

DRAFT

Roll Call

A special work session of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Saturday, February 13, 2010 at 9:35 a.m. in the Navigation Center at Borgess Medical Center, 1521 Gull Road. The purpose of the work session was to develop and discuss a shared two-year vision for the City Commission.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell
 Vice Mayor Hannah McKinney
 David Anderson
 Don Cooney*
 Terry Kuseske
 Barbara Miller
 Stephanie Moore

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

Also present were City Manager Ken Collard, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling, Public Services Director Bruce Merchant, Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation Jerome Kisscorni, Community Planning and Development Director Jeff Chamberlain, Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley, Human Resources Director Jerome Post, City Assessor Connie Darling, Internal Auditor Ann Videtich, and Deputy City Manager Jerri-Barnett Moore.

Commissioner Excused

Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Moore, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Cooney. With a voice vote the motion passed.

City Commission Visioning Session – Opening Remarks

Mayor Hopewell welcomed participants and offered opening remarks.

Dr. Tim Fallon reviewed the visioning discussion from the previous day and described the agenda and expectations for the current meeting.

*Commissioner Cooney arrived at 9:41 a.m.

Opportunity for Staff Comments

Mayor Hopewell provided an opportunity for City staff to comment on the previous day’s discussion.

Chief Hadley stated community policing was not a component of Public Safety’s service, it was the core service Public Safety provided.

Director Merchant stated citizens did not complain about City services until they stopped receiving those services. Public Services Director Merchant stated an important question was, “How can City hone the skills of its workers to provide service more efficiently and effectively.

City Attorney Robinson stated the City Charter and state laws constrained the City in the areas of generating new revenue streams, like an income tax, and increasing existing revenue streams. City Attorney Robinson stated if Kalamazoo County, the City of Portage, and the City of Kalamazoo wanted to work together to address an issue, their cooperation would form an interconnected web, and the issued would get addressed.

Director Kisscorni noted a local income tax was not a “silver bullet,” as Michigan cities with income taxes were struggling just like Kalamazoo.

Director Chamberlain stated the City needed to address social issues as City employees encountered these issues, such as poverty, on a daily basis.

City Assessor Darling stated the visioning session had provided insights about the Commissioners’ values and priorities.

Director Post stated the City Commission’s discussion about priorities would be more important than its discussion about vision, as determining priorities would force the Commission to make choices and focus the organization’s effort.

Internal Auditor Videtich urged Commissioners to select a limited number of priorities so they could accomplish their goals for those priorities.

Deputy City Manager Barnett-Moore urged Commissioners to remember the City’s core responsibilities.

City Clerk Borling noted the needs in the City’s area of core responsibility could be addressed with additional resources, but the community needs resisted simple solutions because they involved human beings who made independent choices and decisions.

Dr. Fallon posed the question, “What will be the City Commission’s agenda?” and asked each Commissioner to name a few key goals on which the City Commission should focus for the remainder of its term.

Commissioners’ Key Focus Areas

Commissioner Miller

- Budget
- Public Safety
- Infrastructure

Commissioner Kuseske

- balancing the needs of neighborhoods and the downtown
- providing services to citizens
- taking care of employees

Vice Mayor McKinney

- jobs and economic development
- addressing legacy costs

Mayor Hopewell

- youth
- The Kalamazoo Promise

Commissioner Cooney

- supporting the Kalamazoo Promise
- supporting ex-offenders at they re-entered the community

Opportunity for Staff
Comments (cont’d)

Development of City
Commission Agenda

78634

Development of City
Commission Agenda
(cont'd)

78634

Commissioner Moore

- decent and affordable housing
- community governing (not just community policing)

Commissioner Anderson

- leveraging the City's 750 employees
- addressing legacy costs

Discussion followed regarding the roles of the City Commission relative to its agenda.

During this discussion Dr. Fallon posed the following questions to the Commissioners: "As you fulfill your Charter responsibilities, are there ways you can think about those core responsibilities creatively?" and "How do we use the pressure of the current economic conditions to produce a diamond, so that you align your core responsibilities with future realities?"

In response to Dr. Fallon's questions, Commissioners developed the following themes related to its agenda:

- focus on two or three key areas
- aspirational, realistic goals
- Resources are more than money.
- manage expectations
- play a leadership role that included convening and mobilizing the community around key issues.
- play the role of mediator
- address root causes, not symptoms
- focus on charter responsibilities
- keep in mind community needs and human impacts

Dr. Fallon observed agreement around the following themes:

- The City Commission should address Charter responsibilities a) in a way that is congruent with its vision; b) in a way that understands the human impacts; and c) in the context of the new realities.
- The City Commission should focus on a few (1-3) key areas, including an aspirational goal, which would drive the Commission to a community leadership role.
- The City Commission should focus on root causes, which would address multiple issues.

Mayor Hopewell, Vice Mayor McKinney, Commissioner Anderson, and Commissioner Kuseske expressed support for the above framework.

City Manager Collard stated his main concern was managing resources and suggested advocating for the maintenance of state shared revenue as a key priority. City Manager Collard also noted customer service improvement did not necessarily cost money.

Mayor Hopewell suggested the following model for organizing the City Commission's agenda: develop a legislative agenda and a core services agenda containing two or three items on which Commissioners agreed and which related to the shared vision.

City Manager Collard observed the Commission might also need a convening agenda.

In response to questions from Dr. Fallon, Mayor Hopewell stated the legislative agenda would involve the City's legal framework, which included changes to statutes, the City Charter and City ordinances. Mayor Hopewell indicated the convening agenda would include linking Commissioners to each other and working with community partners to solve community problems or to improve the quality of life for the whole community.

Dr. Fallon asked Commissioners if the Mayor's model was an appropriate framework for moving forward.

Vice Mayor McKinney, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Cooney, and Commissioner Miller indicated this framework was not appropriate.

Commissioner Kuseske expressed concern that the Mayor's framework would result in categorizing the focus areas without prioritization.

The meeting recessed at 11:18 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 11:32 a.m.

Following the recess, Commissioner Cooney stated the City Commission had a responsibility to organize and mobilize citizen around community issues and problems. Commissioner Cooney described a model for the City Commission's organizing and mobilizing role, which included raising awareness of a problem, inspiring stakeholders, and mobilizing the larger community (identify resources, bring people together, put needs on the table, implement plan).

Commissioners discussed this mobilizing model.

Vice Mayor McKinney and Commissioners Kuseske stated the City Commission needed to utilize community assets and to support community organizations prior to seeking solutions for local problems in Lansing and Washington.

Commissioner Moore noted the Commission's advocacy role also included communication with citizens about available services and what the City was doing.

Dr. Fallon noted there was a high level of commonality in the areas of vision and the need for the Commission to address Charter responsibilities, and he observed there was general agreement that there was a broader community role for the Commission to play. Dr. Fallon suggested the City Commission set an aspirational goal that was narrower than the vision but that affected both core and community responsibilities. Dr. Fallon stated the City Commission could fulfill its Charter responsibilities with a mind to its vision and the human needs in

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(cont'd)

78634

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78634

the community. Dr. Fallon asked Commissioners if they were ready to identify specific focus areas and goals.

Mayor Hopewell and Commissioner Anderson indicated they were willing to identify specific focus areas and goals.

Vice Mayor McKinney and Commissioners Cooney, Kuseske, Miller, and Moore indicated they were willing to begin selecting focus areas and goals, depending on the specific goals that were chosen.

Commissioners developed the following agendas and focus areas:

Proactive Core Agenda

- Legacy costs
- Community Connector (telling the City's story, building awareness of available services, increasing access to services)
- Intergovernmental collaboration to streamline service delivery
- Community Policing/Community Government

Community Agenda

- Jobs
- Education
- Community Connector/Communications

By consensus, the City Commission agreed to make the above focus areas the agenda for the remainder of its term.

Next Steps:
Implementing the
City Commission's
Agenda

78634

Next, Commissioners discussed the implementation of their agenda. By consensus Commissioners agreed on the following next steps:

- further define the four areas of the Proactive Core Agenda
 - What do each of these involve?
 - Who would do what: Commission, staff?
 - determine results, deadlines, measures, accountabilities
- further define the Community Agenda
 - discuss and decide on the approach
 - create an aspirational goal for the agenda
- further clarify and refine the vision to make it a driving force, including the perspective of Commissioner Kuseske.
- use the vision, the Community Agenda and the Core Agenda to inform the State of the City Address (Mayor Hopewell will take the lead in this.)
- The City Manager will work with Commissioners Anderson, Cooney and Moore to further define the implementation steps (results, deadlines, and measures).
 - Who?
 - When?
 - How?

When given an opportunity to make comments, the following citizens addressed the City Commission:

Citizen Comments

Bob Doud, City resident, stated the City's core responsibilities were performed by the City Administration and City staff, not the City Commission. Mr. Doud expressed concern that the City Commission took it upon itself to define the community's needs without input from the community. Mr. Doud suggested the City develop a 10-year vision for streamlining its operations to reduce the duplication of services across multiple levels of government.

Chris Shook, City resident, applauded the City's efforts to cut costs and urged City leaders to empower and then release people to do good work. Mr. Shook offered the development of the Business, Technology, and Research (BTR) Park as an example of a visionary effort where City Commission released people to do their work.

Jim Hilboldt, City resident, stated the visioning session was helpful. Mr. Hilboldt stated he did not know what the City would be able to do about the need for jobs, and the City's options for helping the underprivileged were limited. Mr. Hilboldt urged the City to be a catalyst for economic development, which would create new jobs and bring new industries to the City.

Next, City Commissioners offered the following miscellaneous comments:

City Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Moore expressed appreciation to the Mayor for convening the visioning sessions.

Mayor Hopewell thanked Commissioners and staff for attending the visioning sessions and stated there was work to be done. Mayor Hopewell noted City staff may be working already to improve core services, but the Commission's goals did not preclude that work.

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on March 15, 2010

Approved by: _____
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: March 15, 2010