

**HIGH POINT CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING (RETREAT)
FEBRUARY 13, 2020 – 9:00 A.M.
THE LOFT AT THE FACTORY, 410 W. ENGLISH ROAD**

MINUTES

ROLL CALL, CALL TO ORDER

Present (9):

Mayor Jay Wagner, Mayor Pro Tem Christopher Williams (Ward 2); Council Member Britt W. Moore (At Large); Council Member Tyrone E. Johnson (At Large); Council Member Cyril A. Jefferson (Ward 1); Council Member Monica L. Peters (Ward 3); Council Member S. Wesley Hudson (Ward 4); Council Member Victor A. Jones (Ward 5); and Council Member Michael A. Holmes (Ward 6)

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Greg Ferguson, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Jeron Hollis, Director of Communications & Public Engagement; Ryan Ferguson, Marketing Manager; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

Meridith Powell, Facilitator (www.valuespeaker.com)
Judy Stalder, TREBIC; Marlene Sanford, TREBIC; Jimmy Scott

News Media Present:

Pat Kimbrough, *High Point Enterprise*

Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Council convened to the second part of the Retreat and started group work to come up with the long-term goals.

Some suggestions/goals made by the groups were as follows:

- ✓ Accommodate the growing, changing population.
- ✓ Take a more holistic look at neighborhoods that need a lot of help (i.e. housing, street lighting, sidewalks in need of repair, bus shelters, etc....). Putting money in neighborhoods where they can really make a recognizable impact and difference by using the data being compiled by the Community Development & Housing Department. This can be a redevelopment zone or a revitalization area. Regarding the stabilization piece, City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle cautioned there are some in the neighborhoods that do not want their neighborhood to be “labeled” as needing help and she suggested it might be time to revisit this.
- ✓ Continue supporting the Catalyst Project. Keep the momentum going.

- ✓ Reduce poverty by 10% and reduce crime by 30%. It was noted that crime could be reduced with the stabilization/enhancement of the neighborhoods.
- ✓ There have been a lot of issues around food and a lot of resources in the city already working to address food insecurity, so it would be helpful to figure out a way to unify all the various groups in the community so there are not as many groups working on the same problem coming from different angles.
- ✓ Implementing a Catalyst Project 2.0 in the Southwest area to help ignite development to make it more attractive to developers; and make those residents feel “connected” to the existing Catalyst Project downtown. Council Member Peters stated the Southwest area is part of the Opportunity Zone and is part of the historic, industrial corridor of High Point and stressed that she does see this as a separate goal. She shared that she often gets calls from the Southwest residents and they continue to feel excluded and felt a message that the city does care should be shared with them.
- ✓ Start a “Shop High Point” initiative so that High Point residents realize they don’t have to travel to Winston Salem and Greensboro—the amenities are already in downtown High Point and more are coming.

Ms. Powell summarized the goals that were previously discussed.

1. Supporting our growing and changing population which includes millennials, Shop High Point, diversity and inclusion, and housing
2. Holistic strategy for stabilizing and enhancing neighborhoods to reduce poverty, violent crime, and ignite development, includes increasing the code enforcement.
3. Keep the momentum going and complete the downtown Catalyst Project
4. Create a Catalyst 2.0 project

Ms. Powell asked what needs to be fixed, enhanced, or changed. A lengthy discussion followed whether or not to keep the Catalyst 2.0 project as a fourth, separate goal.

Some of the reasons voiced were:

- Need a specific, attainable goal. Not sure that the area is ready yet.
- The planning that is taking place in the Southwest area is essential, but includes investors wanting to locate there which is a byproduct of other things.
- Must continue enhancing the Southwest community.
- The I-85 interchange is not and there is a lot of work to do on S. Main Street once the interchange is finished. Uncertainty of how this will affect development. [Council Member Peters interjected and pointed out S. Main is not part of the Southwest area].
- The I-85 interchange area is actually more attractive from a transportation standpoint than N. High Point; it’s where they all tie in.
- It’s prime location for freight, small scale/large scale manufacturing.
- Only have a certain amount of time and resources and a whole laundry list of things we want to accomplish.
- If something is not in the forefront, then it will be forgotten.
- Capable of doing two catalyst projects at the same time, not necessarily going full force into a project, but laying the groundwork to make sure we establish the framework and expand the

scope of the Catalyst 2.0. to not only small-scale manufacturing, but large-scale manufacturing as well.

Mayor Wagner explained that keeping the goals at three does not mean that the city is going to stop paying attention/working on the Southwest area or disband small scale manufacturing because the project is too important for the future. He spoke to how the city would eventually get to the place where more focus can be put on this area in an effort to get more definable, tangible goals.

Following the discussion, **it was the consensus to not add Catalyst 2.0 project as a long-term goal at this time.**

The final outcome from the discussion resulted in the following new long-term goals:

1. Create the environment in High Point that increases the population of diverse, engaged, entrepreneurial working millennials and active adults by 25%.
2. Develop a holistic strategy for enhancing and stabilizing neighborhoods to reduce poverty, violent crime, and ignite development.
3. Complete a downtown catalyst project that produces:
 - ✓ 500 private sector jobs
 - ✓ 15 – 20 new restaurants and shops
 - ✓ 250 additional residential housing units
 - ✓ A centralized gathering place

Ms. Powell instructed each group to get back together to come up with short term goals under each long-term goal. Each group presented ideas for the short-term goals for each of the three long-term goals. The short-term goals were narrowed down to the following.

1. Design a marketing campaign focused on diverse groups, events, and quality of life.
2. Select target neighborhood and coordinate necessary city departments to implement a holistic strategy.
3. Recruit 50 new office jobs and 5 new investors for catalyst project.

Once the short-term goals were established for each of the long-term goals, Ms. Powell instructed the groups to build an action plan around the short-term goals, to include the time frame, steps, accountability, and measurement. The final outcome for the Action Plan for each of the goals was as follows:

Goal: Design a marketing campaign focused on diverse groups, events, and quality of life.

Time frame: Six months.

Steps:

1. Do market research to determine asset inventory, target market, competition.
2. Establish partners.
3. Establish budget.

4. Determine effective platforms and media.
5. Focus on culture, diversity, quality of life, entrepreneurial spirit.
6. Ensure long-term focus on the plan.

Goal: Select target neighborhood and coordinate necessary city departments to implement holistic strategy.

Time frame: Two months

Steps:

1. Define what criteria and boundaries are needed for selection of neighborhoods.
2. Take the criteria/boundaries information to the Community Development Department.
3. Community Development Department gets the information and data required.
4. Community Development Department prepares a report to Council.
5. From the report, Council selects top five (5) neighborhoods.
6. Council directs the city manager to work with departments to get a more comprehensive report on those top five (5) neighborhoods and determine the budget and timetable.
7. The updated report is provided to Council and from that, Council chooses the target neighborhood(s).
8. Council reports it out to the community.

Accountability:

1. Criteria and boundaries defined.
2. Reports created.

Measurement:

1. Top five (5) neighborhoods selected.
2. Target neighborhood finalized.

Goal: Recruit 50 new office jobs and five (5) new investors for catalyst project.

Time frame: Six months

Steps:

1. Meet with executives of city's top 20 employers (private sectors).
2. Host prospective investor events (#number).
3. Create a national advertising campaign for downtown opportunities.

Accountability:

1. Monthly reports from staff to Council
2. Events scheduled and held.
3. Advertising campaign in place.

Measurement:

1. Reaction to advertising campaign- hits/impressions/likes.
2. Investments increase for catalyst project.
3. New office jobs created.

At this time, Marlene Sanford with TREBIC, was afforded an opportunity to make a comment. Ms. Sanford provided a different perspective from somebody that is not a High Pointer. She shared that this is the first time that she has seen this kind of positive strategic focus and thinking and wanted to make sure that the City Council knows that the rest of the world is noticing High Point. She spoke to how the business community has noticed, is intently tuned in to what High Point is doing, and how the environment in High Point is completely different than five years ago. She encouraged High Point to just not think about High Pointers because others in nearby communities are ready to come.

For the final group exercise, Ms. Powell asked for everyone to get back into the assigned groups and determine what all of this will look like when accomplished. Some of the things cited were:

- ✓ Streets of gold
- ✓ More vibrant downtown
- ✓ Improved quality of life
- ✓ Improved public perception
- ✓ Continued momentum
- ✓ Stronger community buy-in
- ✓ Economic prosperity at large
- ✓ Decreased poverty
- ✓ Decreased crime
- ✓ More homeownership

Ms. Powell informed Council that she would type up the notes from the discussions and would send it back to Council and explained it would be Council's responsibility to get traction on each of the short-term goals. She noted that not everything will work as planned, so expect some roadblocks and obstacles in the process moving forward to execute it. She advised the key is to keep the updates on the goals in the forefront at the council meetings. She then turned it over to staff for comments.

City Manager Greg Demko expressed appreciation to Ms. Powell for facilitating the discussions. He pointed out these are some pretty lofty goals but felt everything is doable in time.

Mayor Wagner advised that these goals would be in the forefront with reports to Council, and discussed in the various committees as well.

In wrapping up, Mayor Wagner noted that it takes courage to do these things for elected officials and for them to make those decisions. He issued a challenge to the elected officials to stick with this and see it through because these things were agreed to as a group as important. He stated he was really proud of the Council as a group in working together and being civil, getting things done, and deciding what the

priorities will be. He noted the reason the last goals of Council were successful because Council was focused and worked together as a team.

ADJOURNMENT

There being nothing further to discuss or come before Council, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m. upon motion duly made by Council Member Moore and second by Council Member Johnson.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay W. Wagner, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa B. Vierling, MMC
City Clerk