City of

Mayor

Dr. Eric Jensen

City Council

Michael Kots
Misty Boes
Clay Haley
Carolyn Siemann
LaVern Dirkx
Jerry Fleshner

City Staff

Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Manager
Laura Schaefer, City Clerk/Finance Director
David Bruner, City Attorney
Brad Burke, Chief of Police
Randy Krauel, Public Works Director/City Engineer
Greg Schreck, Fire Chief/Chief Building Official
Rachel Van Erdewyk, Library Director
Jack Wardell, Parks and Recreation Director

Goal Setting Report

November 4, 2019

Facilitated by Regenia Bailey, Bailey Leadership Initiative, LLC

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Introduction

The Carroll City Council held a goal setting session on Tuesday, October 29, 2019.

The objectives of the session were to:

- review and discuss recent City activities and accomplishments, on-going City projects, and community issues and trends.
- identify and develop ideas for new projects and programs, including ways to improve how the City Council does its work.
- determine priorities for the upcoming year to provide direction to City staff for budget development and the upcoming year's work plan.

The session included participation from the City's elected officials: Mayor Dr. Eric Jensen, and City Council members Michael Kots, Misty Boes, Clay Haley, Carolyn Siemann, LaVern Dirkx and Jerry Fleshner, as well as City Department Heads: Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Manager; Laura Schaefer, City Clerk/Finance Director; David Bruner, City Attorney; Brad Burke, Chief of Police; Randy Krauel, Public Works Director/City Engineer; Greg Schreck, Fire Chief/Chief Building Official; Rachel Van Erdewyk, Library Director, and Jack Wardell, Parks and Recreation Director.

Before the goal setting session, the Mayor, City Council members, and Department Heads completed a survey to identify recent City accomplishments, on-going City projects, and community issues and trends. The survey also asked respondents to provide ideas for new projects needed in the community. The summary of the survey results is provided below.

Summary of all survey responses

City of Carroll, Iowa

Goal Setting 2019

City Council n=6
City Department Heads n=7

Accomplishments

The following were identified as City accomplishments over the past two years.

Infrastructure

- Progress on street repair
  - ⇨ U.S. 30 and Grant Road Intersection Improvements
  - ⇨ Completed annual street improvement project
  - ⇨ Street resurfacing—2019
    - Third Street resurfacing
- City water improvements
  - ⇨ Changing water meters to radio read
  - ⇨ Water Distribution System Modeling and Evaluation
  - ⇨ Water main transmission lines
  - ⇨ Water Distribution Main Replacements—2019
  - ⇨ Water Tower Improvement project
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility project

Parks and Recreation

- Northeast Park Master Plan
- Graham Park Master Plan
- City's partnership with private efforts for an accessible playground—Kellan's Kingdom
- Rec Center improvements planning/funds committed
  - ⇨ 24-hour access at Rec Center
  - ⇨ Gym curtain at the Rec Center
- Trails Expansion
  - ⇨ Bike trails enhanced
  - ⇨ Multiple trail projects from master plan to reality
  - ⇨ Completed the 2nd Recreation Trail Project
  - ⇨ Trail on north side of Carroll around sports complex
  - ⇨ Trails—Segment A & B
  - ⇨ Trails 2019—Golf Course & Youth Sports Complex
  - ⇨ Trail on south side of Carroll from Sauk Trail
- Golf Course
  - ⇨ Patio Cover & Siding at Golf Course Clubhouse
- Merchants Stadium

Accomplishments continued

City Facilities

- On-budget completion of the City Hall Project
- Nearing completion of the Library Project and it is on budget
- Airport improvements/new driveway & lighting

Community and Economic Development

- Street Scape projects
  - ⇨ Downtown Streetscape Phase 8
  - ⇨ Completed Downtown Streetscape Phase 9
- Urban Revitalization Area
- Purchase of City apartments
- Carroll apartment abatement
- Federal housing project
- New Businesses
- Corridor of commerce continuation
- City's cooperation with Chamber for Sesquicentennial Celebration

City Operations

- Continued sound financial position of City
  - ⇨ Street Maintenance Facility funds committed
  - ⇨ Funding plan for Maintenance garage in place
- Rental housing inspection
- Long term employee contracts in place
- Formalized City Council Rules of Procedure
- Ordinance to prepare for 5G

Public Safety

- Upgrade to in car and body worn cameras at PD
- Purchased a new Fire Truck
- Completed changeover of the police radio system in Carroll to ISICS

Issues/Concerns
The following were identified as issues and concerts that will affect the City's activities, programs, policies, services, finances, and operations over the next two years.

Economic/ Funding Concerns

- Closing of local businesses
- Low unemployment/available workforce
- Slowdown of construction/building residential
- The change in Carroll's housing market
- Potential decrease in City population during next census
- State funding/loss of tax backfill
- State legislature imposing unfunded mandates on cities
- Additional budget hearing requirement
- Wastewater Treatment compliance with copper and nutrient discharge requirements
- Water distribution pressure and chlorine compliance requirements
- City projects—the number of projects, their costs, and funding sources
  - ⇨ Rec Center
  - ⇨ Street Maintenance Building project
  - ⇨ Street rehabilitation/reconstruction funding
  - ⇨ Downtown Streetscape completion
  - ⇨ Graham Park improvements
  - ⇨ Limits of staff time and resources
- Public perception that Carroll is a "high-tax" entity

Communication/Community Engagement

- Lack of communication among city, county, special interest groups, private enterprises
- Projects in the community are overly divisive
- Improving public image/regaining public trust

Community Development/Quality of Life

- Train horn mitigation

Trends and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues and concerts that will affect the City's activities, programs, policies, services, finances, and operations over the next two years.

Trends

- Population decline
- Trend for population to gravitate to larger cities
- Increase in minority population
- Aging of city population
- A trend of slowing building activity
- More online purchases leading to a potential decrease in LOST revenue
- Citizens' attitude of no more taxes
- Infrastructure deterioration outpacing funding for repair and reconstruction
- Rec program decrease in numbers

Opportunities

- Interest rates continue to be favorable for bonds
- Attraction of business/population growth
- Carroll has been named as one of USA Today's 50 best cities to live in the US
- Carroll's low tax rate/stable City levy
- Improving communications with the public
- Improving relationships with County Officials
- Community involvement of the younger generation
- Positive public sentiment toward seeing projects completed
- Uncontested council races—an indicator that people are satisfied with how things are going
- Housing for our workforce
- Mitigating train noise
- City projects
  - ⇨ Continued trails expansion
  - ⇨ Golf Course Irrigation Pump Station Upgrade
  - ⇨ Rental inspection ordinance and code enforcement officer will increase effectiveness on nuisance complaints
  - ⇨ Upgrade of shelter house for year-round use
  - ⇨ Pickleball

New programs

The following were identified as new programs, activities, initiatives, or policies that the City should consider during the next two years.

Infrastructure

- Wastewater Treatment Plant compliance with copper and nutrient effluent requirements
- Water Distribution compliance with pressure and chlorine requirements
- Address flooding/drainage behind homes in Rolling Hills Park
- Continue street improvements
  - ⇨ Address safety concerns on Timberline Road

Parks and Recreation

- Rec Center improvements
- Donated land near Graham park
- Improved parking in little league/soccer field area
- Exercise stations on bike trail system
- New trails
- Fee increases—Golf Course, Recreation Center

City Facilities

- Improved restrooms at Cemetery

Community and Economic Development

- Train horn mitigation
- Entry level housing

City Operations

- Better/proactive communication from the City with the public
- Finalize rental housing inspection policies and begin enforcement

Organizational Effectiveness
The following were identified as steps the City Council could take to improve City decision-making processes, teamwork, organizational effectiveness, and the ability to accomplish the City's goals and objectives new programs.

- Continue work sessions
- Continue meetings with the City Manager
- Continue good communication practices between elected officials and staff; look for improvement where needed
- Use a systematic approach in reviewing goals and capital improvement program
- Keep new goals/projects to a minimum to adequately focus on on-going projects
- Hold more town hall meetings
- Improve communication from the City with the public
- Encourage citizens to attend City Council meetings and to communicate with elected officials/staff
- Encourage regular meetings between the City Manager and Department Heads
- Have the City Council attend a League of Cities training on how to accomplish Council priorities

Priority Programs and Activities for the Upcoming Year

The session participants reviewed the list of possible new programs from the survey results and identified those for consideration (provided in Exhibit A). The City Council selected the following projects as their priorities for the upcoming year:

- Rec Center
  - ⇨ Smaller project: locker room, gym/walking track
  - ⇨ Referendum on March 3, 2020
- Street projects—increase the funding
- Train horn mitigation—new information: how much would a new study cost?

Organizational Effectiveness

The Mayor and City Council members agreed to continue Council work sessions and Council member meetings with the City Manager. The City Manager indicated that City Department Heads meet regularly and this would also continue. Additional discussion about organizational effectiveness focused on communication with Carroll residents and the need to regularly review City policies to ensure that these remain relevant and up-to-date.

The Mayor and City Council discussed various ideas to increase communication with residents. The group acknowledged that the City has a number of ways for residents to obtain information about City Council decisions and City projects. City Council members noted that additional communication activities would require additional staff time; they would like to maximize the communications systems and methods currently being used. To that end, City Council members asked to regularly see the analytics indicating the visits and use of the City's website, Facebook page, Twitter account, and YouTube channel. Additionally, the Mayor and City Council supported expanding the list of people who receive the City Manager's monthly activity report email and including the activity report in the Carroll Herald's regular email.

It was noted that Council members are free to write op-ed pieces that provide information about Council meetings, decisions, and projects. Council members' expectations of one another regarding op-eds are that these will present factual information about City Council decisions.

The group agreed that it may be time to review the City's financial policies to make any necessary changes or updates.

Final Comments

The goal setting session was a work session to provide direction to the City staff regarding priorities for the upcoming year. As indicated in the Council's Rules and Procedures, work session discussions and conclusions are informal. Formal action on these priorities and any other discussion that occurred in the session will be made in subsequent regular Council meetings.

As has happened in the past, it is recommended that the City Manager prepare a work plan that incorporates the steps to accomplish the priorities that the City Council has outlined. The action plan should come before the Council for review and approval. Regular updates regarding the status of projects in the action plan will help ensure that the Mayor and Council stay informed about project implementation.

New Program Possibilities for the Upcoming Year

- Rec Center
  - ⇨ Smaller project: locker room, gym/walking track
  - ⇨ referendum on March 3, 2020 indoor pickleball
- Pickleball courts—not at $300,000
- Exercise stations at NE Park—with Reeves grant
- Trails—continue the master plan
- Drainage Study/Improvements—on City property and impacted by City property
- Street projects—bump up the funding
- Timberline Road—cost contained solutions for the short term and the long term
- Miracle Field
- Shelter—Graham Park; Northeast Park—enclose; install air conditioning/heat
- Look at fee restructuring for golf course/rec center
- Restrooms at the cemetery
- Train horn mitigation—new information: how much would a new study cost?
- Continue to work with Region 12 (housing/CDBG)
- Work session on housing: needs/trends; multifamily—e.g., townhouses, condos

Organizational Effectiveness/Communication Items

- Rotate an op-ed
- Carroll Herald email—include Mike's email
- Look at financial policies
- Website analytics

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