

## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

DECEMBER 21, 2021

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor John Haila at 6:01 p.m. on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of December 2021, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law. Present were Council Members Gloria Betcher, Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Rachel Junck, and David Martin. *Ex officio* Member Trevor Poundstone was also present.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Haila noted that the one item on Consent: Resolution approving the Restrictive Covenants and Regulations for Single-Family Homes in the Baker Subdivision (321 State) was requested to be pulled by staff due to a few changes that still needed to be done.

**ORDINANCE ADOPTING MAP ESTABLISHING NEW WARDS AND PRECINCTS:** City Attorney Mark Lambert explained that at the last City Council meeting it was decided to go with the County's map. He put the Ordinance together based on the approved map and what the Council received is what the new wards and precincts will be for the next ten years.

Mayor Haila opened public input and closed it when no one came forward to speak.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Betcher, to pass on first reading an ordinance adopting the map and establishing new wards and precincts.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Betcher, to suspend the rules necessary for the adoption of an ordinance.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Corrieri, to pass on second reading an ordinance adopting the map and establishing new wards and precincts.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Betcher, to pass on third reading and adopt ORDINANCE NO. 4452 adopting the map and establishing new wards and precincts.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Ordinance declared adopted unanimously, signed by the Mayor, and hereby made a portion of these Minutes.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Gartin, to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 21-629 approving the Memorandum of Agreement between the City and Story County regarding the federal census block information.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

**WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:** Assistant City Manager Deb Schildroth stated the project team has changed with the departure of Kayley Barrios Lain. Ms. Schildroth, Public Relations Officer Susan Gwiasda, and Sustainability Coordinator Merry Rankin will continue leading the project.

Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) representative Naomi Devine, who joined the meeting electronically, stated that the meeting objectives were to inform the Steering Committee members about target setting by taking a deeper dive on what it means and how it connects to low-carbon action planning, target options developed by SSG, and engagement outputs regarding target setting. Ms. Devine explained the Workshop will be conversational-based, and then provided a brief overview on where SSG was currently and the process going forward.

Target Setting Review: Yule Herbert, SSG representative, joining the meeting electronically, stated that a target does not guarantee success or a pathway forward. He noted that a target is enabled by a common understanding of the target, a pathway to get there, a way to align decision-making with the pathway, allocation of resources, and adaptive mindset and response.

Council Member Gartin asked to what degree the target was binding. He explained that he is struggling with finding an aspirational goal that doesn't bind them to anything and it doesn't matter if they hit it or not or is it going to be a standard by how the City does a process. Mr. Herbert stated that a target is a signal, and it sets where the City of Ames lands, which will have implications as to how people look at the community. The target helps guide the level of ambition that the City should embed in the actions SSG is modeling. The City will need to develop a viable pathway to decarbonize all cars that drive around Ames, businesses, and households. Two key pieces are a signal and a pathway for how to get there. Mr. Gartin is worried that there will be some people who will be very disappointed and feared the community will be disappointed with a lack of commitment.

Council Member Beatty-Hansen stated that whatever target the City Council decides on will help SSG set up the model as to what needs to be done. She noted that SSG will take the goal of the City Council and set up a pathway.

Council Member Martin said the Council should not be concerned with the commitment by the City at this point. He said that target-setting was discussed previously, and it has to come first in order for the consultants to put together the pathway, but it does not commit the City to anything.

SSG Representative Brittany MacLean, who also joined the meeting electronically, explained that it was more of a directive for SSG to move forward and to come back with a road map for more engagement opportunities. She mentioned that when looking as far out as 2050 it is somewhat aspirational, but SSG will provide interim updates. Ms. MacLean asked where Ames wanted to be in 2030, and that SSG would be able to provide some detailed analysis around what it would take to decrease to a certain point by 2030.

Mayor Haila inquired if a target is set, and that target becomes unachievable for the City of Ames, would SSG go back to do additional revisions until the City could reach a target that it can agree on. Ms. MacLean stated there are some iterations that can be done, but they could not provide unlimited iterations because of the timeline. SSG will take directives from this meeting, provide an analysis based on those directives, and present them to the Supplemental Input Committee and Council for feedback.

Ms. Devine went over an example of two low-carbon scenarios that had a target versus no target set (evidence based). She explained that SSG creates low-carbon Climate Action Plans and will look to the City for guidance as to how far and how fast the City wants to go to get there. Ms. Devine noted that any target-setting won't constrain SSG from being successful in putting together a Plan for the City of Ames to get to a low-carbon future.

Council Member Martin inquired what would happen if SSG develops all these results and it turns out there is "not an appetite" to take them all on as originally thought. He noted that it stood to reason that some of the items represented in the wedge diagram would be independently controllable, i.e. passing an ordinance or providing funding. Mr. Martin asked if Council elected to postpone one or two, could SSG estimate the impact that would have on the timeline. Mr. Herbert confirmed SSG would be able to adjust the model to show the impact on the items Council might want to remove or postpone.

Mayor Haila asked SSG in the example that was shown how the community responded to the proposed retrofits and all the investments necessary. Ms. Devine stated the community, in the example shown, wanted an aggressive target and wanted a science-based aligned target. Mayor Haila asked what the overall cost was for that example, Ms. Devine commented that SSG did not have that information available. She deferred to Mr. Herbert for examples of costs with targets similar to Ames. Mr. Herbert mentioned that Holly Hills is similar in size to Ames with approximately 60,000 people, and they are aggressive in their approach with a target of being net-zero by 2030. Council Member Gartin asked if those financials were public record and could be shared. Mr. Herbert confirmed that they were and would provide the information to the Council.

Council Member Betcher wanted to make sure she was looking at the "creating a pathway: low carbon assumption (building)" correctly, as it looks like the older building will need more retrofitting. Ms. Betcher was curious if the community shown had more pre-1980 buildings or post-1980 buildings. She stated that the old communities are going to be hit harder at the beginning of the process because that is more "bang for the buck." Ms. Betcher commented that she can understand SSG point of view, but the low-income communities are the ones that can't afford the retrofit. Ms. Devine mentioned that it would be beneficial to offer an incentivizing program to allow the retrofit to be done, and how those incentives are rolled out is unique to each community.

Engagement Update: Ms. MacLean reviewed the engagement summary and went over the survey results. SSG did analyze the results three times and did not find much variance between the three analyses. It was noted that during the analysis some people were identified as non-residents of Ames, and there were a few IP addresses that were from out of state, but they could be residents of Ames. Ms. MacLean recapped the survey results that Council had received prior to the meeting. There were 902 responses, but it's still not a statically relevant survey. The demographic data that was collected was close to the representation of Ames.

Council Member Betcher noted that given the survey results, it seemed odd that SSG's recommendation was not the science-based target. Ms. MacLean advised that she will go into further detail about why SSG is recommending building from the ground up.

Council Member Martin stated that a lot of people took offense to the questions asking for

demographic information. Ms. MacLean explained that demographic information was asked to make sure that the community was represented by a diverse community. Ms. Devine noted that there was an option to not provide any demographic information. Mr. Martin asked for a statement to be added at the beginning of the survey to explain why demographic information was being asked for.

Supplemental Input Committee Outreach & Workshop: The Supplemental Input Committee was asked to reach out to their sectors and ask specific questions related to the project. Ms. MacLean noted there were some emergent themes that came up. One of the themes was the Plan was greater than the Target and the City should start making progress. She mentioned that the community was really wanting action and were ready to start implementation. The survey also showed citizens were concerned with equity, lower income, and how SSG can create a process to make sure everyone is included. Ms. MacLean then showed some examples of comments that were heard during the Workshop.

Recommended Approach: Ms. MacLean explained that at this point SSG was recommending developing a bottom-up pathway for the City to arrive at a target that reflects local circumstances in Ames and the effort required to address climate change. She noted that while there was support for the science-based option, there were a lot more questions and hesitancy about that process. The bottom-up approach gives the Council the option to move at its own pace.

Council Member Martin stated that SSG mentioned that there had been a lot of hesitancy, and he wanted to know who that information was coming from. He asked if it was the Council, Supplemental Input Committee, or the community. Ms. MacLean noted it was a combination of all of them. Mr. Martin wanted to be clear that the hesitancy was equally distributed from all three groups mentioned earlier.

Council Member Gartin asked Ms. Rankin what her recommendation would be. Ms. Rankin noted that the consultants were brought in for their expertise with putting these types of plans together and would defer to them. She explained that when looking at Climate Action Planning, the City should consider how it can ensure the efficiency of what staff is demanding within the community and infrastructure, so that when those transitions are being done, it will be in the leanest most-efficient manner possible.

Council Member Betcher inquired if the Council were to go with the evidence-based model would it create the perception that the Council was dragging its feet on moving forward with the Plan. Ms. MacLean stated it wouldn't slow down the process at all from SSG's end. She explained evidence-based and science-based models have a very similar process; they could get to the same point in the end. Council Member Martin stated he understood Ms. MacLean, but was hesitant on the message that would be conveyed to the public on how seriously Council was taking this Climate Action Plan.

Mayor Haila asked SSG for help in understanding some of the data in their Report regarding energy consumption and transportation for every building and vehicle within the City. He also wanted to know how to balance areas over which the City has no control. Examples given were the Ames Community School District, Department of Transportation, Animal Disease Lab, and others that have their own vehicle usage. It was asked how SSG had dealt with other communities who had similar situations. Ms. MacLean stated that is a complication of developing a Climate Action Plan because it is a community-based plan. No one entity can implement on its own as it requires participation from every sector; the

City will not have complete control. Ms. Devine said communities that do this well form strong partnerships with the other entities to help with the implementation, and the partners share in the responsibility, but the municipality needs to be the leader.

Mayor Haila wanted to know if SSG had worked with other University communities. Mr. Herbert indicated that there was a community where a CAP roundtable was formed to create dialogue and buy-in from the other entities and employers within that city. He stated Universities can be a powerful partner and the City has a very good relationship with ISU. The Mayor explained that the City had not had any conversations with ISU or the School Districts about setting a Target. Ms. MacLean mentioned that another similar community had developed a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the University to make sure there were goals for each one entity and outlined any funding. The Mayor asked when the University was brought into that process. Ms. MacLean noted the University was on the initial subcommittee.

Council Member Betcher noted some of the comments were regarding funding for the Climate Action Plan. She noted if the Council went with the evidence-based approach, the City may miss out on the opportunity to apply for funding. Ms. Betcher asked if the City would benefit from having a science-based target. Ms. MacLean stated what SSG had seen was that having a plan was enough for funding. Funders want to see a plan and some type of commitment from communities.

Council Member Beatty-Hansen stated the evidence-based model could possibly get the City to the same place, but there would be a lot of value to taking a stance on a Target as it would be signaling and motivating. She explained that cost would be an issue, but the cost of inaction is significant, and people don't see that. Even though the consultant is recommending an evidence-based approach Ms. Beatty-Hansen felt now is the time for Ames to step-up and declare an ambitious goal. She said it was the City's responsibility not only to the citizens and the global community but for future generations as well.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Junck, to adopt the science-based fair share approach, setting the target at an 83% reduction of Greenhouse Gases by 2030, and net-zero emissions by 2050.

Council Member Corrieri agreed with Council Member Beatty-Hansen, but with any of the Targets there are going to be complications and the Council cannot make everyone happy. Ms. Corrieri was concerned with the message the Council will send to the community, she would like the message to convey where the City wants to go along with realistic expectations. Changes will occur and the timeline might have to be adjusted. She explained that giving people a strong sense of where you want to head while still being realistic and honest with them about the process is the best option.

*Ex Officio* Poundstone noted that the students' most popular choice was the Science-based approach.

Council Member Gartin noted all the Council wants to see a reduced carbon footprint. He is very proud of the City's track record thus far, but stated he liked SSG's recommendation of evidence-based. Mr. Gartin explained that the evidence-based approach gives the Council a chance to evaluate the viability of the suggestions it is given. He stated the science-based approach will lead to cuts in funding to other programs and an increase in taxes. He noted that he therefore, would be voting against the

motion.

Council Member Martin noted the Council was not ignoring the data, but there are no data. He appreciated the concern for disappointment and hopes the citizens of Ames realize what has been adopted and understand Ames is committed to doing its part globally. He hoped the community will provide some leeway on measuring the progress. Mr. Martin emphasized that, if the motion passed, it would not be a commitment by the Council to do anything, but direction for the team to pursue further recommendations.

Council Member Gartin responded that if the Council knew there were significant financial obligations around the corner, it could make financial decisions. He noted that next month budget discussions will start. Mayor Haila clarified the budget has already been set. The timeline is September or October 2022 for the Climate Action Plan to be complete. There will be nothing wrapped into the budget this year.

Council Member Betcher stated by setting a goal that is aspirational is helping move forward, but it is not obtainable. She explained she is conscious of people that say, “the Council is always giving lip service and never puts the money where their mouth is, and a Plan will be done, and nothing will ever be done with it.” She expects that if the Target is going to be set then Council will need to “Put the money where their mouth is.” Ms. Betcher stated the Council will need to figure out a communication plan and education plan that is going to help the community understand the nature of the Target better than what is currently being done. She will support the motion, but only with the understanding that the target can be modified.

Council Member Junck commented that she was in support of the motion. She would like to see the menu of items that will get the City to the target as quickly as possible. Ms. Junck didn't know if the City could meet any of the goals, but they are only goals. The Council can't say if any of the goals are realistic or not because they haven't had the set of actions outlined for them. She explained that the Council shouldn't insinuate that they may need to cut funding or programs when they have no idea what the associated costs would be.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Betcher, Beatty-Hansen, Corrieri, Junck, Martin. Voting Nay: Gartin. Motion declared carried.

**DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL:** None

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** *Ex Officio* Poundstone stated there is strong support from the student population to go green and support the Plan. He felt the students would be involved in any steps they can make to help reduce emissions.

Council Member Gartin commented that this is Council Member Martin's last meeting, and he felt Mr. Martin has been a model City Council Member. He thanked Mr. Martin for his thoroughness, heart, and brain power that he has brought to the Council. Mr. Gartin noted that Mr. Martin will be missed.

Council Member Betcher mentioned that she will miss Mr. Martin's technological expertise.

Council Member Martin explained that an email was received from Drew and Tammy McConnell about a rental situation. He mentioned that he had forgotten what Council's role was in the process, as to whether they have discretion to make different decisions or not.

Moved by Martin, seconded by Junck, to ask staff for a memo regarding Drew and Tammy McConnell's rental situation from.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mayor Haila stated tonight had been a great example of civil discourse as the Council Members do not always agree, but they were unified and able to move forward. He noted that the Council will be asked to schedule a Special Meeting for the Consent Item that was pulled earlier tonight to review the covenants for the Baker Subdivision.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Martin to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

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Amy L. Colwell, Deputy City Clerk

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John A. Haila, Mayor

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Diane R. Voss, City Clerk