



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 27, 2014

1:00 P.M.

700 Alma Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Arrillaga Family Recreation Center, Oak Room

1:00 P.M. GOAL SETTING SESSION

Mayor Mueller called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m. with all members present.

Staff present: City Manager Alex McIntyre, Assistant City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, City Attorney Bill McClure, Police Chief Bob Jonsen, Public Works Director Chip Taylor, Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck, Community Services Director Cherise Brandell, Finance Director Drew Corbett, Human Resources Director Gina Donnelly, Economic Development Manager Jim Cogan, City Clerk Pam Aguilar, Assistant to the City Manager Clay Curtin

1. Welcome and introductions

Mayor Mueller, City Manager McIntyre and Facilitator Jan Perkins all gave brief opening remarks

2. Public Comment

- Steven G. Sidlovsky, Secular Franciscan Order, spoke regarding citizen overlay life peace zones ([handout](#))
- Fran Dehn, Chamber of Commerce, spoke regarding working together with the city to retain businesses

3. Review workshop agenda

At the start of the workshop, Facilitator Perkins reviewed the agenda and suggested several ground rules to help the group have a successful workshop and achieve the results they intended to achieve through the goal setting process.

- Seek consensus
- Focus on creating realistic and achievable priorities
- Have candid conversations
- Listen to and respect others' opinions
- Don't text or answer email

4. Celebrating our accomplishments

Facilitator Perkins reviewed a partial list of City accomplishments that had been identified in her interviews with Councilmembers. Council and staff also identified the key factors that contributed to the accomplishments.

The highlighted accomplishments included:

- Affordable Housing projects
- Housing Element
- Greenhouse reduction goal
- Downtown Specific Plan confirmed
- Sustainable budget
- Stanford project

- Greenheart project (El Camino)
- Sobrato project
- Employee labor groups contracts
- Tree lighting event
- Well-attended recreation programs
- General Plan Update
- Christmas activities
- Facebook construction
- St. Anton project
- Payroll upgrade underway
- Downtown beautification
- Police improvements (substation, advisory group, technology and others)
- Median landscape contract
- Renegotiated contracts saved money
- Belle Haven Visioning
- EIR for San Francisquito Creek between counties
- Public Records Act software – greater efficiencies
- Letter of credit approval by Successor Agency saved \$450,000/year
- Improved coordination of development processes
- Preferred Alternative for Willow and 101 freeway interchange
- Filled key management positions

Factors that contributed to the City's success with these accomplishments were:

- Good planning
- Teamwork: staff and City Council
- Professional staff responses to inquiries from Council
- Improved trust
- Balanced budget, stronger fiscally
- Dedicated staff and commission volunteers
- Communication with staff
- Collaborations
- Combination of experienced and new staff
- Well prepared Councilmembers

5. Discussion of priorities

Council participated in a dot-voting activity designed to identify a clear list of priorities for which resources (primarily staff and time) are available or could be made available.

At approximately 5:15 p.m., Mayor Mueller left the meeting.

6. Confirm consensus on priorities

Council identified sixteen goals consisting of some projects as new initiatives and those with prior direction.

- Enhance economic efforts, particularly in the downtown and industrial areas
- Explore shared services with other agencies
- Improve public communication
- Explore modifying parking in the downtown
- Evaluate the City's water policy
- Strengthen internal administrative systems
- Make gains in the City's Climate Action Plan

- Conduct more community events
- Process and/or complete development projects
- Improve traffic flow on El Camino Real
- Establish and maintain positive employee-employer labor relations
- Create long term strategy for dealing with methane at Bedwell Bayfront Park
- Continue work on the General Plan Update
- Enhance citywide public safety, including the Belle Haven neighborhood
- Adopt operating and budget development principles
- Collaborate with schools on Safe Routes to School

7. Staying focused on agreed upon priorities

Council and staff discussed the process for handling emerging issues and the types of progress reports staff will make to the Council. As new ideas arise, they will be gathered and considered by Council on a quarterly basis. No new projects (other than emergencies) will be approved except through the quarterly discussion process. This will enable staff to stay focused on Council priorities established in this goal setting session.

8. Next steps

City Manager McIntyre will return to Council with a proposed work plan that identifies tasks, timelines and resources required for each of the priority items. Council will consider this list and modify or confirm it, which will then become the focus of the City's work plan and upcoming budget.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

HANDOUTS

1. [Staff Report: Update on 2013 City Council Goals](#)
2. [Staff Report: Guiding Principles for the 2013-14 Budget Process](#)
3. [Proposed Council Goals](#)
4. [City Council Procedures Manual](#)



Pamela Aguilar
City Clerk

These minutes were approved at the Council meeting of February 25, 2014.