
City of Falls City
City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2020 5:00 PM
Meeting Location: 320 N Main Street, Falls City, Oregon 97344

Council Present: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill, Tony Meier, Cliff Lauder, Dennis Sickles, T.J. Bailey

Staff Present: Mac Corthell, City Manager; William Sullivan, Community Development & Outreach Coordinator; Jamie Ward, City Clerk

Others in Attendance: Sue Dicile, Facilitator.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Gordon called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

2. Roll Call

Clerk Ward took roll call.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gordon led the pledge.

4. Motion to adopt the entire Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor T. Meier and seconded by Councilor L. Sickles to adopt the entire agenda with changes the addition of swearing in new Councilor T. J. Bailey. Motion carried 5-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill Tony Meier, Cliff Lauder, Dennis Sickles

City Manager Corthell swore in Councilor T.J. Bailey

5. Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor T. Meier and seconded by Councilor L. Sickles to adopt the Consent agenda carried 5-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill Tony Meier, Cliff Lauder

6. 2020 Goals Setting

- a. Mayor Gordon wanted to thank everyone for their continued service and dedication to the City. He said he is excited to observe all the progress being done that community members have stated they would like to see.
- b. Ms. Dicile wanted to thank everyone for welcoming her; she wanted to show everyone a sticky note on the agenda (See exhibit A) and point out that there is a noted time for each agenda item next to the agenda item. She wanted to clarify that it was set there to keep things moving along smoothly. Ms. Dicile went over the themes from pre-session interviews (see exhibit B).
- c. City Manager Corthell went over the existing goals that Council and Staff are working on over the past year. Some strong points are addressing the backflow situation and giving a presentation on low cost solutions. Helping community members understand City Government and holding three (3) town hall meetings for that. Creating an Events procedure policy and welcoming a two new City Sanctioned Events Let Freedom Ring and

Pride. The hiring of RARE participant William Sullivan and all the work he has been doing. Sullivan has been working with the Visioning Committee on downtown beautification, the pathway project, and the development of our new website. Corthell went on to talk about the implementation of the Falls City Internship program, the partnership with Western Oregon University for social media help, Community Vision Road Map and the Falls City Schools Historic App that students are developing. Corthell brought up that the Fire Department is now up to code in a lot of areas, that he and bob are holding regular Friday meetings for the first time.

- d. Mission statement remains the same:
Create an environment that supports community rural living at its best by mixing family, work, recreation and social opportunities while providing fiscally sound, responsible municipal services.
- e. Purpose- To Enhance The Quality Of Life In Falls City
- f. Goals Identified and milestone timeframe
 - i. Water, sewer and waste water infrastructure goals were set in terms of priorities to support the 2017 Water Master Plan. Some key ideas in moving the wastewater lagoon construction forward include setting milestones for each project in a specific timeline. Council agreed that between the months of
 - February to June 2020-Council will focus on getting the Environmental and Engineering Study completed and determining some Financing options for the project via projects with Council Work Sessions and the One Stop Shop Meeting.
 - July to December 2020-Council will focus on providing information to Citizens by holding Town Hall meetings, keeping information flowing freely on social media sites and keeping our website up to date with current wastewater lagoon project information. Council also would like to see all the grants being applied for in this period.
 - January to June 2020-Council would like to see the Land fully acquired.
 - July to December 2020- Council would like to begin construction.
 - 2021 and Future years- Council will focus on getting Facilities Plan amendment done and adopted.

It was also stated by Mayor Gordon that the need for affordable and/or low income housing options should be a key factor in Community Development. After Council discussion Council agreed that the need for the City's sewer system being upgraded took precedence over housing initiatives due to the fact that without the system being updated we could not really welcome or service more addresses.

- ii. Economic Development Goals were second on the list for Council. Those goals include Code Services, Falls City Beautification, and Destination Development. City Council acknowledged the fact that Code Services is not something the City

can afford to support on its own and would like to see recommendations on what other similar sized communities did for funding. Council also agreed that one solution to resolving the code services situation could be looking inside the City for volunteers or building community groups to help support the City. Councilors all agreed this could be a helpful solution. Councilors talked about making Falls City a Destination City, they have heard people throughout the City refer to it as such and would like to continue on making that happen by making Falls City a gateway to nature and outdoor recreation, creating more community events and supporting local business in their growth.

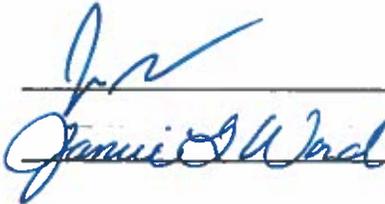
- iii. Recruitment of a new City Manager and establishment of policies and practices that will support continuity of governance during management turnover, and practices that will support retention once a new manager is in place was the third goal (3) L. Sickles addressed her opposition with Corthell giving his notice and would like to continue discussion on what it would take to get him to stay. Mayor Gordon readdressed the fact that sometimes the lines between City Council and the authority over City Staff can get blurred making it tough for the City Administrator to do their job functionally. Council would like to see someone that will stay for a long time.
- iv. Council Development and Continued Education is the fourth goal set by council. Council agreed that training on best practices for the City Council is priority, as a means of establishing a shared sense of best practices and as a step toward building greater rapport and trust. The comment was made that some feel like there is a lack of unity amongst Council, and would like to have it feel more accepting and trusting. Council agreed that they would attend extra meetings and trainings to help resolve these problems.

City Council decided to hold their first Goals Work Session on Monday March 02, 2020 at 6:00PM

- g. Other Issues of Strategic Importance for 2020 include
 - i. Broadened planning to include a comprehensive citywide capital improvement plan, with strategies that acknowledge and address the lack of financial resources for critical infrastructure
 - ii. Parks development
 - iii. Road maintenance and repair
 - iv. Strategies for housing all economic levels, beginning with exploration of Polk County block grants for housing

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm. No Motion was made

Attested:  _____ City Clerk, Jamie Ward

 _____ Mayor, Jeremy Gordon

AGENDA

**Falls City Council 2020 Goal Setting Session
January 27, 2020**

- 5:05 Session Opening and Working Dinner**
- *Mayor's opening remarks.*
 - *Facilitator's overview of the agenda and themes from pre-session interviews.*
 - *City Manager's review of the status of existing goals.*
- 4:45 Longer-Term Context for Goal-Setting**
- *Revisit findings from Community Visioning.*
 - *Consider goals and mandates in city master plans and other guiding documents.*
 - *Renew Council aspirations for Falls City*
- 5:30 2020 Council Goal-Setting**
- *Evaluate relevant existing goals that will be brought forward into 2020 - 2021*
 - *Assess capacity in light of work-in-progress.*
 - *Establish milestones for goals that are already in motion.*
 - *Propose 2020 - 2021 Council goals and evaluate in light of capacity, importance and urgency.*
 - *Establish anticipated milestones.*
- 7:00 Climate & Culture on Council**
- *Thoughts about the "10 Habits of Effective Councils" article: What take-aways are most relevant to this Council in general, and to the issues raised regarding Council dynamics in the pre-session interviews?*
 - *What "working agreements" could be established to move the culture and climate on Council further into the positive?*
- 7:50 Reflections on the discussion**
- 8:00 Session Closing**

The six virtues

1. Focus
2. Frankness
3. Fairness
4. Courtesy
5. Brevity
6. Equity

(A 10-minute break will occur mid-session)



Falls City Oregon

City Council Goal-Setting Session

January 27, 2020

Summary of Themes from Pre-Session Interviews

The following is a summary of interviews conducted in January 2020 with members of the City Council of Falls City in preparation for the City Council 2020 Goal-Setting Session. The purpose of the interviews is to create a pertinent agenda and focus for discussion in order to make the best and most efficient use of time. The interviews were conducted by the session facilitator in the two weeks prior to the Goal-Setting session. All members of City Council took part in the interviews.

This summary outlines **themes** – topics brought up multiple times in the interviews. *In the interest of both brevity and confidentiality, issues mentioned only once in response to an interview question are not included in the summary.*

•**KEY**

- Topics signified with an arrow were among the most frequently-cited responses to that interview question.
- Topics signified with a dot were cited multiple times but were not among the most frequently-cited responses.
- *Phrases in italic indicate verbatim statements that are representative of other comments within the theme.*
- *Note that there are more responses than Council members, as individual Council members gave more than one response to each interview question.*

Themes from 2020 Pre-GoalSetting Interviews with Council

2017-2019 in Review

Accomplishments

- Relationships and partnerships formed with local, regional and state entities and NPOs. “A productive year”.
- Significant progress on the wastewater system
- The transition to a City Manager form of local government has “brought us a long way” with administrative processes and procedures as well as civic projects.
- Increased capacity via AmeriCorps volunteer.
- Conducted a community visioning process via surveys and community events that will inform goal-setting. Citizens taking more interest in a shared vision for the city.

Disappointments

- Community reticence to embrace a council / city manager form of government.
- Announcement that the current manager will leave this year.
- Loss of code enforcement staffer due to cost



Falls City Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths

- “A small rural town.” “Peaceful” and “neighborly.”
- “The community is very engaged.” Volunteer capacity is strong. “Tight-knit” - people come together,
- Location – proximity to nature, recreation, and gateway to the coastal mountains.

Opportunities

- Possibility of a mechanism for code enforcement (Factors cited: housing partnerships with Polk County and Business Oregon.)
- Potential to leverage the town’s “gateway to nature” for economic development.
- Possible funding solutions to city needs e.g. Wastewater or Law Enforcement Districts or other approaches.
- Build-out of the wastewater system opens up possibilities for development.

Weaknesses

- “Fiscal realities” (Factors cited: limited current resources, citizen & council reluctance to implement revenue measures, insufficient growth for sustainability.)
- “The built environment” (Factors cited: buildings in need of beautification, lack of code enforcement impacts on the town’s appearance and reputation, hard-to-maintain-roads, systems infrastructure e.g. waste-water.)

- Aversion to change and/or lack of creative vision about what the town could be.

Risks/Threats

- Potential for financial and environmental catastrophe via wastewater-related infrastructure. (Factors cited: unanticipated system failure, disproportionate cost-to-number-of-paying-households, state or fed intervention, reluctance to consider full range of funding mechanisms.)
- Risk of loss of financial and managerial progress made during current city manager’s tenure.

Strategic Priorities 2020

- **Water and sewer infrastructure goals, and short, mid-range and long term priorities to support the goals of the 2017 Water Master Plan, including decision-making this year on the path toward the wastewater lagoon construction.**
- **Recruitment of a new city manager.**
- **Policies and practices that will support continuity of governance during city management turnover, and practices that will support retention once a manager is in place.**
- **Strategies for code enforcement.**
- **Strategies for housing at all economic levels via exploration of Polk County block grants for housing.**
- **Positioning Falls City as a gateway to nature-related recreation, and signature annual events.**
- **Broadened planning to include a comprehensive citywide capital improvement plan, with strategies for acknowledging and addressing the lack of financial resources for critical infrastructure.**



Council's Group Dynamics



➤ **“Mostly good, but...”**

- Council has not participated together in LOC trainings that would provide a unified understanding of best practices and procedures for council members, resulting in council members sometimes straying outside appropriate council practices and public meeting laws.
- Council tends to defer to the mayor and city manager.
- Over-focused on promoting pet projects.
- Some town “patriarchs” wield outsized influence.
- Opinion on Council is diverse, sometimes hard to reconcile.

• **On the other hand...**

- All love the city and are there for the right reasons.
- Varied backgrounds contribute toward decision-making.
- The mayor does “an amazing job” balancing individual personalities, opinions and beliefs.

Most Important Outcomes of 2020 Goal-Setting

- Building solidarity on Council and making sure we are all on the same page.
 - Review of past goals.
 - Clear and feasible goals to support our most critical priorities, leaving fewer and most important things on our plate
 - Incorporating the results of the citizen visioning process: making sure we are in alignment with the community.
 - *Post-goal-setting, a comprehensive strategic plan with departmental objectives to support Council goals.



Potential Barriers & Disconnects

- We may need to be reminded to listen to and be patient with each other.
- We sometimes get “*into minutia*”, “*wordy*”, “*off track*” and “*focused on administrative tasks*” and need to be “*wrangled away*.”
- We need to focus on the critical few Council-wide priorities and how to pay for them, and avoid long lists of individual interests and nice-to-haves.
- Personal and personality issues can interfere. We need to park those so as not to overwhelm the meeting.

