

**WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL  
Council Retreat  
Chuck Fulton Meeting Room  
54 Moore Street, Walla Walla  
January 11, 2014**

**1. WELCOME CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Cummins called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Mary Lou Jenkins, Dick Morgan, Chris Plucker, Allen Pomraning and Mayor Jerry Cummins.

Absent: None.

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, City Attorney Tim Donaldson, Deputy City Manager Tim McCarty, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Parks & Recreation Director Jim Dumont, Police Chief Scott Bieber, Public Library Director Beth Hudson, Fire Chief Bob Yancey, Finance Manager Jean Teasdale, Technology Services Manager Vikki Peterson-Rea, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

Also Present: John Van Gorkom, Strategic Planning Consultant.

**A. Citizen and employee satisfaction results**

City Manager Shawa presented a high level overview of the results from the citizen and employee satisfaction surveys performed by Cobalt Community Research. Both surveys had a very high rate of return. The City was ahead of comparables on employee satisfaction and engagement.

**2. ACTIVE AGENDA**

**A. Review outcomes of priorities set at 2013 Council Retreat**

City Manager Shawa provided a brief review of the Council's 2013 goals:

- South side annexation: There was a great deal of opposition from the areas that are not highly developed. These areas were also opposed due to the City's failure to connect penalty for wastewater. This penalty has been repealed and the proposed

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boundaries for the annexation modified to include the areas that are developed.

- Gangs: The police chief is continuing work on the "Clearing House for Hope."
- Strategic Plan: There will be an in-depth presentation on the strategic planning efforts.
- Communications: New City website deployed; Parks and Library are using Facebook; the Go Walla Walla campaign was initiated for public works projects; Peak Democracy was used for citizen feedback on the Alder Street parking issue; a communications officer position was included in the 2014 budget.
- Walla Walla Excellence: Customer service standards have been developed; City-wide customer service training was provided; and three employees attended State examiner training. Technology Services Manager Vikki Peterson-Rea has been selected as an examiner for a state application.
- Streets: Staff is proposing that the second phase of Rose Street be delayed going to bid until December 2014/January 2015 to ensure it is done right from both staff and financial perspectives. Staff would like to start breaking the cycle of getting projects out to bid late in the construction season which increases project costs. The sidewalk infill project would move forward but a delay would have no impact on the other Transportation Improvement Board grant. Concerns were expressed by Council with delaying Rose Street. It was the consensus to continue discussion at the Work Session on January 13.

### **B. Strategic Planning Presentation.**

City Manager Shawa introduced John Van Gorkom, Strategic Planning Consultant. Mr. Van Gorkom reviewed his experience and the strategic planning process used by the senior leadership team.

Mr. Van Gorkom and staff outlined the four strategies developed by senior leadership staff and how these strategies work in concert with the comprehensive plan:

1. We will engage our residents, businesses and employees by developing and deploying a two-way communication plan that enables feedback; identifies needs and expectations; and evaluates our performance.

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2. We will set priorities and dedicate necessary resources to renew our infrastructure.
3. We will lead a collaborative effort to promote and enhance a safe community.
4. We will encourage economic development and sustain financial strength.

City Manager Shawa reported the next steps will be Council adoption of the strategies and strategic objectives in February and staff development of detailed action plans for implementation.

Senior leadership staff was excused with the exception of City Manager Shawa, City Attorney Donaldson, and City Clerk Hill.

### **C. Review of 2014 Legislative Priorities.**

City Manager Shawa outlined how staff and City Council members approach legislative issues in the State and Congress. The City's 2014 draft legislative policies, besides the Association of Washington Cities priorities, include:

#### State Legislative Issues:

- Transportation – US 12 Phases 7A&B, \$126 million.
- Local transportation funding.
- Public Works Trust Fund.
- Veterans' Long Term Care Facility.

#### Congressional Issues:

- US 12 – funding for Phase 8, \$250 million for design, permitting and right-of-way funding.
- Veterans' Long Term Care Facility in Walla Walla – Support Federal match to 2012 State appropriation of approximately \$13 million.
- EPA STAG Grant – funding for City water treatment upgrades due to LT2 project.
- Mill Creek – improvement and demonstration project.

There was clarification and discussion on these priorities.

### **D. Working lunch and open discussion.**

Council and staff discussed the following:

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- Annexation: City Attorney Donaldson explained the difference, advantages, and disadvantages between the petition and election methods of annexation. It was the consensus of a majority of Council to move forward with the petition method of annexation for the area south of Abbott Road and east of Cottonwood encompassing the three developed subdivisions. A majority of Council expressed the desire to consider a policy amendment to not extend City utilities until property is annexed to the City.
- Cost of Labor index: There was discussion on the current use of cost of labor indexes for non-represented employees and the impact this methodology has had on some employees. It was the consensus of a majority of Council to have staff review the methodology used for non-represented employee salary schedules with a report back to the City Council in August.
- Council travel: It was the consensus of a majority of Council to have the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and City Manager draft a policy to determine how budgeted travel funds for Council are allocated and used.
- Finance Committee/Budget Development: It was the consensus of a majority of Council to maintain a Finance Committee with a change to rotate one member of the Finance Committee every year among Councilmembers; and to ensure a public process with all members of Council in developing the budget.
- Legislative Committee: It was the consensus of a majority of Council to establish a three member legislative committee to provide flexibility in responding quickly to changing directions in legislative priorities and to advocate legislative priorities.
- Council communication with City staff: Council and staff were reminded to keep the City Manager in the loop on all issues when Council communicates with City staff.
- Aviary: It was the consensus of a majority of Council to have a report on the progress by the Friends of the Pioneer Park Aviary in meeting their benchmarks, with balance sheet information, for consideration at the Council's first meeting in February.

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- LT2 Water Treatment Plant improvements: This will be a high priority for Council in 2014. Staff will need direction on whether to pursue the operate, design, build, operate (ODBO) approach or use the General Contractor/Construction Manager (GC/CM) delivery method. This will be on the January 13 Work Session for discussion.
- Communications: The City's current communications efforts were reviewed. This will continue to be a major focus with the hiring of a communications coordinator.
- Gangs/Youth Issues: The Police Chief is continuing the "Clearing House of Hope" efforts and other methods in dealing with gangs and other youth issues.
- Strategic Plan: It was the consensus of a majority of Council to move forward with the strategic plan as outlined earlier in the meeting.
- Swimming pool: There was discussion on the feasibility of renovating Memorial Pool as proposed by a local citizens group. This local citizens group doesn't appear to be working with staff because Memorial Pool cannot be rebuilt as a competitive pool and it is uninsurable. Staff suggested that the first step is to determine what the community will support financially. Then the City Council will need to determine if a pool is a priority and if so, the amount of funding necessary to subsidize maintenance and operation.
- Other:
  - Assisting in the creation of stronger neighborhoods.
  - Use of emergency management notification system for identifying geographical areas for messages from the City (i.e. leaf pickup schedule; infrastructure repairs; etc.)
  - Empowering citizens to be leaders within their own neighborhoods or smaller communities.
  - Incentivizing citizens to be more civic-minded.
  - Ensuring streets remain a priority. This will be accomplished through developed action plans to meet the City's strategic objectives.
  - Planning for future growth within the City and ensuring land is annexed to support this growth.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.