

Minutes of the City of Seaford Mayor, City Council and Leadership

Planning Session Meeting

February 28, 2020

Mayor Genshaw called the Planning Session meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. with the following people present: Councilman Dan Henderson, Councilman H. William Mulvaney III, Councilman Orlando Holland, Councilman Matt MacCoy, Councilman James King, City Manager Charles Anderson, Director of Public Works Berley Mears, Director of Economic Development and Community Relations Trisha Newcomer, Chief of Police Marshall Craft, Director of HR and Finance June Merritt, Director of Electric Bill Bennett, Building Official Mike Bailey and Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Katie Hickey.

Mayor Genshaw greeted everyone and thanked everyone for their attendance. In this year's Planning Session, he would like have some goals for the next 3-5 years.

An ice breaker was then completed.

City Manager Anderson then reviewed the agenda.

City Manager Anderson presented information regarding strategic planning. He added that strategic planning aims to ensure employees and other stakeholders are all working towards a common goal and their energy, focus and resources are all aligned towards an organizational goal. It is also envisioning the future of the City, translating that vision into measurable and achievable goals, and then implementing long range planning to accomplish those goals.

Mayor Genshaw stated that he would like to see job creation and job retention within the City. He would like to create an atmosphere where people want to move businesses here. He also believes that infrastructure needs to be in place and there needs to be space for business to grow; for job creation to occur and to be appealing to businesses. He added that there is a diverse collaboration within our community and if we all align together in the same direction, there are many great things that can happen.

Councilman King added that he would like to see more quality of life resources for our residents.

Councilman Mulvaney stated that he would like to see more entertainment options available.

Mayor Genshaw used the Riverfront and downtown area as an example of what success is for our City. Mr. Bennett pointed out that if he desired to open up an entertainment business downtown that included a band or outside area; due to the noise ordinance, he would have to shut down at 9:00 p.m. It was discussed to be flexible and reduce those barriers for businesses so they would want to come here.

Councilman MacCoy stated that he would like to see improvement in resident communication. He added that there are a lot of good things happening here and within our organization, however, the message is not always given out to the public. If people were more aware of the successes and opportunities, it would help with getting the word out.

Mayor Genshaw stated that having walking and biking trails would be appealing to people. City Manager Anderson pointed out that there are numerous employees at the hospital which is walking distance to

our downtown. We could make the corridor at Front Street more walkable and bikeable to link that into our downtown.

Councilman King pointed out that during the comprehensive plan, there were surveys completed; those comments can be used to look at things that the public is interested in.

Councilman MacCoy added that the Hispanic and Creole population should also be focused on; it is only going to continue to grow in our area.

Councilman Henderson stated that in the new developments that are being built in our surrounding communities, there is flexibility. There are no sidewalks and walking paths are available for the residents. In today's generation, people are interested in renting rather than purchasing a home. He added that even older generations are looking at downsizing. There is a high demand for market rate apartments. Councilman MacCoy added that these are even more popular and supported when amenities are added such as clubhouses, swimming pools and gyms. It was pointed out that in previous developments around the City, the amenities are completed in the last phase which sometimes does not get completed in a timely manner. For instance, some residents may buy a house with the understanding that amenities will be built and it could take years after for them to come. Mr. Bennett asked if there was a way to have the City give incentives to the developers to build the amenities first. City Manager Anderson stated that when a development occurs, a phasing plan is completed. The City Council can say if they desire to have the amenities built first. Mr. Bennett added that another potential option is to offer tax incentives on the amenities only. City Manager Anderson stated that when discussions are being held with developers, it can be brought up of ways that we can close the cost gap helping them get where they need to be. Mrs. Newcomer added that the DDD program does something similar. However, they only help those that are within the district boundaries. It was also discussed that if these incentives are offered, the developers will have conversations within their network and they will want to come here. Mayor Genshaw stated that we all have to be in sync of the vision and plan for it to work.

Councilman Henderson stated that he believes that the City needs to focus on value added jobs and businesses that people can afford to support.

Councilman King asked if we were to offer these incentives, how would we continue to generate additional revenues? Mayor Genshaw stated that some of the incentives that are currently being offered and discussed today do not have a cost. We could also use state money to get infrastructure into place.

Councilman MacCoy asked what were some goals that we want to get done? City Manager Anderson stated that he believes that we want to attract restaurants and businesses to our downtown. There are options such as partnering with organizations to do a restaurant tour, bringing food trucks in or having a beer and wine festival in the fall. Another suggestion was to invite people to the Oyster House property.

City Manager Anderson shared that if you can define your culture and your values, you can hire people that are a reflection of these traits. Mr. Bennett stated that the questions that are asked during the job interview process have not been updated in several years. He suggested to review them to update and revise them.

City Manager Anderson shared some organizations that may be asking the City for some help in the future. For example, Live for Chocolate event due to the hospital merging with PRMC. Nanticoke Little

League is currently having financial assistance discussions. The Christmas parade is currently put on by Downtown Seaford Association who has limited participation and membership. Odd Fellows maintains the cemetery and they could approach the City needing assistance. During a recent meeting, the hospital shared that they will be going to CHP boilers which will reduce their electrical load by an estimated 85%. There are other organizations that are also dealing with change such as the Fire Department, Historical Society and Library.

A short break was then given.

City Manager Anderson shared some figures showing the volunteerism rating throughout the U.S. it was shown by the statistics that only 25% of Americans volunteer. Mr. Bennett then presented information regarding volunteerism. He stated that getting volunteers has been a long-standing problem. Every organization that depends on volunteers is currently struggling to maintain their organization and provide the services that our community depends on. He feels that the City needs to lead in the effort to promote volunteerism and not sit back and be reactive to the problem. Mr. Bennett stated that the City should look at engaging its employees to volunteer in the community. During the FY (July 1 – June 30) the City can track the employees volunteer hours and for every 50 hours of time volunteered, the employee would receive 8 hours of AT time. off; they would have to use during the FY.

Mr. Bennett shared that during one point of time, he was allowed to respond to structure fires, accidents and rescues in Seaford's fire district during working hours. He feels that the City should look at allowing employees that are members of the fire department to leave for these alarms again during working hours if the work load permits the employee to do so. He also believes that if any employee who is a member of a fire department is late for working because of a working fire that meets the same criteria, they should be paid for the hours that they are late. The fire department can supply a note of the type of fire and what time the member was released. The City could allow one hour from the release time for the employee to get a shower and respond to work.

Mr. Bennett also shared that the Nanticoke Senior Center currently is need of volunteers to deliver homebound seniors' meals. He would encourage the City to allow a team of two employees to use a City vehicle to volunteer to deliver meals once a week. They would still be on the clock and these hours would not count towards for their volunteer hours for credit towards AT time. The City could also on a quarterly basis promote the volunteer hours that their employees give and maybe this would help increase the volunteerism from other workforces and the general public. A listing of the donations that were included in the FY20 budget for non-profit organizations was then shared which totaled \$21,000.00.

Councilman MacCoy stated that he is favor of the suggestion, however, he does not believe that it would get many more people to volunteer. Mayor Genshaw stated that it may not motivate more people to volunteer, however, it will show that the City is supporting these organizations that are in need of help. He also believes that if there is a personal ask of a specific employee that they may be more willing to volunteer. Councilman King added that it will send a positive message out to the community. Councilman MacCoy suggested things could be given to incentivize people such as free registration for recreation programs or free round of golf at Hooper's Landing.

Councilman King asked how the City chooses who to help or donate to? Ms. Hickey stated that where Nanticoke Little League is located, the City owns that property and for Kiwanis and Soroptimist, we

maintain their parks for them. Councilman MacCoy stated that he believes that the City should help an organization short term and have the organization put the leg work in to allow them to be successful for a long period of time. Mrs. Merritt gave an example of how the Nanticoke Little League could use their fields to host a tournament. That would also bring people here to our area which would help support hotels, businesses and restaurants.

Mrs. Merritt then discussed succession planning. She explained that successful succession planning is any effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization, division, department or work group by making provisions for the development, replacement and strategic application of key people over time. In government, effective succession planning is an ongoing, dynamic process, not a static, one-time objective. It not only empowers employees to achieve their professional goals but also supports organizational goals.

Mrs. Merritt stated that succession planning is important because at the heart of the talent management process is identifying key roles and mapping out ways to ensure the organization has the right people with the right skills, capabilities and experiences, in the right place at the right time. She added that it is a process to identify and develop new leaders who can replace old leaders when they leave, retire or die. Succession planning entails developing internal people with the potential to fill key business leadership positions within the City. Succession planning requires commitment to a longer-term strategic view of talent needs and features several benefits.

City Manager Anderson stated that at one point of time, the Police Department had limited command staff in place. Now, the department has a Deputy Chief and Lieutenant in place and the Chief has had the opportunity to train people. At the WWTF, if a level 4 operator is required by State regulation or we would not be able to operate the plant. There was a time where that happened due to a medical emergency and our permit was at risk. At this time, all of the employees at the WWTF can go up to a level 4 operator; we have "bench strength" if needed.

It was shared that in the electric department, there are many employees that will be eligible to retire in the next four years. In the workforce throughout the City, there are twenty employees that are eligible to retire in the next five years. Therefore, putting a succession plan in place is critical for the future of the workforce.

A break was then taken for lunch.

Mrs. Newcomer then came forward to do a SWOT exercise with the group. She asked each person to write down 3 things that they would want in a perfect community. After all of the ideas were shared, it was shown that most of the ideas were the same and all tied together. Mayor Genshaw shared that each of them tied to jobs. He added that he feels that jobs drive the success of the school system, volunteerism and activities.

Mayor Genshaw added that he believes that the City needs to look at additional land to purchase for future planning. Councilman Henderson stated that he believes that the City should start focusing on fostering relationships with developers. As far as public safety, Mayor Genshaw stated that he believes that we are on track and there is a plan in place. Chief Craft has been working hard on getting people in the right position and getting new people hired.

Mayor Genshaw thanked everyone for taking the time to attend today and participating in the discussions.

With no other questions or comments, Mayor Genshaw closed the Planning Session at 1:55 p.m.

Charles Anderson, City Manager