

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL RETREAT
October 26-27, 2012

A retreat of the Winchester Common Council was held on Friday, October 26, 2012, and Saturday, October 27, 2012, at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. President Jeffrey Buettner called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. on October 26, 2012.

PRESENT: President Jeff Buettner; Councilor Evan Clark, John Hill, John Tagnesi, Les Veach and Ben Weber; Vice-Mayor Milt McInturff; Mayor Elizabeth Minor; Vice-President John Willingham (9)

ABSENT: None (0)

City Manager Dale Iman introduced Lyle Sumek and presented a brief summary of his background.

Mr. Sumek stated the focus of today and tomorrow will be to form a strategic plan and governance issues. The goal of the strategic plan is to work on the high important/low urgent and not the high urgent/low important.

Mr. Sumek stated there will be some challenges in housing that will affect the strategic plan with the 1) college graduates who can't get a loan and the retirees who don't want a house anymore; 2) ancients (the 80-90 year olds); and 3) baby boomers who want a 3 bedroom in multi-use housing areas.

Mr. Sumek discussed the Instant Response Challenge which occurs from people wanting instant response. Success = Realistic – Expectations

Mr. Sumek discussed the definition of Team = Great!

- Goal – common goal = unified purpose
- Role – Value different styles to succeed
- Executing – adjusting decisions when needed
- Attitude – negotiate thru conflicts
- Trust – earned over time

Mr. Sumek and Council reviewed the successes that occurred over the past year that were discussed in the one-on-one Council interviews.

Mr. Sumek and Council reviewed the cost reductions made by staff and the increase in existing services and new services for 2012.

Mr. Sumek and Council discussed three things each councilor would like to see in 15 years, 5 years, and 1 year.

Council discussed the principles of their vision for 2028 and prioritized what was important to each one. The items and their top priorities are as follows:

1. Beautiful & Historic Town
 - a. Celebrating and promoting Winchester's history – a true community asset
 - b. Preservation and restoration of historic building and sites
 - c. Beautiful and distinctive gateways and entrances to Winchester
 - d. New buildings and homes reflecting the City's development standards are regulations
 - e. Wayfinding signage guiding visitors on tours of the community
 - f. Repeat visitors coming to discover more about Winchester
 - g. Well designed, well maintained streetscapes, median, parks and green spaces
 - h. Kept "small city" charm
2. Hometown for Families
 - a. New residents making Winchester their "hometown"
 - b. Individuals retiring to Winchester
 - c. Young professional finding Winchester a place that they want to locate
 - d. Nationally recognized public schools and educational program
 - e. Strong faith based organizations and community organizations working together
 - f. Great place to raise children or bring your grandchildren to
 - g. Parks with a variety of amenities
 - h. Convenient daily living – easy access to work, leisure, and medical
3. Vibrant Downtown
 - a. Easy access and convenient parking
 - b. Pedestrian friendly and walkable
 - c. Entertainment venues offering choices
 - d. Increase people living in and around Downtown
 - e. Regional destination and focal point
 - f. Place for community events and festivals
 - g. Preservation of small town feeling and character
 - h. Essential Services
4. Growing Economy
 - a. Regional center for medical and healthcare services
 - b. Expanded LFCC and Shenandoah University offering a range of undergraduate, graduate, and post graduate programs
 - c. Increase community prosperity and wealth through having higher paying jobs
 - d. Diversify the economy with more manufacturing and technology related jobs
 - e. Active, success tourism economy; history, ecotourism
 - f. Expanded tourist venues – more reasons to come and return to Winchester
 - g. Expanded CTE partnerships with Shenandoah University and hospital
 - h. Workforce development

5. Great Neighborhoods with a range of Housing Choices
 - a. Choice of housing opportunities: different life style, family generations and price points
 - b. Well maintained homes (owners occupied or rental) meeting City standards and codes
 - c. Well-maintained public neighborhood infrastructure: streets, sidewalk, streetscapes and public areas
 - d. Safe walkable neighborhoods that are pedestrian and bike friendly
 - e. Residents feeling safe and secure in their homes and out in their neighborhoods
 - f. Green space, pocket parks, and community gardens
 - g. Mixed use development that create a neighborhood
6. Easy Movement
 - a. Well designed, well-maintained highways and streets
 - b. Sidewalks and trails connecting the city
 - c. Bike friendly community with routes and racks
 - d. Safe walkable community for purpose and recreation
 - e. Residents having a choice of alternatives to the automobile
 - f. Effective traffic flow within the city and to the region
 - g. Improve public transit serving the needs of the community and residents using it by choice
 - h. Regional air service to major cities

Council discussed the principles for the mission for 2028 and prioritized the items discussed in the one-on-one interviews. Each principle and priority is listed below:

1. Financially Sound City
 - a. Having adequate resources to support defined City services and levels of service
 - b. Providing City services in the most cost effective, efficient manner
 - c. Having a competitive, responsible City tax rate and fees
 - d. Investing in the maintenance and upgrade of City facilities and infrastructure
 - e. Continuously exploring methods, including contract services, to reduce the costs of service delivery
 - f. Having residents feeling that they are receiving value for their tax dollars and fees
 - g. Increasing public/private partnerships
2. Top Quality Municipal Services
 - a. Developing and retaining a quality City workforce dedicated to serving the Winchester community
 - b. Timely responding to emergency and nonemergency calls for service
 - c. Using technology to enhance the delivery of City services
 - d. Identifying “best practice” and applying when appropriate to the City of Winchester
 - e. Developing and using service benchmarks
 - f. Providing services that are valued by our residents and businesses

- g. Developing and updating strategic plans, master plans and land use plans in decision making and actions
- 3. Focusing on the Customer
 - a. Listening to and understanding the City's customers
 - b. Keeping your customers informed regularly
 - c. Treating your customer in a fair and respectful manner
 - d. Taking personal responsibility for customer service
 - e. Follow up with customer on results
 - f. Hire and develop customer service skills in staff
- 4. Engaging our Community
 - a. Developing and maintaining strong working relations with major institutions: Shenandoah University, Valley Health Medical Center
 - b. Developing and maintaining strong relationships with economic development partners
 - c. Maintaining an open and transparent City government
 - d. Providing easy access to information and service for residents
 - e. Using effectively advisory boards, commissions, tasks forces and citizen committees
 - f. Keeping the community informed on plans and future developments

Council discussed who the most critical customers are and who our customers are as we move forward to the mission.

- 1. Top 6
 - a. Residents (year round, full time)
 - b. Business Owners (local, small)
 - c. Perspective Businesses
 - d. Tourists
 - e. Property Owners
 - f. Guests (out of town company)
- 2. Second 6
 - a. Employees/Work Force (don't live here)
 - b. Valley Health Medical Center and medical community staff
 - c. Community Organizations
 - d. University (administration, students and parents)
 - e. Businesses (national)
 - f. Developers

Council discussed the 4 goals for Winchester 2018 and prioritized the objectives, challenges and opportunities, and actions for each.

GOAL 1: Grow the Economy

- 1. Objectives
 - a. More higher paying jobs for residents
 - b. More tourists coming to experience Winchester
 - c. Expanded medical and healthcare facilities and services
 - d. More diverse local economy

- e. More manufacturing businesses in Winchester
 - f. Partnering for a prepared workforce
 - 2. Challenges and Opportunities
 - a. Tapping the location – near Washington D.C.
 - b. Positive momentum with Shenandoah University and Valley Health
 - c. Attracting businesses that are right for the Winchester community
 - d. Lack of a conference/convention center
 - e. Peoples' perspective of Winchester – good or bad? (young professional/college grads – nothing to do here, too country, not sophisticated)
 - 3. Actions 2013
 - a. Career Training Center: health profession
 - i. At JHHS by next school year
 - ii. Partner with LFCC
 - b. Zoning Incentives for Major Projects
 - i. Direction – be proactive
 - ii. Get land use set up in zoning
 - iii. Get incentives in place for builders
 - iv. Revise process
 - v. Aligning zoning and Comp Plan
 - c. Amphitheater
 - i. Concept Definition
 - ii. Direction City's Role
 - iii. Partners
 - iv. Actions
 - d. Convention Center/Conference Center Strategy
 - i. Concept/Market Analysis
 - ii. Direction
 - iii. Plan
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Initiating discussion with partners
 - e. Major Employer Attraction Strategy
 - i. Pillars of the Economy
 - ii. Direction/Goals
 - iii. Plan
 - iv. Action
 - f. Economic Development Performance Standards and Metrics
 - i. Development
 - ii. Reporting
 - g. Winchester Towers Redevelopment
 - i. Define project with a start date
- GOAL 2: Develop a High Performing City Organization
- 1. Objectives
 - a. Provide adequate resources for the defined core City services and service levels

- b. Increase teamwork and collaboration among City departments
 - c. Develop, retain a quality City workforce
 - i. Develop depth on the bench
 - ii. Train for management succession for all levels
 - d. Upgrade, increase the use of information technology to increase productivity and engage the customer
 - e. Maintain a high level of customer satisfaction with City services
 - f. Maintain competitive compensation and benefits for City employees
2. Challenges and Opportunities
- a. Increasing service demands for City services from residents and businesses
 - b. Increasing costs of delivering City services
 - c. More Federal and Commonwealth of Virginia regulations, mandates and monitoring
 - d. Funding for school facilities and annual operations
 - e. Aging City facilities and infrastructure needing upgrades or replacements
 - f. Departmental silos and need for collaboration and sharing
3. Actions 2013
- a. Communications and Marketing Plan with specific actions
 - i. Development
 - ii. All meetings stored on-line
 - b. City Reorganization Plan
 - i. Development
 - ii. Define duties and responsibilities of Assistant City Manager
 - iii. Consistency of team development
 - iv. Implementation
 - c. School Funding
 - i. Direction
 - ii. Decision
 - iii. Capital projects
 - iv. Mechanism – ongoing funding
 - v. End of year spending on carpeting, etc.
 - d. Air Force ROTC in High School
 - i. City's role
 - ii. Funding (short term/long term)
 - e. Social Service:
 - i. Staffing evaluation
 - ii. Direction
 - iii. Funding
 - iv. Self- sufficiency for clients
 - f. Comprehensive Capital Development Plan/Community Investment Plan
 - i. Direction (overall)
 - ii. Development
 - iii. Project Identification and Priority
 - iv. Funding mechanisms

- g. Student Internships/Work Study Program
 - i. Development
 - ii. Funding
- h. Fire Facilities and Development Master Plan
 - i. Development in county that City is responsible to cover
- i. Management Succession Plan

Council adjourned at 7:38 p.m. to re-convene on Saturday, October 27, 2012.

Council reconvened the meeting at 8:01 a.m., October 27, 2012

PRESENT: President Jeff Buettner; Councilor Evan Clark, John Hill, John Tagnesi and Ben Weber; Vice-Mayor Milt McInturff; Mayor Elizabeth Minor; Vice-President John Willingham (8)

ABSENT: Councilor Les Veach (1)

Council continued to discuss the goals and priorities for actions to see in the next year.

GOAL 3: Continue Revitalization of Historic Old Town

1. Objectives

- a. Restore key historic buildings: Taylor Hotel
- b. Expand the Downtown Assessment Districts
- c. Increase the number of residents living Downtown
- d. Expand revitalization efforts to all parts of the Secondary Taxing District
- e. Continued investment of EDA and Private/Public Partnerships in properties
- f. Enhance gateways to Old Town

2. Challenges and Opportunities

- a. Working with property owners and business owners
- b. Some aging and blighted buildings needing major rehabilitation or demolition/replacement
- c. Defining and prioritizing community events and festivals
- d. Developing a range of housing options in Downtown
- e. Marketing the Downtown to residents and to the outside world
- f. Addressing issues of Special Taxing Districts – understanding the value of tax dollars

3. Actions 2013

- a. Taylor Hotel Project
 - i. Completion
- b. Events Coordinator
 - i. Development of program
- c. Developing 25 market rate housing units in area
- d. Look at Zoning and development regulations (proactive review)
- e. Plan for Old Town Gateway enhancements

f. Parking Garage Maintenance Plan

GOAL 4: Create a More Livable City for All

1. Objectives

- a. Revitalize the Northside neighborhood
- b. Upgrade City infrastructure
- c. Upgrade City school facilities – elementary school (2) and middle school
- d. Upgrade the quality of rental housing stock
- e. Create a more bikeable and walkable City connecting key community destinations
- f. Manage future growth, development and redevelopment consistent with City's vision, Comprehensive Plan and development standards and policies

2. Challenges and Opportunities

- a. Defining and funding the City's role and activities
- b. Individual property owners not investing in the maintenance or upgrade of the buildings, homes or properties
- c. Revitalizing existing neighborhoods with vested interests
- d. Working with the private sector to redevelop and upgrade
- e. Lack of resident involvement

3. Actions 2013

- a. Comprehensive Plan Implementation and Zoning Ordinance
 - i. Action Steps
- b. John Kerr Elementary School
 - i. Direction
 - ii. Funding
- c. Northend Redevelopment Strategy with Action Plan
 - i. Development
- d. Sidewalk and Street Master Plan
 - i. Development
 - ii. Policy Direction
 - iii. Project Priority
 - iv. Funding Mechanism
- e. Stormwater Management Policy and Plan
 - i. Development
 - ii. Policy Direction
 - iii. Project Priority
 - iv. Funding
- f. Gateway Beautification Project (landscaping and signage)
 - i. Definition
 - ii. Development
 - iii. Actions
 - iv. Funding
- g. Substandard Property Resolution

City Manager Dale Iman reviewed the interdepartmental teams for the City. He stated each team will meet twice a month and report back to the City Manager.

A brief discussion was held on the Assistant City Manager position. President Buettner asked to see what duties that person would have before advertising the position. Mr. Iman stated what is needed is someone to take on special projects.

Lyle Sumek stated he and staff will organize the priorities into action plans to include the department teams and responsible party and bring it back to Council for the final review and implementation

President Buettner left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Iman presented a copy of the Council Action Memo (CAM) that will be used for items coming to Council. He also stated posters for the strategic plan will be set in each department and room in the City so every staff member can be a part of accomplishing the goals set by Council.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mayor Minor, seconded by Councilor Hill, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.