



Meeting Minutes

City Council

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360.753.8244

Saturday, June 9, 2018

8:30 AM

Council Chambers

Mid Year Retreat

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Cheryl Selby, Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones, Councilmember Jessica Bateman, Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Clark Gilman, Councilmember Lisa Parshley and Councilmember Renata Rollins

2. BUSINESS ITEM

2.A [18-0540](#) City Council 2018 Mid-Year Retreat

Facilitator Nancy Campbell shared recent work with City Departments around the difference between reacting and responding.

She noted quick reactions can damage long term relationships and undermine collaborative conversations and actions. Response mode allows a person to push the pause button without assuming intent of the other person. The Council discussed which emotions trigger reacting rather than responding.

Ms. Campbell summarized key *themes* from her interviews with Councilmembers.

Interview Themes

Desired Retreat Outcomes:

Regain how we felt in January about recognizing and working with our differences
Revisit the ground rules and adjust as needed
Find a path forward to work better together
Look for a way to just talk to each other more so emotions don't build up in negative ways

Working Together:

Positive except for the housing issue
Most members feel optimistic about future relationships
Trust issues are surfacing
Questions regarding once agreement is reached if a member is obligated to advocate for it, mention it or ignore it
Everyone wants to find ways to resolve conflict with respect

Time Together:

Desire for more unstructured interaction remains
More clarity around the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) limits on meetings between Councilmembers
Too many meetings overall add to collective stress

The Mayor's Role:

Not a Strong Mayor
Want more transparency regarding interactions, meetings, etc.
Want to reach agreement on the role
Citizens expect a lot of the Mayor and confuse the role - but the seat has the same weight as any other Councilmember

The City Manager's Role:

Some concern that Steve does not distance himself enough from policy setting
Weekly meetings with Councilmembers can create miscommunication

Agreements Reached**Finding Time for Members to Discuss Issues:**

Councilmembers reiterated their desire to have time to meet together to discuss and probe issues without having to reach conclusions or to take action. To support the Councilmembers desire to have more time to meet as a group and to discuss challenging issues, several options were brainstormed including:

1. Councilmembers want to be transparent in their communication with each other and the community. It was suggested that the Council meet with the City Attorney to discuss the Open Public Meetings Act and to better understand options regarding ways to create time for members to meet to discuss issues.
2. Review committee assignments to determine if a Councilmember must attend the committee meeting or if a staff member or community member could be assigned. The decision criteria for this would be whether the committee engages in policy setting activities.
3. Rather than having one/one meetings with Steve, consider having two or three members meeting with Steve at the same time.
4. More experiential tours such as of the Maintenance Center and McAllister Springs are desired.

Working Effectively Together:

Councilmembers discussed a desire to have an operating norm regarding how they frame issues once a decision on a policy or action has been made. It was suggested that members first share the agreement of the Council and then when appropriate to share any perspective they may have as an individual Councilmember.

Another suggestion was when the Mayor is asked to represent the City at a function that another Councilmember be invited to attend as well. This will allow for more transparency and potentially less confusion regarding activities and any opinions or information shared.

To prevent conflicts from developing into situations where motivations are questioned, it was suggested that the Council be able to access dispute resolution training or other methods to have open and timely discussions before issues escalate.

Finally, it was suggested the Council complete the contract for hiring a Policy Coordinator that reports to the Council. This will allow policy support for topics outside the time or expertise of staff.

Community Conversation Update

Senior Planner Stacey Ray gave an overview of the Community Conversation which occurred on April 14, 2018. The day of the Community Conversation Mayor Selby, Councilmember Parshley and Councilmember Bateman introduced the topics and spent time listening to citizens throughout the day.

The purpose of the conversation was to listen to citizens' perspectives on the top priorities and to inform the City's budget investment over the next two years. The Community Conversation was also a way to pilot some new ways to engage community members by testing:

- Using the community survey to reach typically underrepresented voices
- Matching our community demographic profile
- How we extended the invitation
- Reducing barriers: bus passes, child activities, food
- Asking about budget priorities in a different way
- Capturing participant input in new ways

Ms. Ray noted 225 invitations were sent to community members and 35 community members attended the Community Conversation. Of the participants 14% were people of color, 20% had income of less than \$50,000/year, 14% were renters and 40% had never participated in a government planning process.

Positive feedback from participants included enjoying interaction with each other; appreciating the effort; feeling heard; enjoying a positive atmosphere and discussing a range of topics. Ms. Ray shared areas the participants felt like improvement was needed which were, more time for dialogue; an alternative to the Slido technology; hosting more conversations; sending out materials in advance; involving more youth and expanding to other venues.

Ms. Ray reviewed lessons learned and next steps. Participants will receive thank you

notes and a summary of the conversation and a toolkit with best practices will be developed and shared with staff for hosting future conversations.

Walking Tour

Councilmembers toured several facilities that provide homeless services. At the Salvation Army Councilmembers toured the facility with Major Richard Pease and at the Providence Community Care Center toured the facility with Facility Manager TJ LaRoque. Before returning to City Hall Councilmembers also toured Hawley's Gelato and Coffee.

2018 Priorities

Assistant City Manager Jay Burney reviewed and gave a status update on the Council priorities that were developed at the January City Council Retreat.

Councilmembers discussed actions moving towards a Homeless Response Plan to include clarifying the objectives of the Community Care Center and what success looks like; creating an inclusive space for faith based groups to assist in the work; finding opportunities for stakeholders to be heard; and facilitating a Community Conversation regarding homelessness as a kick-off to a community-wide plan to respond to homelessness.

Council also asked for a summary of how the City and its employees are engaged with and listen to business concerns.

The discussion was completed.

2.B [18-0677](#) Approval of Changes to City Council Committee Assignments

Councilmember Bateman discussed stepping down as the Council Liaison to the LOTT Board in order to participate in the Association of Washington Cities Legislative Committee. Councilmember Parshley will take on the role of Council Liaison to LOTT with Councilmember Cooper to serve as alternate.

Councilmember Bateman moved, seconded by Councilmember Parshley, to appoint Councilmember Parshley as the City Council Liaison to the LOTT Board. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Mayor Selby, Mayor Pro Tem Jones, Councilmember Bateman, Councilmember Cooper, Councilmember Gilman, Councilmember Parshley and Councilmember Rollins

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at at 2:00 p.m.