

City Council of the City of Carbondale, Illinois
Retreat
January 7, 2016

The City Council of the City of Carbondale, Illinois held a Retreat on Wednesday, January 7, 2016 at the Dayemi Community Center, 218 N. Illinois Avenue. Mayor Henry called the Retreat to order at 8:15 a.m. with the following-named members of the City Council present/absent:

1. Roll Call

Present: Councilwoman Carolin Harvey, Councilman Lee Fronabarger, Councilman Tom Grant, Councilman Adam Loos, Councilman Navreet Kang, Councilwoman Jessica Bradshaw, and Mayor John M. Henry

Absent: None

Also present were Deputy City Clerk Clinette Hayes, Assistant to the City Manager Alicia Burtley, Interim City Manager Gary Williams, Retreat Facilitator John Washburn, and City of Carbondale Department Heads

Mr. Washburn introduced himself to the City Staff and gave a brief review of yesterday's retreat. He also presented the Vision statement and Goals that were established by the Council. Today's purpose is to collectively establish priorities for the City Council and staff over the next 3 – 4 years.

2. Background: Setting the Context

Mr. Washburn briefly touched on the major points of each item below:

- Comprehensive Plan
- 2013 City Council Retreat
- Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2010
- Mayor Henry's State of the City Address from December 16, 2015
- Downtown Advisory Committee

Mr. Washburn pulled information from each of these, as well as information obtained from surveys completed by the Council and City Staff, to develop a comprehensive listing of challenges and priorities.

3. Discussion of Visions / Goals

Mr. Washburn presented several goals which were narrowed down to 7 by the Council in yesterday's Retreat. The 7 goals were shared with City Staff. Each person was asked to determine a way to attain each goal. At the end of discussion, the group was asked to select their own top 5 in order of priority.

- **Provide a High-Quality of life and Foster a Sense of Community for All Residents**
 - Community-made events, forums, community calendar, public meetings, public relations
 - Bring parks back into the city
 - Annual events/festivals
 - Utilize empty lots for parks/recreation/community gardening,
 - Owner occupied single family housing

- Utilizing the Civic Center
- Filling vacant office spaces in City Hall
- Public access television
- Address open ditches, sidewalks and quiet zones
- Improve signage to welcome visitors, aesthetics, safety,
- Embrace diversity
- Year-round community youth programs
- Using technology to communicate (apps, social media)

A break was observed at 10:35; reconvened at 10:45

- **Encourage Progressive Economic Development, Tourism, Arts, and Entertainment**

- Expand TIF areas
- Encourage entrepreneur and small business development
- Formal marketing for gigabit status
- One stop package for development
- Expand arts and entertainment
- Refining the business development process
- Zoning limits on short term activity
- Bring outdoor art into downtown area
- Centralized location for 2017 Eclipse information
- Consider branding Carbondale as a business friendly city
- Improve look of Main Street and Amtrak (curb appeal)
- Promote Carbondale as a destination. Coordination of efforts with agencies responsible for promoting Carbondale
- Affordable start-up
- Increased funding for economic development
- Code updates
- Consider standards for special use permits
- Museum/discovery center.

A break was observed for lunch at 12:00; reconvened at 12:15(working lunch)

- **Demonstrate Fiscal Responsibility and Transparency**

- Consider new revenue
- Property tax and other taxes
- Diversifying taxes; address “sunsetting” taxes
- Fully implement New World Systems
- Strategic annexation
- Events fee (ticket tax)
- Management/operations study
- Build a fund for emergencies (reserve)
- Proactive approach vs. reactive approach
- Expand health and wellness options
- Employee contributions to health insurance
- Culture of ownership in the city budget (What would I do if it were my money?)
- Examine existing fee structure
- Storm water utility fee
- Equipment purchase plan
- Be open to radical approaches to fiscal responsibility
- Pay attention to on-going costs with improvements.

A break was observed at 1:35; reconvened at 1:45

- **Provide High-Quality City Services and Infrastructure**
 - Customer service, “can-do” attitude, being a good listener
 - Examine ways to address infrastructure needs
 - Culturally sensitive staff (foreign/sign languages)
 - Maintain and improve existing assets
 - Updated phone list and PEN
- City employees should bring neighborhood concerns back to the appropriate department
 - Employees should know they are a part of the Carbondale community
 - Examine procedures from the customer side
 - Suggestion box on the website
 - Possibility of branding the city
 - Funding position for the public (relations, social media, website)
 - Look at opportunities for facilities (enhancements beyond SIU)
 - Keep all technology current

A break was observed at 2:30; reconvened at 2:40

- **Build On, Expand, and Develop New Relationships with SIU**
 - Seamless aesthetics between SIU and Carbondale
 - Utilize SIU interns
 - Expand communication between SIU and city services
 - Cooperative planning (what’s good for city and for SIU)
 - Respect differences in university and private sector environments
 - Safe light paths
 - Share SIU resources with community (rec/library)
 - SIU volunteers working with the city
 - Make it easier to travel to Carbondale
 - Centralized employee relocation services
 - Broaden groups of people that the City partners with
 - Partnering with SIU to identify things for students to do
 - Attend SIU Board of Trustee meetings in Carbondale
 - Continued partnerships between SIU and city law enforcement
 - Better coordination with SIU for cooperative work experiences with private sector
 - Cooperation with SIU for local school improvement
 - Market the university and city together
- **Use the Downtown Master Plan as a Guide to Revitalize the City Center**
 - Bury power lines
 - Make sure the Master Plan is comprehensive and consistent to city services
 - Use as a guideline for what the city is doing
 - Address the speed limit through downtown
 - Continuity (design standards) in downtown buildings
 - Finalize multi model center
 - Find a way to incentivize change in existing downtown facilities
 - Make sure the Master Plan has flexibility
 - Continue focus on parking,
 - Bring back the fun

- **Beautify Streetscapes and Enhance Residential Development/Rehabilitation**
 - Strategic annexation
 - Street lighting
 - Improving incentive program to improve curb appeal, open ditches and sidewalks
 - Support staff decisions regarding curb appeal decisions
 - City support for organizing neighborhood associations
 - Rehab of old rental houses
 - Flexible zoning restrictions for neighborhoods
 - Be cognizant of history and preservation
 - Create materials to describe additions to living in Carbondale
 - Plant more edible plants and trees
 - More affordable options for first time home buyers
 - Painting intersections to dress them up
 - Community pride signage
 - Improve welcoming corridors
 - Selective downzoning where it makes sense

Due to the discussion of items 1, 2, and 3 the remaining items, except for item 6, on the agenda did not get covered as time did not permit.

4. Discussion of Priorities

None

5. Ranking of Priorities

None

6. Citizens' Comments and Questions

None

7. Impressionistic Summary

None

8. Adjournment

The City Council Retreat adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Clinette C. Hayes, Deputy City Clerk

Approved by the City Council on
