

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, December 6, 2021

Regular Meeting

Item Consent2

Council to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2021 Special Meeting.

Staff Contact: City Council

Special Meeting
November 29, 2021

The Scottsbluff City Council met in a Special Meeting on Monday, November 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 2525 Circle Drive, Scottsbluff. The meeting was requested by a written call therefor by City Manager Dustin Rief for City Council to conduct a strategic planning session. A notice of the meeting had been published on November 19, 2021 in the Star Herald, a newspaper published and of general circulation of the city. The notice stated the date, hour and place of the meeting, that the meeting would be open to the public, that anyone with a disability desiring reasonable accommodation to attend the council meeting should contact the city clerk's office, and that an agenda of the meeting kept continuously current was available for public inspection at the office of the city clerk in City Hall; provided, the city council could modify the agenda at the meeting if it determined that an emergency so required. A similar notice, together with a copy of the agenda, also had been delivered to each council member, made available to radio stations KNEB, KMOR, KOAQ, and television stations KSTF and KDUH, and the Star Herald. The notice was also available on the City's website on November 19, 2021. Mayor McKerrigan presided and City Clerk Wright recorded the proceedings. Mayor McKerrigan welcomed everyone and informed those in attendance that a copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available for the public's review. The following Council Members were present: Jeanne McKerrigan, Jordan Colwell, Nathan Green, and Selina Lerma. Also present were City Manager Dustin Rief and Deputy City Attorney Megan Dockery. Absent: Angela Scanlan. Mayor McKerrigan stated no other business shall be transacted at the special meeting unless all Council Members are present to consent and the City Council declares the existence of an emergency. She then asked if there was such an emergency. There was none.

Angela Scanlan entered the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Ms. Brittany Hardin with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, on behalf of the Nebraska Public Power District, introduced herself and started the strategic planning session.

Ms. Hardin started by asking participants to introduce themselves and explain what they love/their favorite thing about Scottsbluff. There were many different responses offered with the most popular being the friendliness and generosity of the community, shopping, green space, downtown area, and schools.

She then asked the participants, looking out into the future; 10 years from now, what would look and feel different in the City of Scottsbluff. She also added the caveat of having unlimited resources. The ideas and suggestions were as follows:

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| More diverse in economy | Diversify to other industries | Pathway completed |
| Access to Monument | PAWS | Redevelopment |
| More retail in the Mall | Aquatic & Senior Center | Money for Roads |
| Fill up empty buildings (stores) | Four year college | Annexation |
| Infrastructure growth | Safety along river | Bigger City Hall |
| Recreation opportunities | Park & Rec building | Better website |

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|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Park/Rec work w/ St. Parks | Heartland Expressway | Activities for Seniors |
| Pool | Tear down Kmart Bldg | Attract trades & professions |
| Housing | Restrooms downtown | Finish existing projects |
| Park N of Hwy 26 | River Run at airport | Another terminal at airport |
| Activities for youth | Homeless options | Water sports |
| Business & Art growth | Recruitment | Partnerships with communities |
| Big box businesses | Property standards | Community Center |
| Needs-one stop shop | Community garden | Juvenile Detention Center |
| Advocates-victims of crime | Indoor field house | Sustainable development |
| Regional Compost Facility | Transitional housing | Riverfront development |
| Support data storage | Business Center to rent | Senior transportation after hours |

After the brainstorming discussion the participants took a break at 6:06 p.m. so Ms. Hardin could prioritize and put the ideas in time box themes of recreational, housing, school development, business, and infrastructure.

The group reconvened at 6:30 p.m. At that time Council Members were then placed with three to four people to implement strategies and potential action for goals on the theme they picked. The group discussions started at 6:45 p.m. and ended at 7:17 p.m.

After the discussions, Council Member Lerma started by introducing her theme of school development. She explained her group talked about paid internships for college students and using the college dorms as housing during the summer. They also addressed marketing Scottsbluff and Gering to out of area college students to get them to stay here after graduation and possibly changing our existing college from a two to four year institution.

In addition, her group discussed reopening the Senior Center at the mall or potentially using the vacant Albertson's building, both would need to house a kitchen area, however.

Ms. Lerma stated the top priority for her group would be the internship program and getting college students to stay in this area, adding the Senior Center was also mentioned as a close second.

Council Member Scanlan's group discussed business development. She explained their vision for business development in the area includes low vacancy, diverse business, workforce recruitment and growth. She added it is more about placement rather than just coming out and looking at the area. In addition her group discussed retooling the business incubator at Twin Cities Development and being able to make use of the service more, utilizing the idea of central information to direct people of where they need to go.

Mayor McKerrigan's group discussed housing. She explained her group's vision was more affordable housing for all levels of income, adding we lack housing for people to move up to the next level. She noted part of the problem is not having enough sub-contractors in the area because there is not enough workforce to address the need. Her group's short term solution is to partner with the school to build their woods career path to make it more construction trade, such as HVAC, plumbing, and electrical; the internship would definitely need to be paid to be successful. She added having tours for middle school students to introduce them to these different career paths, adding it needs to be a collaboration between the business, school, and City to make this happen. They also discussed the

homeless community and bringing this situation to light, commenting we have a generous community who would do in kind work and give donations to make a shelter available for this type of need, but commented that would be more of a long term timeframe.

Council Member Green picked infrastructure. He started by stating this is something that is not thought about until it is too late; an example being you don't think about big box retail until a store leaves or the PAWS project until you have poison water and need to put up a \$300M facility. He added short term goals aren't instant gratification for infrastructure. They are ten years out. He explained his group put their ideas in wants and needs categories. Needs being clean drinking water and a compost facility. In the wants category they put big box stores, data storage, and site redevelopment. His group agrees the PAWS project is a priority and a short term goal is to engage and get the backing of the community to keep the projects going.

Council Member Colwell picked recreational opportunities. He explained his group looked at a community center that could be a tie in for a new City Hall, which could include a youth center. He added the Alberton's building could fit that need and/or fit the need of an aquatic center also. In addition, he stated, the aquatic center could be located on the river front property across from Panhandle Coop.

The group also addressed the need of public restrooms downtown and trail development. The idea of an overpass added at 5th Avenue could possibly help clean up the vacant areas and also connect to the Pathway. Also, a pedestrian bridge could be built by Target and the pathway connected through the Scottsbluff Drain with redevelopment being added in those areas, too.

As far as Arts development, murals could be painted on buildings downtown by local artists and a bigger venue for theater performances could be implemented.

A park north of Highway 26 was also addressed as a need and different areas were identified, such as the Hilltop Estate location.

The long-term goal of this group is having a one stop shop for a community/aquatic/senior/youth center to possibly include a larger City Hall.

After discussion, Ms. Hardin stated she will write a report addressing long term and short term goals based on the priorities listed, as well as ideas on ways to get there. She will also identify the different partnerships that were mentioned. This report will then be presented to Council at a later date.

Council Member Green moved, seconded by Council Member Lerma to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m., "YEAS," Lerma, Green, Colwell, Scanlan, and McKerrigan. "NAYS," None. Absent: None.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

"SEAL"

