



Meeting Minutes - Draft

City Council

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360.753.8244

Friday, January 8, 2021

10:00 AM

Online and via Zoom

Special Meeting - Retreat

Attend: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81121663352>

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Cheryl Selby, Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Clark Gilman, Councilmember Yên Huỳnh, Councilmember Dani Madrone, Councilmember Lisa Parshley and Councilmember Renata Rollins

2. BUSINESS ITEM

2.A [21-0023](#) 2021 City Council Retreat

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting facilitator Nancy Campbell reviewed, and the group discussed, key themes from interviews with Councilmembers. As the newest Councilmember, appointed the day before the retreat, Yên Huỳnh was not able to be included in the interview process.

Key Themes

Desired Retreat Outcomes:

- Reflect on what has worked and not worked in the past year
- Integrate new Council member to feel part of the Council
- Review existing norms and discuss how to work best together
- Deepen understanding of race and equity challenges
- Create clear priorities for staff
- Review Council Guidebook and revise as needed

The Good News of 2020:

- Did not implode
- Pivot to COVID response well done
- Spent CARES Act funds wisely
- Displayed confidence in staff and followed City Manager Burney's lead
- Race and Equity conversations and community led participatory process
- Hiring staff to lead racial equity work
- Public safety work
- Completed climate plan
- Councilmember relationships for the most part good

Challenges:

- Addressing another year of multiple challenges (bad economy, pandemic, housing issues, becoming more inclusive, new issues such as climate)
- What is the role of the Council?
- Split between strategic responses and implementation
- Lack of agreement on processes
- Need to revisit the operating norms

Member Relationships:

- Harder to have effective relationships when not in person
- A lot of communication that happened informally (events etc.) no longer can
- Most feel Councilmembers worked well together
- Communication seen as fine among most members but not all
- Most want time for unstructured conversation
- Some erosion of current operating norms
- Five Councilmembers are up for election in 2021

Agreements:

- Not complete agreement on the role of Council as compared to staff - strategic vs. operations
- Not complete agreement on structure and purpose of some meetings
- Clarify role of Mayor Pro Tem and Mayor, as well as Council Committee Chairs
- Revisit the Council guidelines

Processes and Systems:

- A third Councilmember attending agenda setting on a rotating basis has been valuable
- Not all Councilmembers agree with the current committee structure and process
- How to further develop remote systems for receiving community input and testimony
- Are norms for receiving community input too limiting and shutting out voices that need to be heard

The history of the development of the current principles and operating agreements developed by the Council was discussed. It was determined there was not sufficient time to review and revise the agreements during this retreat. It was agreed the mid-year retreat will be a strategic planning session to include a review of these agreements.

Councilmembers and City Manager Burney participated in training on race and equity facilitated by Erin Jones.

The discussion was completed.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.