

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

FEBRUARY 15, 2022

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor John Haila at 6:00 p.m. on the 15th day of February 2022, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law. Present were Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Rachel Junck, and Anita Rollins. *Ex officio* Member Trevor Poundstone was absent.

CITY COUNCIL VALUES, GOALS, AND TASKS FOR 2022/23: Assistant City Manager Phillips stated that the City Council met a couple weeks ago to put together its values and goals. Since that time, staff has worked to determine some recommended tasks that would help the Council achieve those goals in the next two-year period. City staff has evaluated the tasks to make sure city staff has the capacity to get through them. Assistant City Manager Phillips indicated that the tasks are achievable, and Council would receive a list of action items at the end of this calendar year. He said at the end of the two-year period, City staff will take care of any remaining tasks. Assistant City Manager Phillips noted there is a good mix of various City departments, so no one department will be overloaded, nor will Council be overloaded. The question is does Council agree with these tasks and do the tasks represent what Council is trying to achieve with the goals that have been set.

We Value Communication and Engagement with the Public

Assistant City Manager Phillips reviewed Goal 1 and asked if anyone had any changes. Council Member Beatty-Hansen asked about the “Play Ames Festival” and if Council wanted to continue that event. Mayor Haila asked who would be responsible for running it, organizing it, and having a strategy. He noted “Play Ames” is a big initiative and questioned who would head it up. Council Member Rollins indicated obtaining funding was an issue last year, but she thinks if Council starts something and doesn’t continue it, Council doesn’t build trust within the community. If there is an option to continue this Festival, she would like to see the Council and City staff explore it. Council Member Betcher thought Iowa State University would like to hold the Festival again, but with a modified team. The team leaders for the Festival did apply for community grant funding, but were not awarded that grant. Council Member Beatty-Hansen said we should ask Iowa State University if they want to pursue the Festival again. She indicated a good topic would be communicating to the public Council’s Values and Goals. Council Member Gartin asked how many people attended. Discussion was had around attendance, since there were several locations, it varied. Approximately 200 people attended “Play Ames” across four different locations.

Task 1 of Goal 1 was updated to read “Staff will approach the CRP 432/532 class regarding the possibility of hosting another “Play Ames Festival” focused on educating the public regarding the City Council’s values.” No changes or updates were made to Task 2 or Task 3.

We Value Diverse Housing Options for the Community.

Assistant City Manager Phillips said with this goal, Task 2 is key and it depends on what Council prioritizes. Council Member Gartin expressed concerns that Council would be able to do anything

significant regarding affordable housing. He believes Council should be preserving the existing housing stock. He asked if Council could look at creative programs to rehabilitate existing housing stock that might otherwise decline in value. City Manager Schainker referred to Task 3 and Task 4 and said a low/moderate-income housing strategy is needed. Council needs to have a policy in place before discussion about incentives to determine if there are any Code impediments. City Manager Schainker said Council needs to look at all the projects and prioritize those projects after they have reviewed them.

Value of Fun, Vibrant, and Healthy Community that Attracts and Retains People.

Assistant City Manager Phillips indicated there are two goals under this value with five tasks outlined under Goal 1. City Manager Schainker said this Goal will be directed towards the Parks & Recreation Department and the Ames Public Library. They are excited and already working on potential programming. City staff is also looking at bringing in other partners.

Council switched the task order on this goal so Task 3 would come before Task 2. Council Member Gartin stated he was excited about this Goal and the for the citizens of Ames. He mentioned the City of Dubuque has implemented some work around this type of goal and it would be worth reaching out to their staff.

Under Goal 2 Council recommended updating the wording to “consult” rather than “establish a task force”. Mayor Haila mentioned meeting with businesses individually to thank them for their efforts and see what the City can do to help them. Council Member Junck stated task force was used a lot in the plan so changing it to consult is better.

We Value a Diverse Equitable and Inclusive Community.

Assistant City Manager Phillips reviewed the two goals noting that there is no time line at this point for hiring DEI Coordinator. Council Member Gartin asked what the job responsibilities would be for the DEI Coordinator. City Manager Schainker said the individual in that role would review all policies to make sure they are fair and equitable, help with the process of recruiting ensuring equitable representation, handle internal complaints regarding discrimination, and take the lead on ADA issues and complaints. This individual would also be assigned as the staff person for the Ames Human Relations Commission (AHRC), splitting their work time internally and externally.

Mayor Haila said he’s hoping the DEI Coordinator might be able to work with Council as well. Council Member Betcher expressed her frustration on how they have not moved forward on this inclusive goal on policy review. Council Member Gartin stated he would like to see training for Council with Iowa State University pursued. City Manager Schainker said he wants Council to tell him what training they want to focus on, and he would line something up, noting that utilizing Leon Andrews again is not an option as he left his position with the National League of Cities.

Council added a new Task 1 that reads “Staff will present for Council’s approval a proposed prioritization of tasks related to housing availability and affordability identified in Ames Plan 2040.” All other tasks shifted down numerically one spot.

Council Member Rollins stated that she would like to see if Council can work with AHRC to begin working on some items prior to hiring DEI Coordinator. Assistant City Manager Schildroth noted that AHRC will be before Council in April or May to present the Annual Report. She provided an overview of what AHRC has been involved with. Ms. Rollins indicated that AHRC has some great initiatives that Council could get behind. Assistant City Manager Schildroth stated AHRC has a strategic plan and the pandemic has influenced what the members have been able to accomplish and the events that they have been able to participate in.

Assistant City Manager Phillips reviewed Goal 2 and said this Goal involves a couple different tasks. He noted there are budget implications to this Goal. The timing is layered in with the budgeting process and depends on how in depth a study needs to be. CyRide staff has the ability to do some preliminary analysis, but if it's going to be pursued further, CyRide staff felt a consultant could provide a more in-depth analysis to explain what is going to shift people's decision-making on riding the bus or not.

Task 4, Task 5 and Task 6 all relate to the bike/ped master plan. Assistant City Manager Phillips said staff is close to hiring a consultant to complete that plan. Council will have a chance to review and consider the recommendations of the plan in early 2023. Micromobility falls under Task 7 and Task 8 City staff expects to complete the report the end of this calendar year. Assistant City Manager Schildroth stated staff is working with Iowa State University to consider micromobility on the shared use paths around campus and that will all be wrapped into the micromobility ordinance.

There was discussion around the completion dates. City Manager Schainker stated those are fluid. Council Member Junck stated she was excited for this goal. She said it provides another needed piece that fits in to the City's Climate Action Plan.

We Value Environmental Sustainability

Assistant City Manager Phillips stated the Climate Action Plan (CAP) will impact this value. In Quarter 2 of 2022, Council will receive the Waste-to-Energy Study. Council will then have to decide which option to pursue, and that will generate a whole new set of tasks and budget concerns. Regarding Task 8, Assistant City Manager Phillips brought up solid waste collection and how to determine the next steps. He noted City staff should be able to provide Council that information in Quarter 3 of 2022. With that it made sense to move the completion goal for Task 9 to Quarter 3 of 2023.

Council Member Gartin asked about the CAP proposal coming in April where the consultant will review the *6 Big Moves*. Assistant City Manager Schildroth noted the Consultant will provide the information gathered from the focus groups, which will be providing community input on the *6 Big Moves*. She stated that the CAP is scheduled to be approved by Council in September 2022 after an additional town hall meeting and community input. She also noted the *6 Big Moves* are available to review on the CAP website.

Council requested Task 6 be updated to remove the word "pursue" and add "consider" in its place. Mayor Haila asked if there was any action Council wanted to take.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Betcher, to accept the Goals, as amended.
Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF PLANNING DEPARTMENT WORK PLAN: Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann said, based on the Council goals that were drafted back in January, Council needs to prioritize referrals and tasks for implementation. He said he tried to give a full range of issues as outlined in the attachments. The first table attached to the Council Action Form was the Work Plan of current or committed priorities (Attachment A) and the second table was the non-prioritized project list (Attachment B). Items on the non-prioritized project list have been discussed, but have not moved forward. Director Diekmann said that if Council wants to move an item into the Work Plan from the project list, an item already on the Work Plan needs to move off. Director Diekmann reviewed five initiatives. He stated staff believes that thinking of the initiatives in the context of different categories such as Infill/Redevelopment, Housing, Transportation, and Commercial and Other Zoning Issues will assist Council in prioritizing specific issues. He noted committed projects are either ongoing projects or prior directives of the City Council that are not yet complete. This list includes the Fringe Plan Update and a placeholder for Plan 2040 Initiatives. Attachment A includes a list of 18 projects and the status of each. He said that of the 18 projects, two are related primarily to the Housing Division: the Baker Subdivision and CARES/ARP funding. Staff believes four to six of the committed projects will be completed within the next 90 days, such as the Reinvestment District application, TIF Subdivision Development Agreement, Plaza, and Public Art specifications, and Grove Avenue rezoning. The remaining items are either long-term projects or have not yet been started.

Director Diekmann said he thinks they can make good progress as outlined on Attachment C which was the proposed priorities. He noted Council has the option of removing items from the list, which is done by a motion.

Council Member Betcher brought up Rental Conversion Incentives inquiring if that item can be worked into the housing initiative. Director Diekmann said it could not unless Council removes a project from the Work Plan. Council Member Betcher asked if the item can be put on a future Council agenda to discuss or if it is something Council would want to remove. Council Member Corrieri brought up that people were not interested in rental properties being converted into owner occupied. Director Diekmann said it did seem unlikely.

Council Members Rollins asked how many available rentals there are in the City. City Manager Schainker said the City has access to that information as rentals have to register with the City, but how many are currently occupied is unknown.

Director Diekmann noted that City staff is currently finalizing the Baker Subdivision and working to find eligible households. If the City were to buy an old apartment complex and convert to low-income housing, the City would be competing against itself. Director Diekmann noted that he doesn't think the City has the necessary staff capacity to handle that task.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Junck, to remove Rental Conversion Incentives from the Work Plan completely.

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

Mayor Haila asked about Sign Code Updates. Director Diekmann indicated this was not a priority but if staff has time to review, they could pick up at that time and move forward.

Mayor Haila brought up the Historic Preservation Update. Director Diekmann stated the Historic Preservation Commission did not meet on February 14th due to a lack of quorum so no update can be provided. Council Member Betcher said Council should leave the Historic Preservation Plan Update since the Commission has not provided input yet.

Director Diekmann noted that the current items planned to be resolved by April are removed (Attachment C) was put together based on Council goals. He said if Council looks at the 2040 Plan implementation issues, it's for Council to judge if any of those items are more important than the four or five at the bottom of this list and reprioritize. Director Diekmann explained front yard parking to Council, noting it's specific to single-family homes. The issue with front-yard parking comes into play on non-conforming properties and causes issues for City staff when questions come up about driveways and garages. City Manager Schainker said non-conforming properties are an issue and there are a lot of them in the community right now. Council and City staff may have to re-look at the entire issue and modify the Code.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Corrieri, to accept staff's recommendations, considering the amendments, previously voted on, on the program of work as reflected in Attachment C.

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

City Manager Schainker stated the time line outlined in Attachment C will likely be adjusted, but it is the best estimate right now.

Mayor Haila referred Council and staff back to Attachment B. Council Member Betcher wants to keep the first two items on Attachment B. Director Diekmann said staff would likely do both at the same time, but they are two different things.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to remove holding off any final decision regarding plaza in Campustown until final decision is made regarding relocating of Fire Station #2 and completion of Welch Improvement, (Date Referred 5/14/19), remove requesting staff memo regarding zoning recommendation for the lot of old KFC on Lincoln Way (Date Referred 10/8/19), and remove letter from Justin Dodge on Champlin Property roadway improvement requirements and costs (Date Referred 2/25/20), all from Attachment B.

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

Council Member Junck asked if there was a need for the billboard referral to stay. Director Diekmann stated this was wrapped-up in the development agreement conversations for the Reinvestment District.

Moved by Junck, seconded Corrieri, to remove referred to staff for a memo the letter from Chuck Winkleblack concerning two billboards on the two block stretch on the north side of Lincoln Way between Clark and Kellogg (Date Referred 02/12/19 from Attachment B).

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

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Gartin, to add historic preservation window repair as Façade Grant eligible element to Attachment C.

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

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to delete the demolition criteria (Date Referred 01/12/16 on Attachment B).

Ms. Betcher preferred to keep that item because of everything the City is doing to promote sustainability and the Climate Action Plan. Ms. Beatty Hansen said she thinks the Climate Action Plan will force the City to revisit this item again if it is removed.

Vote on Motion: 2-4. Voting Aye: Corrieri, Gartin. Voting Nay: Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Junck, Rollins. Motion failed.

Council Member Junck asked for clarification on 05/28/2019. Director Diekmann said the Police Department made a recommendation back in 2017 for community policing through environmental design, and there are some strategies around landscape review that go into that. Director Diekmann stated he feels the City has that that incorporated into its processes.

Moved by Junck, seconded by Gartin, to remove reviewing zoning requirements for landscaping on private property (Date Referred 05/28/2019 from Attachment B).

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

Council Member Gartin asked about 05/16/2017. Council Member Corrieri stated everything on the parking lot is just everything the Council is afraid to say no to. In her opinion this whole item can be removed.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to remove review outdoor sales standards for commercial areas (Date Referred 05/16/2017 from Attachment B).

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

Director Diekmann brought up Campustown Action Association (CAA) and changes to the Façade Grant program for Campustown. He would like this to operate on a rolling time period instead of applicants only being able to apply in March. He noted that not all of the criteria need to be revisited, instead the program needs to be easier to use.

Moved by Junck, seconded Beatty-Hansen, to bring back minor modifications to the application requirements for the Campustown Façade Grant program.

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

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to remove request by CAA to consider broad changes to facade grant program for Campustown (Date Referred 05/11/2021 from Attachment B).

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

Council Member Betcher asked what remaining items were on Attachment B. Director Diekmann said the two demolition elements of 01/12/16 and 01/12/16, the Neighborhood Association of 10/16/18 and the Downtown Façade Program of 01/2020. Director Diekmann noted Attachment A will no longer exist after tonight; Attachment C will replace Attachment A.

OVERVIEW OF AMES URBAN FRINGE PLAN UPDATE PROCESS: Director Diekmann provided an overview of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan. He noted Ames works cooperatively with Gilbert and Story County through a 28-E agreement to streamline subdivision review in the County based upon the Ames Urban Fringe Plan. The 28E agreement was for an initial five-year period with an automatic five-year extension, for a total of ten years. The Plan was extended cooperatively by all parties in 2021 until July 2022. The current Fringe Plan addresses two primary policy issues related to future annexation areas and intensity of rural development. The process to update the Fringe Plan is designed to build off of the prior plan and incorporate new elements of Plan 2040. The process is not intended to start from scratch and develop a whole new plan and set of priorities. County and City staff believe the best approach for doing an update is for staff to develop a draft plan and land use map and then seek public input on a complete draft plan. This will help focus on areas or policies that are changes to current policies, rather than spending time reviewing commonly agreed upon principles for the Fringe Plan. He stated that staff believes that, in addition to working with Story County to develop a new Fringe Plan and 28-E agreement, the City should also engage with Boone County about planning for west expansion with a 28-E agreement.

Mr. Diekmann said the intent is for staff to draft a map for the public to respond to. He asked Council to direct staff to move forward and accept the proposed update process with Story County taking the lead while working in conjunction with City of Ames staff to prepare a draft plan for public comment and review prior to holding hearings on approving a new plan.

Mayor Haila asked about the three items listed in his report. Director Diekmann stated that Item 1 was asking Council if there something that is an issue that Council is aware of or wants staff to investigate that is not on the Board of Supervisors' list or staff's list. Director Diekmann noted staff will work from these lists to come up with the best representation from the three government bodies interests, and Council will be able to review later this Spring.

Council Member Gartin asked about annexing a rural subdivision, moving forward and developing around them. Director Diekmann said he does not see this as a big obstacle for the City. There was some discussion around urban sprawl Director Diekmann stated that could be an issue at some point.

Council Member Betcher asked if there was anything in the Agreement that the City has or the zoning that exists that enables or limits the development of wind turbines. Director Diekmann said there is nothing in the 28E. It would default to Story County zoning procedures and its conditional use permit process with its Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Betcher, to accept the proposed update process with Story County taking the lead while working in conjunction with City of Ames staff to prepare a draft plan for public comment and review prior to holding hearings on approving a new plan, and direct City of

Ames staff to reach out to the Boone County Board of Supervisors to discuss Fringe Planning and a 28-E Agreement as part of the Fringe Plan Update process.

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

Mayor Haila asked Council if there were any additional policy issues or concerns related to the Fringe Area Plan not mentioned earlier or in Director Diekmann's report that Council would like to give staff guidance on.

Council Member Gartin asked Director Diekmann if he had had any conversations with Boone County yet. Director Diekmann answered that he had not; however, Story County has reached out to Boone County.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL: The Mayor indicated there are two items under Disposition. The first item was a memo from Mr. Diekmann, regarding a request for a Zoning Text Amendment to Sec. 29.401c to allow for the proposed subdivision of the property at 2108 East Lincoln Way.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Junck, to pursue Option 1, which was to reduce the street frontage requirements for Flag Lots in the General Industrial District.

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

Director Diekmann clarified the applicant would have to apply for it first.

The second item was a memo from Mr. Diekmann, regarding a request for an Affordable Housing Tax Abatement Incentive for the Annex Group.

Moved by Beatty-Hanson, seconded by Betcher, to place the memo from Director Diekmann regarding the request for an Affordable Housing Tax Abatement Incentive for the Annex Group on a future agenda.

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

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Rollins stated she attended an Economics 101 class where it was mentioned there was a 44% growth within the state from immigrants.

Mayor Haila mentioned the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet will be on February 17, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Betcher, seconded by Junck, to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor

Renee Hall, Recording Secretary