

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Council Retreat

January 29-31, 2004

Channel Lodge/LaConner Country Inn
LaConner, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Marshall, Deputy Mayor Noble, and Councilmembers Balducci, Chelminiak, Davidson, Degginger, and Lee

ABSENT: None.

Thursday, January 29, 2004

Mayor Marshall opened the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Councilmembers and staff reviewed the agenda and the major initiatives to be discussed. They talked about ways the City Council can work most effectively. This included a discussion of communication and leadership styles and the attributes of a successful team. Council meeting procedures were reviewed.

The session recessed at 11:10 p.m.

Friday, January 30, 2004

The retreat resumed at 9:12 a.m. City Manager Steve Sarkozy summarized the day's agenda. Council and staff reviewed the City's 2003 accomplishments:

- Meydenbauer Bay acquisition
- McTavish property acquisition
- Bellevue 50Fest events
- Eastgate Park – Community Center planning
- New City Building purchase and redevelopment planning
- Participation in Cascade Water Alliance (agreement for 50-year water supply)
- Development Services Initiative (DSI) and Construction Code Advisory Committee improvements
- I-90 agreement
- Assumption of Coal Creek Utility District
- Continue to balance City budget with no property tax increase in 7 years
- Hired Finance Director
- Numerous road projects

- Charter initiative reaffirmed current form of government and stimulated interest and participation in local government
- Wireless communications facilities ordinance adopted
- Access Downtown project continues to be on time and within budget
- Downtown Implementation Plan (DIP) Update completed with Citizens Advisory Committee
- Lake Hills Shopping Center agreement
- Retail exemption and elevated pedestrian crossings issues handled well and quickly
- New solid waste contract negotiated saving \$1.5 million annually and \$23.5 million over the life of the contract
- Refunding of bonds
- Implementation of mybuildingpermit.com and e-Gov alliance projects
- City's Spanish web site
- Realignment of Information Technology Department
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project is underway, on time and under budget
- Fire Department re-accreditation
- Completion of census
- GIS web browser
- Jail services interlocal agreement.

Mr. Sarkozy highlighted key 2002 accomplishments and reflected that many of the 2002 and 2003 accomplishments will generate long-term positive benefits for the community.

The group reviewed ongoing challenges including collaborations with other jurisdictions and agencies, how to be involved in King County governance changes, the use of technology to help link cities together, and institutional and/or legal obstacles to regional partnerships.

Neighborhoods

Council and staff acknowledged that neighborhoods have been a high priority for Council, and considerable meeting time is dedicated to neighborhood issues. The West Lake Hills Neighborhood Investment Strategy (NIS) initiative, with \$6 million in projects, is an ongoing success. This effort assisted in building a sense of community and encouraging citizen involvement in project planning, particularly since the area does not have a homeowners' or neighborhood association.

Councilmembers discussed their interest in following up with West Lake Hills residents to update them on projects, expanding the NIS program to other neighborhoods, involving residents in prioritizing existing CIP (Capital Investment Program) projects, and encouraging partnerships between civic/service organizations and neighborhoods to complete projects. Council discussed ways to become better acquainted with residents and involved in neighborhood issues. Staff will develop a plan for further discussion of this concept at a future Study Session.

At 11:48 a.m., the meeting recessed for lunch. The meeting resumed at 1:35 p.m.

Budget

Councilmembers expressed appreciation for the 2003-2004 mid-biennium budget process and highlighted what they liked and did not like about the process and the information provided to them. Mayor Marshall noted the ongoing challenge of revenue reductions by initiatives such as I-776.

Staff reviewed that budget discussions typically start in the spring, followed by decision-making in June, and checking in with Council in August and September. The preliminary budget will be presented in October, and budget adoption is scheduled for December. Staff will define the 2004 process and bring it back to Council for approval.

New City Building

Councilmembers reiterated their ongoing interest in controlling costs for the New City Building redevelopment project. Mayor Marshall requested a calendar of all upcoming decisions to guide Council's consideration of each individual decision, such as the recent selection of a systems furniture vendor. Councilmembers encouraged staff and the project team to utilize value engineering techniques and aggressively look for cost savings. In general, Councilmembers would prefer more in-depth discussions about the overall project and budget and are less interested in specific decisions such as furniture selection.

Mayor Marshall declared a break at 3:00 p.m. At 3:15 p.m., Council reconvened and recessed to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss one item of property acquisition. The meeting resumed at 3:45 p.m.

Economic Development

Council and staff reviewed economic development objectives and discussed the appropriate role for the City versus the private sector. Related discussion topics included the Wilburton/NE 8th Corridor Study, an upcoming study of the Crossroads area, future high-capacity transit and other transportation solutions, potential changes in land use zoning, market needs not being met within the downtown, expanded housing options, and special needs for the area surrounding Overlake Hospital. The group discussed a continuum of possible roles and levels of involvement for the City in development and redevelopment.

Following additional discussion, Council reached consensus to explore the feasibility of hiring an economic development director for the City.

The group discussed neighborhood issues including redevelopment strategies, amenities within walking distance, and how to meet the needs of changing lifestyles and an aging community.

At 6:15 p.m., Council recessed to dinner. The meeting resumed at 8:30 p.m.

Regional Issues

Council and staff discussed the City's relationship with the Suburban Cities Association (SCA) and the growing use of coalitions on various issues which are working effectively. There was Council consensus to not join SCA at this time. Councilmembers also discussed City and individual Councilmember involvement in regional forums including the Puget Sound RTID (Regional Transportation Investment District) initiative.

At 10:30 p.m., Council recessed for the evening.

Saturday, January 31, 2004

The meeting reconvened at 8:30 a.m.

Council discussed economic development goals and ideas for moving forward including appointing Council liaisons to related organizations and drafting an economic development interest statement. Council requested research on economic development organizations and their effectiveness as well as learning from other cities.

The group discussed the roles of Councilmembers, Deputy Mayor, and Mayor; communication and meeting protocols; and Council travel guidelines.

Mr. Sarkozy noted the white papers provided to Council on the following topics: Mercer Slough/high-capacity transit, synthetic fields, municipal court options, jail services, parks acquisition, and accreditation of departmental functions.

Councilmembers discussed their ongoing vision for Bellevue, highlighting its strengths and identifying opportunities for future enhancements. Topics included transit, quality of life issues, family oriented activities, affordability, and education.

At noon, Mayor Marshall declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

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