

**DRAFT
MINUTES**

College Station City Council
Retreat, Monday, June 13-14, 2005
Del Lago Conference Center
Montgomery, Texas

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Silvia, Mayor Pro Tem Happ, Council members Berry, Gay, Lancaster, White, Scotti

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Brymer, Assistant City Manager Brown, City Attorney Cargill, Jr., City Secretary Hooks, First Assistant City Attorney Nemcik

Mayor Silvia called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with Council member Gay absent. Members of the local media were present, The Eagle and KBTX.

Mayor made introductory comments. He stated that the goal of the retreat is to engage in positive communication and build consensus about goals and objectives.

Consultant Dick Bowers, former city manager of Scottsdale, Arizona, presented general guidelines for the retreat.

1. Where we are today
2. Where we want to be
3. What the main policy interest
4. What gets in the way of achieving them
5. What are we going to do about it
6. Commit to a common good
7. Set an action plan and accountability
8. Determine follow up process
9. Be a strong policy team with a common vision

Mr. Bowers shared information about retreat topics noted from the interviews held with each Council member prior to the retreat.

- Common Goals: Different Views
- Mutual trust and respectful behavior

- A larger sense of responsibility
- Leadership maturity to allow compromise
- Measures of success to show progress
- Public guidelines for decorum
- Code of ethics

Council members expressed feedback about their intentions for "running for office". Some of the answers were:

- Locally active in service groups, natural extension
- To make a difference, help shape policy
- Pivotal time in history, help balance growth

Comments were noted about the issues confronting the community and what council members liked and disliked about the community.

Strengths of community:

- Unique community
- Small town feel
- Respect for each other
- Amenities of larger town
- Benefit of TAMU
- Intellectual benefit
- Young, dynamic growing community
- Activities within a university community
- Parks
- Family oriented
- Progressive attitude
- Safe community
- Quality of life
- Strong economy

Weaknesses of community:

- Traffic gridlock
- Perceived animosity between students and local residents
- Problems associated with this young growing community
- Foreigners, minorities need equal opportunities
- Too much individualism between three entities.

- Somewhat isolated in terms of transportation, need connections

Council hoped to accomplish the following objectives during the two day retreat.

- Respect each other's position, different but together
- Agree on strategic intentions, key items, no long list
- Commit to the common good.
- Getting to know each other to be an effective Council
- Help with weaknesses and strengths

Major long term policy issues were emphasized by Council members.

- Collaboration and cooperation mutually beneficial
- Build City Center
- Be proactive on growth policy, use trend analysis, infrastructure and services
- Change staff mentality, facilitate more than regulate
- Economic development, Conference or Convention Center
- Transportation
- Recruiting and keeping best staff communicate major staff changes
- Water quality and state law
- Neighborhood well being
- Land use codes
- A&M impacts
- Communication: Frame our issues at policy level
- Establish systems for fiscal stability

Council members separated into two groups to prioritize long term and short term policy issues.

Council took a break at 10:40 p.m. Mr. Bowers pointed out four key themes that summarized Council's overall policy issues.

- I. Growth Management
- II. Collaboration and cooperation
- III. Neighborhood integrity
- IV. Economic Development

A. Growth Management (Strategic Initiative)

- Review and reevaluate how we do zoning; land use plan
- Review Zoning, physical structure of the City of College Station
- Types of business
- Changes occur from zoning cases
- Annexation
- Policies need to be communicated to our citizens
- Include in process – stakeholder

At this point, Council remarked on the importance of focusing on the visions and policies, rather than day to day tasks.

Mr. Bowers indicated that the current Mission statement was not clearly understood. Council agreed that it was important to communicate the Mission statement to its citizens through a variety of communication mechanisms. Council emphasized that the public should be consistently informed about the City's goals and "why" the City is working in a particular direction. The City should take a proactive stance on the communications with citizens.

It was noted that the policy issues should be understood by staff and it is staff's responsibility to bring Council administrative recommendations to address Council policy.

Council recessed for a lunch break at 12:10 p.m. Council member Gay arrived. Council returned for the afternoon session at 1:50 p.m.

B. Economic Development (Strategic Initiative)

1. Job Creation
2. Avoiding competition with other entities (perception)
3. Expansion of tourism
4. Revenue growth
5. Leverage knowledge based, promoting the right kind of growth.

Council recessed for a break at 2:40 p.m., returned at 3:10 p.m. Discussion continued on Economic Development issues.

A suggestion was made to create a College Station Economic Development Committee for specific issues.

Comments related to the fact that the TAMU/Blinn graduates are moving elsewhere for higher paying jobs, affordable living.

Other topics of importance to College Station Economic Development.

- Get city on the right agenda to support the business we want.
- Take advantage of our central location.
- Regional education cooperatives, vocational training and technical programs
- Business retention and regional partners

C. Collaboration (Strategic Initiative)

- Follow up from retreat
- Perception: not seen as collaborative, want to be seen as collaborative
- Collaboration by its nature is win-win.
- Need guiding principles for collaboration
- Include Blinn College officials in intergovernmental committee meetings

Continued discussion of this strategy would continue at a future study session.

D. Neighborhoods (Strategic Initiative)

- Four unrelated per home. Continuous study.
- Collaborate with Bryan on neighborhood issues
- Come up with proactive programs, still see it as a major problem
- Form neighborhood programs to mitigate
- Students involved in neighborhood issues
- Contact marketing companies for list of parents of new or potential students to send "welcome brochure" from City
- Work with off campus housing to market city standards
- Recognize that students are residents and taxpayers

Discussion concluded for the day. Council recessed at 3:55 p.m. to meet the Management Team for social and dinner.

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

Mayor Silvia called the meeting back into session at 8:45 a.m. .

Dick Bowers recapped yesterday’s discussions of key policy areas. He emphasized that the Council should meet at least quarterly to discuss these common themes.

Growth Management
Economic Development
Neighborhoods
Collaboration

He described a high performing community as:

<u>When the City is</u>	<u>The City Council is</u>
Vision and Values centric	Lives the values
Deeply purposeful	Creates, shares vision
Aligned	Enrolls self and others
Strong and capable	Employs self and others
Structurally sound	Creates structures to channel
Continually renewing	Discusses the undiscussables

Council continued discussion on strategic initiatives and key vision points. Council members conveyed the following issue list to the facilitator.

1. Council pointed out a mechanism to convey information about code enforcement, whereby, utilize the neighborhood forums for a variety of issues, expand two way communication. Engage the associations and traditional neighborhoods
2. Move forward on Conference Center project
3. Strengthen the police department
4. Enhance very positive teamwork mentality of Council as team.

5. Economic development policy and direction
6. Reports from Research Valley Partnership appointees to City Council.
7. Communication master plan
8. Garnish public support for City Center.
9. Establish goals and objectives with appointees for performance review purposes.
10. Selection process for appointing citizen committees.
11. Meeting Management
 - Work Study Sessions
 - 3 minute rule enforced for public comment
 - Utilize consent agenda

Mayor Pro Tem John Happ left the meeting at 11:25 p.m.

Council recognized the team's strengths and weaknesses. Mr. Bowers asked Council members to continue to improve the weaknesses and amplify the strengths.

Strengths

Devoted to community
Strong desire to work together
Very diverse and experienced
Independent thinkers

Weaknesses

Lack of timely, effective communication
Need strong group leadership to achieve potential
Poor decorum @ meetings
Engaging and informing citizens
Remember City Council ultimate decision body and move forward

Council took a 15 minute recess for lunch. The meeting reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Brief discussion was held on developing a new Vision Statement. Mr. Bowers suggested several ideas for Council to brainstorm at a future meeting:

Build a premier, high quality community. Best at basics and go the extra mile. Use intelligent community to get things done.

Proud citizens take ownership of the community. Young people would love to stay here but can't. Economic opportunity and complementary businesses.

Develop businesses while retaining our culture and rural nature. Use Research Valley to its potential, help shape it to our vision.

Be one community.... In common purpose, common shared vision standards and processes.

Knowledge based community, life long learning. Engage citizens, prudent demographic shifts and work force needs. Big picture, smart planning.

Growing South with I-69 as a key impact area. Tell our story to the citizens.

Council briefly discussed council meeting procedures and committee appointment process. Staff noted that the Council will have these items on the next regular agenda for consideration.

Discussion on retreat topics concluded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 23rd day of June, 2005.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

City Secretary Connie Hooks

Mayor Ron Silvia