Comments were made regarding services above and beyond the duty required and computers in all police vehicles.

Public Works, Steve Riehle – 1) balancing projects and needs for infrastructure while maintaining current infrastructure 2) succession planning 3) manage projects. Comments were made regarding sanitary sewer system deterioration and detention cell maintenance.

Regional Planning, Chad Nabity – 1) Broadwell grade crossing 2) staffing 3) sewer and water extensions along South Locust Street. Comments were made regarding TIF funding along South Locust Street.

Utilities, Gary Mader – 1) condition of electric utility industries throughout the nation/regulatory requirements, uncertainty of future electric 2) renewable resources 3) water quality. Comments were made regarding coal fired power plants, energy audits, and Parkview Superfund.

#### **WRAP UP/GOING FORWARD:**

Jeff Pederson City Administrator thanked the department directors and council for their input. Mr. Pederson mentioned a pre-budget retreat in the next 6 to 8 weeks. Mayor Hornady thanked those present.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

RaNae Edwards  
City Clerk