

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

AUGUST 31, 2021

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor John Haila at 6:00 p.m. on the 31st day of August, 2021 in the Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law. Present were Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, and Rachel Junck. Also attending electronically was Council Member David Martin, as it was impractical for him to be present in person. *Ex officio* Member Trevor Poundstone was also present.

CONSENT AGENDA: Moved by Betcher, seconded by Corrieri, to approve the following items on the Consent agenda:

1. Motion certifying Civil Service candidates
2. RESOLUTION NO. 21-274 awarding contract to Howrey Construction of Rockwell City, Iowa, for the Tahira and Labh Hira Park Concrete Work in the amount of \$60,414.25
3. RESOLUTION NO. 21-275 approving Final Plat for Birch Meadows Subdivision, Second Addition
4. RESOLUTION NO. 21-276 accepting partial completion of public improvements and reducing required security for Domani Subdivision
5. RESOLUTION NO. 21-277 approving Emergency T-Hangar Door Repairs at Ames Municipal Airport (2020 Derecho)
6. RESOLUTION NO. 21-278 approving Iowa Clear Air Attainment Program (ICAAP) Grant application for Phase 3 of the Ames Traffic Network (ITS Program)

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

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: Mayor Haila recognized the group in attendance electronically and in person to present the Ames Climate Action Plan and Target Setting Engagement Plan draft. Assistant City Manager Deb Schildroth introduced Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) as the firm leading the effort, and also acknowledged the Supplemental Input Committee and City staff members involved. Ms. Schildroth said there are 12 community sectors involved and are relied upon to bring materials and information.

Confluence Landscape Architects Representative Denise Hurt introduced herself as the in-person facilitator for SSG. She introduced Project Lead Yuill Herbert, Engagement Lead Naomi Devine, and Technical Modeling Team Representative Eric Frenette, who joined the meeting electronically. Ms. Hurt told Council the objectives of the evening are to inform the Steering Committee (Mayor and Council) about the objectives, scope, and time line of the project; engagement plan for the project; climate action planning and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions target setting; and the modeling methodology.

Ms. Hurt said the engagement process is beginning, and will be described in depth by the SSG team. She gave Council an overview of the project process and said it is anticipated the Climate Action Plan (CAP) will be presented in September, 2022.

Ms. Devine said she will be the guide through the engagement process, which is decision-making support where the public is gathered to get public intelligence to support decision-making. She described engagement as a “dial” for how much, when, and how long. She said they will be engaging some groups more in depth than others for specific reasons. Ms. Devine said the Engagement Plan has been designed to work with the public throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are heard. The pre-engagement interview process was reviewed. Pre-engagement interviews were performed with representatives from local businesses, non-profits and civic organizations, a student, and two residents. A few recommendations that came out of that process were used to draft the Engagement Plan. She said the techniques requested by the City are also included.

Ms. Devine said the Engagement Plan is divided into Engagement Objectives and Engagement Techniques:

Objective 1: To inform and educate the community of the specific targets and actions required to create meaningful and feasible GHG emission reductions, while engendering a sense of responsibility for continuing this work through to its long-term completion.

Objective 2: To involve stakeholders in the development of the engagement process and facilitate inclusive conversations among stakeholders in order to document community concerns and aspirations.

Objective 3: To involve the community and City staff in gathering feedback that will inform 1) the community’s GHG reduction target, 2) the selected low-carbon actions, and 3) the CAP’s near-term implementation strategy.

Objective 4: To inform stakeholders of how their involvement shaped the plan.

Engagement Techniques, Phase 1: Pre-Engagement Interviews and Engagement Design

Engagement Techniques, Phase 2: Active Engagement Period

Engagement Techniques, Phase 3: Final Report and Presentation

Ms. Devine gave Council a preview of the website that was created for the CAP process. She said it links to the Ames Sustainability website.

Council Member Gartin asked about the goal of September 2022. He said if a suggestion the City should consider comes up before that date, the group should feel free to notify Council.

Council Member Betcher said she wants to ensure to the best of Council's ability that under-represented population groups have an opportunity to be at the table. Ms. Devine said additional potential focus groups will be formed to ensure engagement if needed during the process. Ms. Betcher asked how they intend to involve Iowa State University (ISU) students. She said she doesn't want key elements to be missed by students over the summer. Ms. Devine said some of the scheduling is related to the Technical Process, and there are means available to get the input from students before they leave for the summer. Ms. Betcher asked what form the community survey will be. Ms. Devine said online and paper formats can be used, and that the level of detail will come after the Engagement Plan is adopted.

Mayor Haila asked if there are ways input can be sent through the website. Ms. Devine said information on how to get involved is there, but information on how to leave input could be added. Mayor Haila said it might be a missed opportunity if a way to submit feedback is not available on the CAP website.

Mayor Haila said the Council will help contact groups and people for feedback but would like SSG and Confluence Landscape Architects' help. Ms. Devine said materials will be created for engagement that can assist members. She commented that after needs are determined, team members can meet with the City Steering Committee (Mayor and Council) to help lead the process, provide materials, and provide coaching.

Mayor Haila asked about Phase 2, Workshop 1 and asked what target-setting is. Ms. Devine said during that phase it will be reviewed what targets look like in the United States and in the world, and the importance of science-based target-setting. She said this part is very important and involves a lot of information sharing. Mayor Haila said the target will be an important piece of the Plan, and it will be used for a lot of decision making. Council Member Martin asked if it's reasonable to think of the process as culminating to target-setting instead of target-setting toward the beginning of the process. Ms. Devine said it isn't expected to set a target at that time, rather the discussion around target-setting will begin at that point.

Mr. Frenette introduced the Modeling Process. He said the phases throughout the Modeling Process begin with data collection. Council Member Gartin asked to what degree best practices for modeling are reflected. Mr. Frenette said this looks at the trajectory if things stayed the same contrasted by what needs to be done. Mr. Herbert said an accounting protocol is used for GHG inventories.

Mr. Frenette said they are using higher resolution data (modeling all traffic zones in Ames and transportation data from the Ames transportation model), and including Ames' future plans (ISU coal phase out by 2024, 35% reduction of ISU emissions), integrated sectors (using projections for new buildings and dwellings), and realistic physical constraints (vehicle stock takes time to turnover). He said energy use and GHG emissions are the final output.

Council Member Martin asked how much of the model is standard. Mr. Frenette said there are unique aspects to the modeling they have prepared. Mr. Martin asked how this model has been adequately tested. Mr. Herbert said they have made the commitment that it is open source. He said it has been applied to about 100 municipalities so far. He said the most interesting community it has been used on has a population of 10,000. He said there's an adage that all models are wrong and all models are useful. He said this model has been quite transformative and gives a lot of information to use based on cause and effect for decisions communities make.

Mayor Haila said he was glad to see the ISU coal phase out being considered. He asked if ISU is included in the model and what role they play in target-setting. He said he would like to see ISU as a stakeholder at the table. Mayor Haila said there are so many things being implemented into the model, including changes made on campus. He asked if Ms. Rankin is empowered to communicate for ISU, or how ISU should be part of the table. Ms. Rankin said there has been engagement of ISU with consultants and data gathering. She said the Utilities Director and two others from ISU are appointed to the Supplemental Committee. She said any discussions that ISU needs to be involved in they will be. Mayor Haila said CyRide should also be part of the discussion.

Council Member Gartin said the Iowa City CAP would be interesting to look at to see if the University of Iowa was involved. Member Gartin said he is particularly interested in carbon sequestration and partnering with ISU. Mayor Haila wondered if the Department of Transportation and its fleet need to be included. It was noted that truck traffic from non-City vehicles were counted. Mr. Frenette said external trips coming to Ames are counted.

Council Member Martin asked why certain variables that cannot be changed or controlled are included. Mr. Frenette said the model references case plans to get the business as usual trajectory. He said even though a variable may stay fixed, they will get a picture that could influence the financial piece.

Council Member Junck asked if the age of buildings is being considered for residential energy use/non-residential energy use. Mr. Frenette said the age of the buildings are known, and the older ones do have higher energy use.

Mr. Herbert said CAP planning touches on everything, and all things are being put together to make a coherent picture and then set a target. He said best practices for target-setting will be reviewed. Mr. Herbert said 704 cities around the world have adopted a net zero emissions target by 2050.

Mr. Herbert said with all else being equal, this is a technologically viable path to get to net-zero. And a CAP is an evidence-based path that identifies high level financials, schedules, responsibilities, barriers and risks, and mitigating actions. Ms. Betcher asked what is encompassed in high level financials. Mr. Herbert said they track the capital cost of the stock of cars, the capital cost of switching all of those purchased to electric vehicles, and the operating cost of cars. Ms. Betcher

asked at what point the question of environmental justice for community members having adverse effects of costly changes will be considered Mr. Herbert said that is factored in many ways. Ms. Devine said the team wants the community to provide that information to them.

Council Member Gartin asked how to think about growing the population and reducing the carbon footprint. Mr. Herbert said an anticipated growth of 14,000 residents is significant and means more homes, more vehicles, and more energy consumption. He said the goal is to make the growth as efficient as possible and as clean as possible.

Member Gartin asked for examples of techniques cities are using to reduce their carbon footprint. Mr. Herbert said retrofit programs where cities partner with utilities or a construction firm, new construction requirements, transportation strategies, and supporting renewable energy generation for commercial or industrial sites and residential homes, are some ways cities are reducing their carbon footprint. Mr. Gartin asked about the idea of carbon sequestration. Mr. Herbert gave examples of sequestration including increased forest cover, overall land use change, agricultural practices, wetlands, carbon dioxide removals by technology (not yet proven), and in-ground sequestration (expensive).

Member Betcher asked to what extent the recommendations focus on city policies, and how much they will help the City readjust policy setting. Mr. Herbert said modeling doesn't look at policy, rather physical transition of the community and clues to what types of policies may be required and what jurisdiction can be applied, and where education and partnerships are needed. He said the implementation phase will look at this.

Mayor Haila said members of the public will have opportunities to ask questions with the consultant at a later time. Ms. Hurt said the team will soon kick-off the Engagement Plan and will see Council again on November 16, 2021 to dive into the initial modeling results.

Member Gartin said the role of ISU is something he would like to understand. Mayor Haila said he will connect with ISU President Wintersteen about the Plan. Mayor Haila said the under-represented and under-resourced are very hard to connect with and could be impacted. He said there is not a category dedicated to that yet, and would suggest the team think about adding one. Ms. Schildroth said two of the groups would reach out and represent those individuals.

Mayor Haila said he's proud of what the City of Ames has done over the last 40 years. He asked how the word will get out on what the City has already done, and its commitment for the future. Ms. Schildroth said sustainability has been a value of Council's for years. She said those things are promoted through the sustainability web page, and with the activation of this CAP website it should get more traffic. Mayor Haila said there could be a hotlink button on the CAP page for what is currently being done, and a link to what ISU is doing.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL: Moved by Betcher, seconded by Corrieri, to acknowledge the email from Grant Olsen dated August 25, 2021 noting that no action will be taken at this time.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: Mayor Haila said over 50 people had submitted applications for the Supplemental Input Committee, which shows residents are very engaged and committed. He said they want to create a Plan that is workable and attainable so a difference can be made in the community.

Moved by Junck, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to accept the Engagement Plan.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor

Erin Thompson, Recording Secretary