

Cottage Grove City Council  
Goal Setting Minutes  
March 7, 2011

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Present were Mayor Williams, Councilors Fleck, Gowing, Murphy, Boone, Burbach and Doyle (6:30pm).

City Manager Richard Meyers told Council that the City Recorder had sent them information regarding the SEI forms that would be due April 15, 2011 and reminded them when they received the original to get it completed as soon as possible and bring it in to Trudy to send in by certified mail.

Richard talked about the vision and mission statement the Council had identified at the last goal setting meeting: Providing a foundation of services to insure a high quality of life for all citizens and visitors.

Richard said the vision and mission statement should be focused, simple and aim high. He asked Council what the most important part of the vision statement was.

Consensus was that it was quality of life.

Richard said the way it was worded it sounded like providing a foundation of services was the main focus.

Discussion was held and it was decided that “We create a high quality of life by providing a foundation of services for all citizens and visitors” was a better vision and mission statement.

Richard said now that they had the vision and mission statement, they needed to look at the goals and issues that they had put together at the last meeting and come up with goals in order to achieve it. He said in looking at the notes from the last meeting, there was sixteen goals that Council had identified. He asked Council what made a good goal.

Councilors said it was measurable, achievable, there was an outcome,

Councilor Fleck said the SMART goals were **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**angible.

Richard said when you think about specific goals, compared to general goals, they should be tied to specific things so we know when we have accomplished them. He asked if the goals they had put together from last meeting were specific enough, achievable, realistic, tangible and was there a way to measure them. He said some things government could do that no one else could do so they weren't measurable.

Discussion was held on how things could be measured.

Councilor Gowing passed out a list of suggested goals that had been provided to him by a constituent.

Richard read some of the goals from the Economic Forum held in November, 2010 by EBID. He said at the forum there were five roundtable groups that talked about five areas and the goals:

- 1) High unemployment and underemployed citizens - Continue to support programs and organizations that assist individuals with workforce training and support organizations that assist micro-enterprise entrepreneur in Cottage Grove.
- 2) Main Street Program - Continue partnership with EBID, Chamber and City and to help downtown property owners and business operators to be a part of the program.
- 3) Revolving loan funds for local businesses - Have EBID, City and EDC work on that.
- 4) How to approach recruiting new businesses - Respond to all State leads, proactive marketing approach and target industries and develop incentives to help close the sale
- 5) Fiber to every property be a priority - Yes but industrial and businesses done first before residential

Richard asked Council if there were any other goals since the last meeting that they had thought of that needed to be brought out.

Councilor Burback brought up the Municipal Judge and that he felt that after the meeting where the Judge spoke to Council that the Judge had no direction and no one telling him what he needed to be doing.

Councilor Fleck said he had just spoke to the Judge recently and that the Judge had a presentation that he wanted to present to the Council.

Councilor Boone said he had found on the internet, an evaluation process for Judges from the State of Alaska.

Councilor Gowing said one of his goals was to support the downtown businesses. He said Council couldn't really create businesses but what they could do was promote the businesses that were in Cottage Grove, which mean shopping locally and promoting citizens to shop locally. He said an issue he had was with the traffic problems in town and that public safety should be a primary concern and the City should be proactive instead of reactive.

Councilor Murphy agreed and said we needed to be preventative. She said the same had to do with economic development. The City could create a business friendly environment, but we also

had to create an environment where people wanted to bring their families. She talked about losing families that were leaving to find jobs elsewhere and it could get worse with the school district budget cuts. She didn't think the Council was supporting policies that made it friendly for families to move to Cottage Grove.

Discussion was held regarding the police department and traffic issues and educating the public to pay attention to traffic laws. It was discussed that we didn't want to be a community where tickets were written just to create revenue.

Providing incentives to get businesses to come to Cottage Grove was discussed and it was the consensus that it didn't work in the long run. Addressing the way the City did business was discussed as well and that encumbrances weren't placed and over regulating wasn't done that made it harder for businesses to come here.

Councilor Fleck said he liked that Howard went to the EDC meetings and that the City had a place at the table and we were willing to do what we could.

Councilor Boone said he had been doing research on budgeting techniques and trying to find a match on how the City budgets with what the citizens actually wanted, needed and would pay for. He had found a survey that was done in Baltimore that asked its citizens to rate different things the City provided on a scale of 1-10. He said it was more of a broad overview and was used to inform the Council and not constrain.

Discussion was held on surveys and the Council's views on them and how citizens sometimes didn't understand some complex budgeting issues and that Council represented every citizen not just special interest groups. Richard said there was a citizens survey group from Colorado which had a fully scientific survey that randomly sampled and validated and compared what cities had done. It helped to rate how the public perception was how you were doing. He thought it may be the same survey that Baltimore was doing. An estimate for the cost of the survey was around \$8,000-\$10,000 several years ago. The survey would go hand in hand with the visioning process. It would reach out to those citizens who didn't come to Council meetings to find out what their concerns or opinions were. Consensus was Council would be interested in looking into the possibility of the survey.

Richard had Council participate in an exercise where they each took ten pieces of paper and wrote down their top ten goals. Richard read all the goals Council had written down and then asked Council to group them into some kind of organization.

Council then went over and discussed the groups. They included recreation and youth; infrastructure; downtown and rehabilitation; buildings and businesses; public safety; fiber optics; water; IT and City website.

There was discussion on creating an IT position, why it was needed, how so many of the goals revolved around the internet and eventually that position could do the City's wireless system.

Richard asked the Councilors to review the groups and see if there was anything that could be combined into one goal or if anything needed to be changed. He said they needed to be concise as they could with the goals for the next exercise.

The Councilors reviewed and discussed all the goals and came to consensus on the groups. The next exercise was for the Council to select and initial their top five goals.

Council then reviewed all the goals and placed them in order according to votes.

Councilor Murphy pointed out that the visioning goals were not matching up with the goals that Council had selected. She said they wanted to hear from the citizens and wanted citizen involvement but the goals weren't reflecting that and they had heard it over and over again from the citizens.

Richard said the pipes and infrastructure were something that appeared in the visioning and appeared fairly high which amazed the consultants. He said usually that didn't happen which showed the community was a little more educated about the infrastructure than what most places were.

Councilor Murphy expressed her passion for youth issues in the community and her disappointment with Council and the goals selected and how she was the only one who selected goals which targeted the youth.

Richard said of all the goals written, not a single one was for operation or council procedures and how they address each other and how they would operate their functions. He said they got caught up on actual things they had the responsibility to do, but didn't do anything how to do them responsibly.

Councilor Boone said he didn't think of that as a goal, how respectful they were to each other.

Councilor Doyle said the reason she was in defense of Heather, was because it was frustrating when someone was passionate about something and she wasn't affected by it. She felt people had a right to be passionate and it was okay. She said sometimes as women when they were passionate about something about it came out.

Richard outlined the top goals that Council came up with and asked Council to come up with bullet points for each one.

- 1) Infrastructure (Water/Wastewater/Stormwater/Streets)
  - Sustainability - going to last as we grow - reach the 10,000 mark and would we be able to sustain it with what we have - job creation
  - Funding - continue to move forward on adopted plans, look at other options whether it be bonding or some other option
  - Education/PR/Raise Awareness - on what physical infrastructure was, have a

contest for school kids to draw pictures of what infrastructure was, go to the school or have tours so they can see the water and wastewater plants and provide tours to groups, Council to be involved

- Fiber optics

2) Develop an Objective Process for Review and Evaluation of Court Operations

- Create system for proper evaluation and communication with judge
- Goal session with judge
- Smooth flowing and productive and cost effective judicial process for court system when that solves problems and creates revenue and deters crime
- Council to understand dynamics of court
- Review process

3) Public Safety - Police Services

- Preventative measures
- Citizens feel secure
- Maintain minimum level of service - not go below 24/7 patrol
- Foundation of services
- Budget cuts

4) Economic Development

- Workforce Training
- Improve development services department, customer service training with staff
- Work with EDC loan program
- Streamline processes

5) Quality of Life - Create opportunities for recreation and public involvement in the community by supporting a variety of community events, develop parks and promote tourism

- Heritage
- Historic preservation
- Awareness
- Youth

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

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Trudy Borrevik, City Recorder

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Gary Williams, Mayor