

Minutes
Mooresville Board of Commissioners
Planning Retreat
March 3-5, 2011
Mooresville Town Hall

Present: Mayor Chris Montgomery. Commissioners Chris Carney, Rhett Dusenbury, Mitch Abraham, Miles Atkins, Mac Herring, Thurman Houston and Interim Town Manager Erskine Smith.

Also Present: Steve Gambill, Town Attorney; Maia Setzer, Director of Administration and Finance; Michelle Shepherd, Budget Analyst; Gail Young, Facilitator; Janet Pope, Town Clerk.

The Commissioner's Planning Retreat was held at Mooresville Town Hall on March 3-5, 2011.

Thursday, March 3, 2011 – 1:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

1. Agenda Review and Establishment of Ground Rules

- ◆ Test assumptions and inferences
- ◆ Share all relevant information including your reasoning
- ◆ Ask questions
- ◆ Focus on interests, not positions
- ◆ Jointly design next steps
- ◆ Make decisions by consensus where possible
- ◆ Respect for opinions

2. Review of Vision 2010

- ◆ Plan Review
 - 2010 Strategic Plan
 - 2005 Angelou Economic Development Strategy
 - Goals and Community Assessment Study
 - 2007 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2030)
 - 2008 Parks and Recreation Master Plan
 - 2009 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2020)
 - Pedestrian Plan
 - Bicycle Plan
- ◆ Land Use
 - Objective: To increase land value by reflecting growth trends of Mooresville while maintaining land owner value.
 - To lead as a regional resource in cooperation the development of land in conjunction with county.
 - To promote movement of human capital and goods through transportation corridors.
 - Strategy: Focus planning on small areas of highest growth and corridors linking areas of high growth.
 - Develop one stop process for development resources that is customer friendly and efficient
 - Comprehensive transportation plan (greenway/bike trails)

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Pro: Small area plans are effective, have plan on how to include industry
Utilize growth management tools well
Continue tweaking tools (text amendments)
Code enforcement, list/definition of process

Con: Redevelopment of infill
Right path for County and Town working together
Historic preservation, discussion of downtown
Code enforcement, consistency and resources
Continue dialogue with key stakeholders (Lowe's) opportunities and trends
More communications with large land owners

Next steps for land use: Revisit plan in light of demographics and growth patterns
(transportation planning)
Continue collaborations with surrounding communities/entities

◆ **Economic Development**

Strengths: Home run (Lowe's, transition with baseball park)

- Diverse employment base
- Good school systems
- Data infrastructure entity (MI-Connection)
- Elected leaders are investing in infrastructure
- Supporting the growth of long-term partners
- Branding – way finding
- Geography
- Positioning for more recreation
- Working relationships are strong
- Key business leader meetings

Opportunities: Transportation flow (Exit 36)

- Lack of public transportation (seniors as people move south)
- How to move around Lake Norman area
- Recruit business by what we can support
- Running out of building supply
- Key business leader meetings
- Communication to outside world is poor
- External communication/marketing
- Upper level advisory group, monthly lunch (how can we help you)
- Should be facilitating more to solve problems
- How do we market Mooresville (Democratic convention, school system)
- Connect with celebrities

Next steps: Communication strategy, how to focus on Mooresville

◆ **Parks and Recreation**

Strengths: Having the lake

- Investments in parks
- Fiscally, park build-out is a success (got way more than we thought)
- Community meeting, meeting with youth, partners who provide preschool, after school. Discussed needs
- Working toward "fit" community designation

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Opportunities: Lake access in a park

- Communicate what is opening and available to citizens
- Target publications/communications
- Missing inner city opportunities or accessibility to the new parks
- Build inner city facility (indoor, not just basketball)
- Continue getting people to collaborate
- Look at broader funding
- Partnerships with associations/private entities
- Greenways (get past hurdles of paths in backyards)
- Make sure we have equitable distribution of resources (geographically)
- Market recreation as an economic development tool
- Improvements to existing facilities
- Focus on cultural arts; maintain contacts with community to facilitate these efforts

◆ Operations

Strength: Great job at delivering services
Good public perception with core businesses

Opportunities: Outside review of staffing

- Identify “time” that may be available with staff
- Outside assistance in reviewing processes (one department at a time)
- Opportunity to cross-train
- Regional provider of water/not wastewater
- Service enhancements, health and wellness, build leadership, succession planning
- Need to review non-core businesses
- Update 2010 vision strategies
- Zero based budget and expectations for left over funding at end of year (not opportunity for spending on non-budgeted items)
- Understanding what citizens think and are willing to support

◆ Roads and Traffic

Strength: A lot of completed projects
Got changes that we considered “not our issue” with DOT but Mooresville did them
Expertise of staff to design projects
Gotten better at this process
Right people/right tasks
Have a seat at transportation planning meetings

Opportunity: Staff information session on how long it takes to get change to happen once approved by the Board
Inform public of priorities and costs
More focused communication on roads
Our opportunities are endless, lots of projects out there
Change thinking – “not our road; its DOT’s problem”
Discussion on how Town embraces issue (strategy)

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Set aside money, keep it earmarked for construction
Exit 35, what will that look like

- ◆ Financial Performance
 - Strength: Fund balance
 - Opportunity: How do we mitigate the cost of gas?
 - Electric vehicle (what can they do)
 - Challenge local research facilities
 - Reduce fleet vehicles and eliminate take home vehicles as form of compensation (discussion of vehicle policy)
 - Too much fund balance is problematic
 - Review dashboard for benchmarking (financials, Institute of Government)
 - Inspections coming in house, currently not citizen friendly
 - Look at high risk jobs that may contribute to higher liability insurance, outsource?
 - Look for cost savings in private outsource

3. Discussion of “Beyond Civility” Article – Public Engagement to Problem Solving

Is there an opportunity to engage citizens?

Are you holding up your corner?

Need an environment that we are all in this together (both internally and in the community).

If someone drops the ball, it trickles through organization/community.

Feedback system from employees.

Put challenge out to employees. What are the 20 things you would do to improve government. Recognize ideas; celebrate contributions at employee recognition events.

Are we making enough use of technology?

Social network, town channel, facebook, a lot of community goes on line.

Tremendous strides with social media, government channel, website. A lot of community goes online. Alan Bradford explained what he does with Facebook and what other departments have; how we use social media, number of followers, etc.

Give Commissioners an overview of communication by technology.*

Non agenda town hall meetings. (MI-Connection Citizens Advisory Group, change name/change role)

What have you learned about increasing interactions with citizens? How do we share information among commissioners to be helpful to one another?

Commissioners and staff should share when the callback will occur and meet that commitment.

Sounds like a problem, you have to call staff to double check.

Sometimes you have to “peel back” citizen’s concerns to get real problem.

Commissioners need to be out and push message out.

More hand in hand with paper/media.

Need to package info for media.

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Add an invitation line to public.
Current method of hearing citizens at meeting doesn't engage citizens.
Misunderstanding of water/sewer.
Implement a way to take message to all four wards.
Majority of people who know you, trust you and there will always be some who don't.
400 city employees are ambassadors.
Show employees they are appreciated.
Incentives to encourage customer service.
If 400 employees are upset with the policies of commissioners, what are they going to say as ambassadors?
How do we change the culture? Efficiency and customer service. How do we put in policies that reward what we want to see?
Commissioners should give employees a voice to make this a better place to work.
Shared vision between employees and elected officials.
Paint "end game," give everyone a stake.
Confusing to hear six different opinions.
Employees should feel welcome to talk with commissioners, need to let employees know they can come to us.

Friday, March 4, 2011 – 10:10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Commissioners brainstormed the top 3-6 priorities that each one felt should be the focus of this coming year. The list was then prioritized by a multi-vote technique.

Brainstorm List of Priorities/Projects

1. Review Land Use Plan in light of: changing demographics, encouraging infill. (3)
2. Board discussion and direction for historic preservation related to downtown.
3. Develop a communication strategy to promote Mooresville. (1)
4. Contract with external resource to review staffing.
5. Zero based budget. (3)
6. Review data and develop strategy to deal with increase cost of fuel.
7. Discussion of water and wastewater and determine scope of business.
8. Develop communication plan to increase two way communications with citizens. (1)
9. Hold conversations with upper level economic development business leaders to partner with commissioners.
10. Increase partnerships and collaboration to address park and rec opportunities.
11. Review and prioritize transportation flow (lake access, public transportation). (1)
12. Utilize School of Government's dashboard for financial measures. (1)
13. ~~Review data and determine direction on bringing inspections in-house.~~ See #34
14. Identify road priorities and cost to share with citizens.
15. Review "non-core" services to determine scope of business and alternative ways to provide (privatization). (2)
16. Customer service culture change and rewarding the (core values) change we want to see; tied to the vision/mission. (4)
17. Comprehensive list of sidewalk/bike projects. (Carney)
18. Plan to connect pocket park to Willow Valley Park. (Herring) (2)

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19. Comprehensive list of intersection/roadway improvements. (Carney) (2)
20. Aggressive recreation tournament recruitment process. (Carney)
21. Small area planning for our high pressure areas (high growth): Exit 35 to Highway 21; Hwy 115 from 150 to Cornelius Road; Bluefield Corridor; 801/150; Cornelius Road in general; Oates Road. (Carney) (2)
22. Stormwater. (Houston) (4)
23. Branding, solid marketing campaign, raise community awareness of our strengths. (Montgomery) (2)
24. Comprehensive internal/external sustainable communications strategy. (Atkins)
25. Strengthen downtown core infrastructure, especially Broad Street. (Herring) (1)
26. Review contracts, no change order except by the Town. (Dusenbury)
27. Educate the Board on contract management to determine what is legally required, the process, etc. (Atkins) Rules as they are today, not just practice. (Carney) Ability to buy local even if we need change in policy. (Atkins, Herring)
28. Partnering with agencies (Habitat) for revitalization of older homes. (Houston)
29. Community Center owned by Town. (Houston) (1)
30. MI-Connection, transition of service organization. (Atkins) (3)
31. Review of alternative funding sources. (Abraham)
32. Review general fund and effective use of funds. (Montgomery) (1)
33. Engage citizens (Beyond Civility discussion), partner with media, formal leadership training. (Montgomery)
34. One stop shop customer service for development, code enforcement. (Carney) (3)
35. Mooresville/South Iredell County collaboration especially in park and rec (Atkins) with more continuity and fee schedules. (Carney) (1)
36. Comprehensive transportation strategy and Town's role, define and commit to an overall role. (Atkins) (4)
37. Comprehensive - public safety. (Carney) (4)

Summary of Priority Votes:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 7 votes | Communication (has support of entire Board as all voted for one aspect or another) |
| 4 votes | Customer Service Culture
Stormwater
Public Safety
Comprehensive Transportation Plan |
| 3 votes | Review of Land Use Plan
Zero base budgeting
Small area planning for high growth areas
MI-Connection transition
One stop shop for customer service |

The Board reviewed the priorities against the existing strategic goals and made modifications by adding Communication, MI-Connection and Public Safety.

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Goals and Objectives

Land Use – Have a land use plan that is clearly stated and provides for future growth while protecting landowners, regional resource including transportation corridor, moving human capital and goods, department recommendations on what they can do.

Strategy – Small area plans, one stop shop for developers (efficient method), comprehensive transportation plan, collaborate with county for ETJ and planning of corridors.

Economic Development – Corporate, racing, existing manufacturing, recreation, MI-Connection, CVB, downtown commission, marketing workforce labor to new industries.

Strategy – No major changes to Strategic Framework

Parks and Recreation, Operations, Roads and Traffic and Financial Performance – only minor changes.

Opportunities for Saving/Partnering with Others – Local governments working with other entities to provide public services to the community or support services for the organization, as opposed to producing the services “in-house.” Commissioner Atkins presented information from the School of Government and led the discussion on opportunities for partnering. The Board agreed to an action item for each board member to review a list of possible partners and to identify which partners they think are potential partnerships for Mooresville.

MI-Connection

Dawn Huston from MI-Connection presented information on the transition of MI-Connection, plans to expand the board and the desire to provide service in a customer focused manner that also creates business revenue. She reported that David Auger has been hired to manage the transition.

Tax Rate – Revenue Neutral, increase or decrease?

FY 11 Property Tax Budget: \$28,158,000

FY 12 Property Tax Budget: \$27,000,000 ???

The Board seems to be in full agreement that the desire is to keep the same tax rate. There was discussion on how the Town should provide the budget. Zero based budgeting was discussed with varying interpretations as to what that means to the budget process. The Board defined the following approach as desirable for this year’s budget.

- Debt is fixed
- Data is collected on number of employees and services provided (determine the value of services and the costs of those services)
- Adjust building usage and utilities
- What else can be funded?

Department heads should be able to relate costs to specific programs and services

CIP – Mr. Smith presented the CIP list of projects for FY 2012 and the Public Services project summary as of February 2011.

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Saturday, March 5, 2011 – 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Personnel Ordinance Changes

Discussion focused on each point in the document presented by Mr. Smith but it was decided that this document should go to the finance committee for review and recommendation since it dealt with compensation.

1. Town Manager has the authority to sign off on off-cycle merit increase or lump sum bonus.
2. Longevity pay. Incorporate other measurable areas (customer service) into longevity pay.
3. Compensatory time should be taken within the same pay period.
4. Tuition Assistance for education related to job was supported; however, Board preferred changing the employee commitment from one to three years. Encourage people to get more education. Focus on leadership development. Policy should reflect philosophy of the Board.
5. Salary Administration. What is best practice for adjusting pay and who has authority?
6. Family Medical Leave Act.
7. Added policies.

Health and Wellness Initiative

Continue to April pre-agenda meeting, possibly second meeting.
Postponed to a future Board pre-agenda meeting.

National League of Cities

Service Line Warranty Program- Policy available to residents for utility line (water and sewer only) insurance. General agreement, Board to review material, go before Board by second meeting in April.

NLC Prescription Discount Card Program – A free prescription discount card that provides an average savings of 20% off the retail price of prescription medication. It is designed to help residents who are without health insurance or have limited prescription coverage. Opportunities to collaborate to get card out, reach out to get feedback, go to Board second meeting in April.

Sister City Organization – The Board referred the Sister Cities organization to the Travel and Tourism Authority in April 2006. Develop an economic strategy related to Sister Cities and bring back to Board. (Commissioners Atkins/Commissioner Herring)

The Board Retreat adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Janet Pope
Town Clerk

Chris Montgomery
Mayor