

CITY OF ABERDEEN
Council Offsite Meeting
November 12, 2016

Council Present: Mayor Patrick McGrady, Councilman Steven Goodin,
Councilwoman Sandra Landbeck, Councilman Timothy Lindecamp,
and Councilman Melvin Taylor

Absent: None

Facilitator: Jonita Shoaff, Facilitator, Harford Community College

Also Present: Kirk Bane, Deputy Chief of Police
Felicia Banuelos, Administrative Assistant
Monica Correll, City Clerk
Bradley Grant, I.T. Coordinator
Jennifer Liberto, Executive Assistant (Police)
Theresa Hartman, Human Resources Administrator
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Chuck Johnson, Risk and Safety Manager
Randy Robertson, City Manager
Henry Trabert, Chief of Police

The Offsite Meeting convened at approximately 8:00 a.m. the Holiday Inn Express conference room, Aberdeen, Maryland. Mr. Robertson provided the Council with documents for the meeting and informed them that he meets regularly with the City's Department Heads every Tuesday morning.

Ms. Shoaff explained that there are five elements to function well: vision/mission, team, goals, process, and recognition/reward. An exercise was completed by the attendees and they provided the following input:

- Without a strong team, there is no goal and vision. There is chaos.
- Without goals, there would be no vision. The goals are what you need to do to get there. If you have no process, you have no mechanism to achieve these goals.
- Without process, you can't achieve vision and choose a proper team. You can't achieve goals.
- A common denominator is a roadmap. There is no sense of direction, no defined goals; one would wonder if they did well, low morale would be created as well as a lack of purpose.

Ms. Shoaff stated that a goal without a deadline is a wish. She said that gaps cause frustration and recognition is extremely important as people will have to motivate themselves or else they would "fizzle out".

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Finance Department

Mr. Jack presented background on his department and organizational structure. The Mayor and Council members were given an update on the FY2017 actual activities versus annual budget and an overview of outstanding debts. Mr. Jack then spoke of current initiatives which included the Procurement Policy, Capsoft system (real property and personal property tax billing), and electronic processing of deeds. He expressed concerns with the financial condition of the sewer fund. Future initiatives included the use of excess fund balance, E-Procurement, and a water/sewer web platform. He noted that the state of the City's finances remained strong.

2. Human Resources

Ms. Hartman defined the role of the Human Resources Department. Services included recruitment, administering benefits, and working with supervisors to ensure consistency of application. Current initiatives were: employee retention, personnel policy manual, succession policies, and transition in employee/family/retiree healthcare. Her concerns were staffing, the rapid turnover in the City, and having qualified and trained staff to fill management vacancies in the near future. Future initiatives include working with department heads to develop career progression opportunities, finalizing the personnel manual, expanding the use of technology to improve backfilling vacancies, institutionalizing the employee evaluation process and continuous training initiatives.

3. Risk and Safety

Mr. Johnson's current initiatives were: safety processes, emergency operations, Local Government Insurance Trust Insurance, Chesapeake Employers' Insurance, and the wellness program for City employees. Current concerns were reducing accidents which involved City vehicles, emergency response on railroad lines, lost work day claims which impacted insurance, establishing wellness processes due to aging workforce, and the continuation of City-sponsored program funds. Mr. Johnson intended to formalize emergency operations, update and revise the safety manual, look into a community health fair, and start annual rewards for safe worker recognition.

4. I.T. Department

Mr. Grant explained the City computer network encompassed six different locations and that mission critical servers were located in Hunt Valley, Maryland. These companies provided the City further support: System Source for information technology; ComStar Telecommunications for the phone system; and Centric Business Systems for printers.

Current initiatives included the website design, high speed fiber connections through Harford County's high speed, fiber optic based network, front end web interface for the property tax system, workstation upgrades, and firewall replacement. His concerns included: security, disaster recovery, and business resumption planning. He planned to move email to the cloud, take advantage of cloud-based opportunities, and develop a comprehensive business

resumption plan. He presented the new City website and explained its new features. The Council was asked for their feedback.

5. Planning and Community Development

Ms. Grover's current initiatives included:

- exploring opportunities for development in the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area;
- improving the condition of the MARC/Amtrak Train Station;
- utilizing the Maryland Main Street Affiliate Program to attract businesses;
- amendments to the Development Code;
- looking at opportunities for 34 N. Philadelphia Boulevard and the Moose Lodge.

Planning concerns were:

- the appearance and condition of the Aberdeen Train Station, APG Road, West Bel Air Avenue and Route 40;
- the image and perception of Aberdeen;
- traffic congestion on Beards Hill Road;
- being a "gas and go" destination;
- the future of Ripken Stadium.

Ms. Grover planned to:

- create a marketing and recruitment position versus contracting with a professional organization;
- look at the redevelopment of Route 40/TOD area;
- partnering with the Harford County Economic Development Advisory Board and others;
- construct a recreational area in Beards Hill;
- partnering with developers for the completion of Middleton Road;
- upgrade APG Road and the MTA Parking;
- explore Secretary Holt's vision and all available funding for the TOD area.

Ms. Grover showed examples of creative uses for the Moose Lodge, and shared demographic comparisons for housing in local municipalities.

6. Department of Public Works (DPW)

Mr. Torster presented the following: an overview of the DPW organizational chart totaling 91 authorized positions; an overview of the 2017-2021 Capital Improvement Plan which forecasted projected revenue and capital needs; the Beehive Work Order program (an interactive GIS system); background on the MS4 Permit (a municipal separate storm sewer system permit); the need for an elevated water storage tank in order to meet water supply needs. Current concerns were DPW staffing and retention, policy and guidance, and the trash sticker collection program.

Going forward, DPW would continue to work on the MS4 Permit, Ripken Stadium maintenance, Middleton Road extension, sidewalk replacement, road resurfacing, and

Building 250 (the Aberdeen Proving Ground Water Treatment Plant rehabilitation project). Mr. Torster's concerns and initiatives with the APG contract were improvements to the pumping stations, water leak detection and backflow prevention programs, Building 250 redesign treatment process, and upgrading to the sludge collection.

7. City Clerk

Ms. Correll noted that Clerks are the oldest of public servants in municipal government. Some of the Clerk's responsibilities included custodian of official records, official record keeper, custodian of the City Seal, record management, Maryland Public Information Act requests, municipal elections, open meeting/ethics compliance, among others. Her three initiatives were:

- Agenda software for meeting management for efficiency, transparency, research capabilities, and to save resources.
- A record management program to comply with State law and maintain a records retention/disposal schedule.
- Cross-training for the position to continue functions of government and services.

8. Aberdeen Police Department

Chief Trabert presented a video of pictures from past endeavors throughout the Police Department and discussed the following: the public information crew; the criminal investigation division; crime scene investigations, special operations, the Municipal SWAT Team, traffic division, K9 patrol, and crossing guards. He said that the Aberdeen Police Department was the only municipality in Harford County CALEA certified.

Current initiatives included community policing, homeless population, improving the Aberdeen Police Department brand, hiring a Code Enforcement Officer, crime prevention, developing new ways in the current media program, and training. His concerns were staffing, vehicles, medical retirement, pay scale and salary increases, IT, and demographic economics.

TOPIC DISCUSSIONS:

The Mayor and Councils discussed the following topics.

1. Salary Increases/Staffing

The Council and City Manager discussed reviewing salaries for the Waste Water Treatment Plant, Dispatch, and Environmental Department. The City Manager recapped the discussion with a chart showing which departments needed employees: the Police Department - four officers and two dispatchers; Public Works - ten employees; City Clerk - one employee; Human Resources - one employee; IT - one employee; and Planning - one employee. Ms. Shoaff recommended Harford Community College's website for the employee evaluation process.

2. Investment Policy

The City of Aberdeen's Investment Policy was generated and adopted in 1995 and needed updating. Mr. Robertson recommended the help of outside advisors. The Council discussed various options.

3. Trash Collection Program

The trash sticker program needs to be reviewed since the City was not making enough to cover the tipping fee. The "pay as you throw program" was discussed and it was noted that the County might build a transfer station. Mr. Torster will bring Council recommendations in 2017 on the matters.

4. MS4 Permit

Mr. Torster stated to the Council that the MS4 Permit was mandated and explained the associated costs. He also informed the Council about the status on City storm lines.

Being no further discussion, the meeting concluded at 4:44 p.m.