

City of Waverly, Iowa Goal Setting Report

July 30, 2013

Mayor:

Bob Brunkhorst

City Council:

Gary Boorum

Gene Lieb

Tim Kangas

Kathy Olson

Chris Neuendorf

Dan McKenzie

Wes Gade

City Staff:

Phil Jones, City Administrator



Facilitated by:

Jeff Schott

Institute of Public Affairs

University of Iowa

**CITY OF WAVERLY, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
2013**

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CITY OF WAVERLY, IOWA

GOAL SETTING SESSION

2013

Introduction

The City of Waverly requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the city with goal setting. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns, potential new initiatives/programs/policies and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness.
2. Conduct a goal-setting session with the elected officials.
3. Conduct a preliminary session with department heads.
4. Preparation of this final report.

Goal Setting Work Session

The Mayor and City Council held a work session conducted by the IPA on July 30, 2013. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Bob Brunkhorst and Council Members Gene Lieb, Gary Boorum, Kathy Olson, Tim Kangas, Chris Neuendorf, Dan McKenzie, and Wes Gade. Also in attendance and participating in this meeting was City Administrator Phil Jones. A preliminary session with city department heads was held on July 23, 2013. In attendance and participating in the meeting were City Administrator Phil Jones, Deputy City Clerk Carla Guyer, Finance Director Jack Bachhuber, Police Captain Don Eggleston, Public Services Superintendent Brian Sullivan, Library Director Sarah Meyer – Reyerson, Public Works Director/City Engineer Mike Cherry, Leisure Services Director Tab Ray, Economic Development Director Brent Matthias, Community Development Director/Zoning Specialist Ben Kohout, and City Attorney Bill Werger.

Major City Accomplishments

The following were identified as major city accomplishments during the past two years:

- Completed flood mitigation projects/plans including home buyouts and dam project
- 2013 flood response
- New trash collection ordinance-requiring common containers - bin rollout started
- Street improvements:
 - Completed 2nd St SW and 5th St/5th Ave NW reconstruction projects
 - Finalized engineering for Phase I of \$11 million Cedar River Parkway (10th Ave) extension project
 - Collector street reconstructions every year
 - 12th Street NW asphalt overlay
 - 16th Street improvements (in process)
 - Completed 4th St SW improvements
 - Oak Street reconstruction
 - 8th Street NE reconstruction
- Economic development:
 - GMT – retention and expansion
 - People’s Insurance expansion
 - Carmi expansion
- Completed 1st and 2nd year, 3rd year in process, of seven year sidewalk repair/pedestrian ramp program
- Painted water towers and added WSR Logos
- Established a telecommunications utility to proceed with exploring/implementing broadband technology
- City Administrator hiring
- Band shell decision
- Infrastructure improvements for sewer and water
 - Upgrade of the 6th Ave NW and Ridgewood lift stations
 - WPC trickling filter and lift station improvements
- Began the AMR water and electric meter project
- Adopted stable 3-year water, sewer and solid waste fees
- Grant awards
 - Downtown Upper Story Grand Award - \$2.4 million
 - Over \$118,000 for Police Mobile Data Terminals reducing impact on tax dollars
- Good start on green spaces and community gardens
- Purchased 72 acres for initial development of fairground/ball diamond project - Champion Ridge
- Updated comprehensive land use plan
- Approved a downtown master plan
- Began initial land acquisition steps to expand our municipal airport runway
- Start of FEMA floodplain map revisions
- Completed preliminary design - Dry Run Project

Major City Accomplishments (continued)

- Finance:
 - City is in strong financial condition – strong fund balances
 - Affirmation of Aa2 rating
 - Received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- Disaster preparedness testing
- Updated Capital Improvements Plan
- Updated city website
- Citizen survey done, goal setting and strategic planning underway
- Stronger work with HR and Legal professionals:
 - Updated personnel policies and job descriptions
- Reduced staff by one in Accounting while maintaining stable service
- Public Safety
 - Met the FCC mandated January 1, 2013 deadline to narrowband frequencies for all non-Federal public safety radio systems (funding through Law Board)
 - Police Department received a \$200,000 grant to assist with security for the Waverly-Shell Rock School District
 - Developed School Response for Active Shooter Situations - met with and now training district staff and implementing updated options
 - Initiated another community focused event with National Night Out with over 300 people participating
 - Citizens Police Academy
- Library
 - Added a free downloadable music collection to library
 - Replaced furniture in library (received state funding)
 - Significant historic preservation efforts from library staff
 - expanded DIY programming at library
 - Significant eReader push for patrons with assistance
 - Re-accreditation from the State Library of Iowa in 2012
- Restructured golf maintenance staff resulting in considerable savings
- Began process of roof/building repairs at Fire Station

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances or operations:

- City tax revenue reduction from new state property tax legislation:
 - Impact of new commercial and industrial rollbacks on city tax revenues, especially after state backfills are phased out
 - Impact of new multi-residential rollbacks – no state backfill being provided
 - Long-term impact of reduction of maximum valuation growth from 4% to 3%
 - With the new multi-residential rollback, Waverly should make sure areas are zoned for apartment complexes. Developers should see this as an opportunity.
 - Getting accurate valuation figures from the county for commercial property tax changes
- Property taxes keep growing on both commercial and residential. We have to keep those in check
- Continuing affordable growth strategies and balanced budgets
- Housing
 - Perception of lack of rental housing for both LMI and upper scale income
 - Beginning trends in rural housing migration to urban living
 - Increasing demand for low density multiple unit housing (duplex up to 6-plex)
 - Expand/redesign/develop new Housing Commission to help take the lead on "affordable housing" initiative
 - Low residential housing starts
 - Lack of new housing subdivisions
- Health care/work comp costs
- Pool project
- Lack of business park space
- How to address "industrial zoning" along railroad tracks between 6th Ave NW and 7th Ave NW (relocation of Croell, Strottmann, etc.) in a residential setting and east of town a gas tank storage next to residential setting
- Code Enforcement
 - What is the model going to look like? Is it being completed in an effective way at this point?
 - Rental code - making sure we don't over regulate and add a lot of staff time
- Future growth
 - With annexation in the next 50 years, how will the Water Utility handle the possibility of no new hook-ups with Rural H2O surrounding Waverly?
 - Ensure infrastructure and street planning are done with continued growth in mind
- County Economic Dev concerns

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities (continued)

- Incorporating new technologies/social media in communications strategies
- Incorporating watershed management practices with future land use plans
- Putting non-needed projects like 10th Ave Extension and Airport ahead of very much needed projects like residential street improvements
- Controlling Police expenses with increasing Police Pension costs - direct impact on City Budget
- Explore moving "official" Highway 3 to Cedar River Parkway so Bremer Ave can become a city street and then redesigned
- DOT and highway 3 - how can we be more aggressive with the DOT?
- Solid waste
 - Usage fees/options
 - Co-mingled recycling
 - Move to a "pay per use/throw" fee program for solid waste
 - Single stream recycling - Does Waverly embrace whole hog or not?
- Revisit having building inspection/construction plan review under County operations
- Scope of operations under City Engineer's management
- What to do with Jr High?
- Memorial Park and Amvets Park - long term may be vacated by baseball and softball
- Continue our E-Commerce and E-information
- Budget growing too fast
- New Mayor
- Completing sidewalk gaps will be difficult
- Survey suggests street repairs are needed/high priority
- Off street parking in rental areas
- With the downtown grant for housing opportunities to enhance the entire downtown
- Champions' Ridge
 - Funding
 - May be a financial drain
- Fringe development in county - but use city services without paying city taxes
- Age of facilities
- Lack of storage in Public Services areas
 - Opportunity to improve services and efficiency
- Parks maintenance facility condition
- 48 hour parking that is being abused
- Cedar River Parkway a development opportunity
- 4th Street SW BK to DQ reconstruction
- Ability to maintain the expected level of service, neatness, and cleanliness throughout the community is a concern
- More demand on staff, no additional resources
- Workforce planning issues - with retirements, possible functional realignment

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities (continued)

- Golf management contract
- Bremer Avenue:
 - Street condition
 - Streetscape
 - Traffic volumes
 - Marketing/rebranding
- Need to look at City IT questions and/or staffing
- The "new" city website is nice, but realize perhaps expanded need for service of this amenity
- Improve video/audio quality of televising/streaming of council meetings
- Overall management and security of City's webpage
- Mapping information HUB type position (new) could add value to how citizens receive information
- Potential for large turnover of Council this November and future staff turnover
 - Need for way to have smooth transition while maintaining direction.
- Need to do something to get over the economic development hump of "full and happy"
- Marketing Waverly - need to do a better job of sharing the positives of the city
- Demands for street improvements and how to finance
- Reducing the Library tax subsidy
- Equal pay steps for part time employees in all departments
- A thorough city employee pay and benefit study
- How progressive of a stance on enforcement is the Council going to be comfortable with? Once the level of enforcement has been established, will the Council back the staff in imposing those standards?
- Lack of commercial building lots
- Library:
 - Continued existence of Iowa Communications Network (ICN) as internet provider? Inexpensive internet access for the public library
 - Ongoing shift from print to digital resources (impacts collection and staff)
 - Shift from libraries full of shelves to seating/interaction spaces
 - Shift to handheld personal computing devices spread more widely throughout the population
 - Aging population and providing library services to the homebound
 - How to fund digitization of library's local history collection
- Threat of invasive species/Emerald ash borer – impact on city properties, resources

Council Priorities

The participants reviewed potential, programs, policies and initiatives for the upcoming 24 month period and selected the following as City Council priorities:

- Make a decision regarding rental housing inspection
 - Staff to evaluate information and make recommendations
 - Adopt Municipal Infractions ordinance
- Expand TIF Districts
- Advocate for IDOT reconstruction of Bremer Ave
- Make a decision regarding broadband expansion/financing
- Investigate alternatives for Waverly Business park initiative
- Develop funding plan and implementation program for downtown (Main Street) revitalization
- Implement five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Develop financing plan/phasing of Dry Run creek improvements
- Continue sidewalk repair/pedestrian ramp construction program
- Continue AMR water and electric meter project
- Airport safety zone enhancement/compliance
- Historic District surveys
- 20th Street NW – box culvert and railroad crossing
- Cedar River Parkway – Phase I construction
- Schedule referendum on swimming pool project
- Develop plan for reconstruction of local street system
- Conduct community-based strategic planning initiative
- Champions Ridge – city construction of entrances and infrastructure
- Future planning for commercial/industrial development
- Conduct core services study
- Develop plan for Memorial Park renovation
- Develop plan for river use

Organizational Effectiveness

The Mayor and City Council reviewed a variety of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the selected goals and priorities. After review and discussion, the Mayor and City Council selected the following steps to improve organizational effectiveness:

- Continue to enhance city website/streaming video of council meetings initiatives to enhance civic engagement/communication:
- Investigate a trial program of holding two council meetings per month, with one of those meetings involving a planning session scheduled prior to the council meeting (e.g. 5:30 pm)
- In conjunction with Wartburg College, develop internship program focusing on public communications
- Meet periodically with Board of Supervisors
- Engage County with regard to economic development priorities/strategies

- Upon election of new Mayor, consider reviewing/updating council rules of procedure
- Evaluate organizational structure of Public Works
- Review/combine boards and commissions

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Waverly with this goal setting process. I was extremely impressed with the level of cooperation and positive attitudes of the elected officials and city staff.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur.

It is recommended that city staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the Mayor and City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the Mayor and City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa
July 31, 2013

Exhibit A

City of Waverly
Goal Setting Session – 2013

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

- Develop financing plan/phasing of Dry Run creek improvements
- Cedar River Parkway – Phase I construction
- Make a decision regarding rental housing inspection
 - Staff to evaluate information and make recommendations
 - Adopt Municipal Infractions ordinance
- Investigate alternatives for Waverly Business park initiative
- Develop funding plan and implementation program for downtown (Main Street) revitalization
- Implement five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Schedule referendum on swimming pool project
- 20th Street NW – box culvert and railroad crossing
- Expand TIF Districts
- Make a decision regarding broadband expansion/financing
- Conduct community-based strategic planning initiative
- Champions Ridge – city construction of entrances and infrastructure
- Develop plan for Memorial Park renovation
- Advocate for IDOT reconstruction of Bremer Ave
- Develop plan for river use
- Continue sidewalk repair/pedestrian ramp construction program
- Continue AMR water and electric meter project
- Airport safety zone enhancement/compliance
- Historic District surveys
- Future planning for commercial/industrial development
 - Determine priorities
 - Increased Marketing
- Make a decision regarding additional incentives for residential/commercial development
- Make a decision regarding adopting a storm water utility fee/tax
- Lower Property Taxes
- Conduct core services study
- Mailbox placement and replacement policy
- Comprehensive pay equity study
- Early retirement program
- Construction of 4th street corridor to Bremer Ave
- Partner with chamber to mix private/public funds for economic development

- Electronic payroll software
- Municipal Code update
- Enhance equipment/vehicle replacement fund
- Develop plan for reconstruction of local street system
- Establish online and credit card payments for all departments
- Establish policy to email utility bills
- Adopt alternate street parking rules
- Provide health insurance coverage for permanent part-time employees (<30 hours/week)
- Increase funding for urban forestry program
- Provide for Human resources staffing and programming
- Provide for Public Information staffing and programming