

Fairfax Town Council Minutes
Special Workshop Meeting
Fairfax Women's Club
Saturday, March 20, 2010

Call to Order/Roll Call:

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Larry Bragman
Pam Hartwell-Herrero
John Reed
Lew Tremaine
David Weinsoff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Rock, Town Manager
Ken Hughes, Police Chief
Jim Moore, Planning Director
Laurie Ireland-Ashley, Finance Director
Kathy Wilkie, Public Works Director
Joanne O'Hehir, Minutes Clerk

Vice-Chair Bragman called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

Open Time for Public Expression

No one from the public stepped forward to speak.

Discussion/Consideration of the Town's Annual Strategic Plan and Goals – Town Manager

Town Manager Rock presented the staff report. He noted that the time had run out at the previous special meeting and that discussions on Public Works projects would continue. He noted that the goals were listed in priority.

Mayor Tremaine arrived at 9.23 a.m.

Public Works Director Wilkie led a discussion on Pastori Avenue and requested additional funding to incorporate landscaping. Vice-Mayor Bragman noted that the landscaping on Center Blvd was not exceptional and that he would recommend discussion on the use of native plants for Pastori Avenue.

In response to a question on sidewalks, Public Works Director Wilkie stated that the type of materials used would depend upon available funding. Councilmember Reed suggested that funding might be available from "Safe Routes to Schools" for curb and crosswalk improvements.

Planning Director Moore led a discussion on the Bolinas Road improvement project, parking issues and the Downtown Plan. There was general consensus amongst council members to invite Professor Donald Shoup to address the Town Council on paid parking.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on carbon emissions and energy savings and he noted that significant energy savings had been made. Mayor Tremaine noted that energy savings would be available to everyone when Marin Clean Energy (MCE) became available in May.

There was general consensus amongst council members that additional goals could be added to the list.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on the Strategic Financial Plan. Finance Director Ireland-Ashley explained the differences between financial strategic plan and fiscal sustainability.

Mayor Tremaine opened the discussion to the public.

In response to a question, Finance Director Ireland-Ashley stated that Measure I did not take effect until July 2010 and had not, therefore, been added to the list of goals.

Finance Director Ireland-Ashley led a discussion on financial planning.

Public Works Director Wilkie led a discussion on FEMA projects that were due for completion later in the year, which included Creek Road Bridge. She said that the Town was working with the Water Board to address their issues and she noted that the permit process was long.

General discussion took place on water detention, which Public Works Director Wilkie stated should be addressed in the new Storm Water Ordinance.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on helping the business community. He noted that there were few vacancies in store fronts but that tax revenue was flat.

Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero noted that the plan did not address home-based businesses, which led to a discussion on how non-regulated businesses could be encouraged to take out a business license.

Planning Director Moore led a discussion on the Town General Plan and he noted that the elements were coming together.

Councilmember Reed led a discussion on the need to publicize chipper days and volunteer efforts to clear trails. Finance Director Ireland-Ashley suggested that the Town's Website could be better utilized to publicize such events.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on the need for more funding if sale tax and property tax failed to increase. He stated that further staff cuts would otherwise be necessary. Finance Director Ireland-Ashley stated that she was working on projections for retirement and healthcare funding needs through 2014.

Town Manager Rock noted that professional training for staff had been a dilemma with budget cuts.

Vice-Mayor Bragman explained his concern that there was insufficient space in Town Hall and he led a discussion on the possibility of securing space in the Fire Department building, which Town Manager Rock confirmed was owned by the Town. There was general consensus amongst council members that the option should be further explored.

Planning Director Moore led a discussion on affordable housing units. Vice-Mayor Bragman noted that an inventory on affordable housing was needed and Planning Director Moore stated that a survey on rent would be useful.

General discussion took place on non-profit organizations that helped the homeless.

Town Manger Rock led a discussion on the possibility of creating a historical district. Planning Director Moore explained what would be entailed in planning terms to preserve the character of a building or district. It was noted that the General Plan addressed the need for a historic building to be rebuilt in its previous footprint.

Mayor Tremaine led a discussion on the best use of funds from Measure I should they become available for teenage programs and he suggested that kids should be invited to give their opinion. Vice-Chair Bragman suggested that the Youth Center could be updated and improved.

Town Manger Rock led a discussion on public safety and he noted that the town would be holding a safety day in May, where safety personnel would be available to speak with the public. There was general consensus amongst council members that Town Hall could be opened and staff could be available to answer queries by residents.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on sirens and he said that there was a need to investigate a suitable site, which would then be brought before the Town Council for its consideration.

Vice-Chair Bragman led a discussion on the ambulance service and he noted that the Fire Department was in need of an ambulance. General consensus was reached that this should be a long-term goal.

Vice-Chair Bragman led a discussion on a policy decision that should strike the Bush administration from the town's political goals. There was general consensus that the language could be changed to better reflect Fairfax's goals.

M/S, Weinsoff/Bragman, Motion to establish Fairfax as a peace community.

Weinsoff:	Yes
Hartwell-Herrero:	No
Reed	No
Bragman:	Yes
Tremaine:	No

Motion failed.

M/S, Bragman/Tremaine, Motion to establish Fairfax as a peace community in opposition to the destructive and illegal domestic and foreign policies of the Federal Government.

Weinsoff:	No
Hartwell-Herrero:	Yes
Reed	Yes
Bragman:	Yes
Tremaine:	Yes

Motion passed.

Discussion/Consideration of the Town's Annual Strategic Plan – Town Manager

Town Manager Rock stated that he would add the new goals and suggested additions to the Strategic Plan for the Council's discussion at the next special meeting.

Finance Director Ireland-Ashley suggested that a financial sustainability plan should be created that would dovetail with the Strategic Financial Plan, which should include reserve and purchasing policies, to which there was general consensus amongst council members.

Town Manager Rock led a discussion on forthcoming budget meetings and workshops.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne O'Hehir, Minutes Clerk