City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

City Council - Special

Office of the Clerk of Council
200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Brian D. Larick, President of Council, Thomas R. Kneeland, Vice President of Council, Karen J. Angelou, Ryan P. Jolley, Jamie Leeseberg, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer

Kimberly McWilliams, CMC, Clerk of Council

Monday, February 17, 2014 **5:00 PM** **Gahanna Senior Center, 480 Rocky Fork Blvd.**

Planning Session

1. CALL TO ORDER

Gahanna City Council met in Special Session on Monday, February 17, 2014, in Council Chambers of City Hall, 200 South Hamilton Road, Gahanna, Ohio. President of Council Brian D. Larick called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The Meeting Agenda was published on February 14, 2014.

Present 7 - Karen J. Angelou, Ryan P. Jolley, Thomas R. Kneeland, Brian D. Larick, Jamie Leeseberg, Stephen A. Renner, and Michael Schnetzer

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

Mayor Stinchcomb, General Williams, Chief Murphy, Anthony Jones, Jennifer Teal, Tony Collins, Sue Wadley, Dottie Franey, and Niel Jurist

2. PLANNING - Sustainable Forecast

Teal began by explaining the information used tonight is from two days of work sessions with senior staff; hand outs are rough drafts; hope it will be valuable to everyone.

Collins stated this is an exciting time in Gahanna; thanked everyone for committing to meet; appreciate everyone's work and effort; we are passionate about this process.

Collins continued by stating that we want to stay on task; may need to come back to some issues as ongoing discussion items; have a chart called "information points" that we need to more fully inform the public about; could be response times from police department, water break, etc.; need to discuss strategy; this dialogue began in November; two themes spoken about most often are: 1. want to provide best possible Gahanna and 2. Gahanna is a place of opportunity; opportunities for development, service, community, etc.; started with that mindset then looked at financial situation; how can we be a great city, provide the necessary services with the resources we have; this is not a presentation; is a work session; the goal is to have a good brainstorm session; want to develop ideas for new ways to do what we want to do.

Teal discussed the 5 year picture for finances; in order to forecast the future, we need to know how we are today; in a good position to look at 2013 year end numbers.

Teal stated sustainability from a financial standpoint is only using this year's money to pay for ongoing expenses (utilities, salaries, base level capital maintenance, etc.); do not want to commit to spending more than we are taking in; last year ended with $9.7 million in excess reserves (same amount as 2011); have a pretty good idea of future; know there is not going to be additional revenue stream; know our needs; question now is how to determine best use of this one-time limited revenue resource most effectively.

Teal continued with one-time money and expenses; one-time revenue is spending down to the excess reserve; it is future potential revenue from the sale of an asset; one-time expenses are things we reasonably would not expect to pay for twice like the purchase of a park; difference between ongoing and one-time expense is that choosing not to invest in a one-time expense would not affect day to day operations; main goal from a math standpoint was to separate ongoing operating expenses from one-time expenses and resources.

Collins said we are thinking about this as a planning process; started with data; needed to look at current numbers; then we wanted to take that and see how we can go forward with a sustainable plan; for a lot of years, we have been doing a lot of temporary reductions; tore apart our finances and looked at 5 years of sustainability while making sure we are doing what we do well and keeping it going; continue to go through proposed changes from what we started with (the June memo), keeping sustainability in mind; we are building this as a plan and then will get input as part of an ongoing process.

Teal said the first piece was to adjust operating expenses; did not include or promote that there are capital expenses that we need to fund every year that we can't cut down to the bone and expect to operate the way we need to operate as a city; best example is the street fund; we need to spend the full amount every year; this forecast funds capital needs at the level they need to be funded; the second piece is the sustainable/ongoing capital expenses; not all are every year type programs; looking at our capital needs assessment for this year, we have kind of put things into 3 categories: 1. an ongoing sustainable priority, 2. a one-time priority that we can use one-time money for, or 3. should we just not do it at all.

Teal and Collins said it is absolutely imperative to continue to evaluate

whether we can do things more cost efficiently.

Jones said part of our challenge is having the staff to do the work that we know needs to get done particularly when it comes to the planning process; all of the old land use plans are over a decade old; how do we update; how do we get more relevant information going forward.

Collins said there is a fluctuation of staffing questions that we have to resolve and part of that is staffing in the Development Department.

Collins said this is only a part of our process; today we are focusing on the operation side; the 4-5 year business plan; so we can go forward and ask some basic questions; we recognized two other components that are important; one is performance measurement; we have to measure better what we are doing; we have to look at our own processes to see if there is some way we can improve; there are a lot of items we have to get out to the public.

Teal said we went through the capital needs assessment and identified the things we have to include in our ongoing operating program; also identified a number of projects that didn't strike us being critical to the City; everything left over was identified as potential candidates for the use of one-time funds; the first step is looking at one-time resources; we identified potential one-time expenses and ranked them; we identified projects already started or really should be done in a short timeframe; projects that are investments (we spend money now and receive money back in the future) and necessary existing infrastructure improvements; and a lot of big, long-term future projects; this needs to be a collaborative process; we need to come up with a plan identifying that we have a substantial amount of excess reserve and a fair amount of this one-time resource and what are the ways the community should invest that money for the future.

Jones said his ultimate goal is to anticipate the future land uses for our community, both redevelopment and new development priorities; we need to have concrete enforceable plans for development and redevelopment opportunities; the last one is the land acquisition for development; there would be some analysis as to what would be most beneficial and what the best return on our investment would be for any acquisitions.

Council wants to make sure we address actions and next steps; believes it is critical.

Collins said our most important piece is that we believe that this is a process; we need input; we need to collect that information; that's the next step; we

believe another step of the process is to get the public's input; when we have this conceptual idea a little more framed in, we will have a public forum; get the people to look at it and hear these ideas and concepts and provide input.

Mayor said it is important to chunk off this work; put it on a schedule that Council is comfortable with; go through all of the discussion items and figure out a plan; identifying how we want to accomplish this work and by when.

General Williams explained we need a reserve policy; look at what our neighboring communities are doing and what we can help them with; we are making progress, but I think the City can only go so far with the administration; they are giving their best shot; asking Council for direction; say either yes or no.

Chief Murphy stated during the two days the administration spent together everyone was brutally honest and nothing was held back; definitely need Council's direction, because even if we modify it we can adapt to it; don't think people actually appreciate or understand how much we have been cutting over the years; cutting down to the bone because we are professionals; if we only had two officers to protect the City, they would protect the City to the best of their ability because that is their mission; we need Council's input now; we need to keep this momentum going because it's not going to get any better and if we let it languish, we are wasting our time.

Larick said that this is a good step in the review of this; this is a living body and the whole thing has to be functional; whatever that level of function is, it has to be functioning; unless anyone else has anything else they want to add, what we'll all do is sit down and review the discussions this evening and identify what I hope will be an effective way to step the discussion forward on the key points and start that again on February 24th.

Teal said we've worked individually department by department and then as a group so much to try to bring forward this seed or skeleton of a plan that we can all believe in and all support moving forward; while Council has to fund it and authorize it, we all have to go out there and implement it; really think the best outcome will come from this conversation continuing; the best part of having a two day senior staff meeting were all of the bright ideas we had after the first meeting and before the second meeting; you have that opportunity to let it digest; note items; part of what we'll discuss is coming up with a way to ensure that we're capturing that input; capturing those ideas; answering those questions; this doesn't have to work fast; thankfully it's not July or August; we have time; I'd rather be right over time rather than trying to be fast; let us know off line if you want, ideas or issues that you'd like for

us to include; thanked Council for their time.

The Mayor thanked City Council for coming together and doing this; thanked Jennifer Teal and Tony Collins for stepping up to present so she could participate and expressed appreciation to all of the directors; this is just a reflection of the talent that we have on our staff and I just wanted to thank them and say that I hope this dialogue can continue. Council concurred.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Larick moved to adjourn at 9:28 p.m.

Kimberly McWilliams, CMC, Clerk of Council