

City of Northville
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
January 11, 2018

Mayor Roth called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Northville City Hall Council Chambers, 215 West Main Street, Northville, Michigan.

Mayor Roth read a statement informing those present that the City Council meeting was being recorded for rebroadcast on the City's website. By remaining at the meeting, consent is inferred by those present to have their voice and image recorded and posted on the City's website.

Present: Mayor Ken Roth, Mayor Pro Tem Nancy Darga, Councilmembers Sam Ekong, Patrick Giesa, and Marilyn Price

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager Patrick Sullivan, Finance Director/Treasurer Sandi Wiktorowski, Director of Public Works James Gallogly, Fire Chief Stephen Ott, Police Chief Michael Carlson, DDA Executive Director Lori Ward, City Clerk Dianne Massa, Housing Director Tracey Emmanuel, Parks and Recreation Director Mark Gasche, Acting Assistant DPW Director Chris Porman, Youth Assistance Director Amy Prevo, DDA Board member Carolann Ayers, and eight citizens.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion Ekong, seconded by Darga to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

FY 2018-2019 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

The City Manager opened the discussion of the FY2018-2019 goals by briefly reviewing the previous FY2017-2018 City Council Goals, Objectives, and Priorities.

City Council comments noted it was a busy year for the City, and commended the City Manager and Staff on its progression in implementing Council's goals, while performing day-to-day City operations. As City Council reviews the Departmental goals and adds an additional layer of goals, it will try to be mindful that the City remains short-staffed, with a lot of extra work that needs to be accomplished with less staff.

City Council also commented on the goal of expanded communication to the public. Staff continues to make positive changes to significantly improve communications, and neighboring communities and residents notice and appreciate these efforts.

City Council also commented on the financial analysis being performed by Vettraino Consulting and Municipal Analytics. This is a proactive approach in analyzing the areas that Staff identified as concerns (roads, water and sewer, legacy costs, etc.), and get a comprehensive view on what is the best return for the taxpayer.

Discussion ensued pertaining to Abatement Order No. 2096 with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the partnering with Wayne County and several other neighboring communities to work on the required Long Term Corrective Action Plan for additional capacity to catch storm water infiltration going into the Huron Valley Sewer System from wet weather events.

FY 2018-2019 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

CITY COUNCIL GOALS

High Priority

Long-Term Financial Stability:

- Continuation of the long-term fiscal and financial stability efforts outlined in the City Manager's report dated January 11, 2018.

Communications:

- Continue to improve and expand city-wide communications.

Medium Priority

Manager/Department Evaluations:

- Implementation of evaluation/annual review of the City Manager based on progress toward accomplishment of goals identified by City Council and Departments.

Water and Sewer System Improvements:

- Continue efforts to detect water loss and continue to monitor the City's water control to meet City Council established goal of 15% or less water loss.
- Include a water meter replacement program as part of the City's capital improvement plan as aging meters are likely contributing to the reasons water loss remains at 20%.
- Continue to remain current with the commitments to Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to clean 20% of the City's sanitary sewer system each year to comply with Abatement Order No. 2096. To minimize the possibility of sanitary sewer backups in the City, efforts to clean 50% of the City's sanitary sewers should continue.
- Continue to partner with Wayne County and several other neighboring communities to design a Long Term Corrective Action Plan for sanitary sewer excess flow as required under Final Order of Abatement 2096 with MDEQ. Construction of sewer system improvements should occur in 2019/20.

Downtown Strategic Plan/Preservation of Downtown Funding:

- Implement the 2017 Strategic Plan recommendations.
- Complete installation of Phase II of the Wayfinding project.

- Continue to monitor efforts in Lansing that would reduce or eliminate the DDA and TIFA funding mechanisms and work with our legislators to mitigate any negative impact on downtown Northville.

Street, Sidewalk, and Bike Path Improvements:

- Continue with street improvements.
- Continue with non-motorized pathway opportunities.

Future City Hall Repairs/Renovations:

- The City is working with a local architect on plans for future repairs and renovations to City Hall. The plans and cost estimates will be included in the City's comprehensive financial analysis.

Lower Priority

Retaining the Retail Operation of the Northville Post Office within the Central Business District:

- The Post Office building's current lease expired in 2017. Continue to work with the United States Postal Service to express support for keeping the post office in the downtown.
- Future land use of the city-owned property was addressed in the Community Master Plan update. Move forward with intent to issue an RFP for the city-owned land south of the Post Office.

Development and Redevelopment Issues:

- Continue to reduce steps to make application processes less burdensome on developers.
- Amend the Master Plan to allow for first floor residential for redeveloped properties adjacent to the downtown.
- Work on revisions to the Cady Street Overlay zoning district and rezoning the McDonald Ford property to be consistent with the Master Plan.

Cemetery Build-Out:

- Complete the Phase 2 expansion of Rural Hill Cemetery.

Projects on Hold

Mill Pond Improvements/Watershed Enhancements

- On hold due to lack of available funding sources. Staff will continue to monitor funding opportunities.

City Council brought forth specific additional goals for discussion. City Council requested that the City Manager review these goals with Staff for feasibility and feedback. The completed list should be placed on a February meeting agenda for Council discussion and then categorizing the goals as high, medium, or low priorities.

Financial

- Complete the consultant's financial review and implement plan for long-term funding of highest priority needs (Council comments viewed this as a high priority goal).
- Determine and implement the cemetery maintenance fund investment plan (Council comments viewed this as a high priority goal).

Operational

- Complete the website redesign project and implement more self-serve options (fillable forms, online payments, etc.) and implement a searchable zoning ordinance (not a PDF).
- New website rollout should include the development of a process for Department Heads to create and maintain communications for their areas. Content should be current.
- Review the community organizations listed on the website to ensure that groups are still operational.
- Consider having a YouTube channel on the website to show snippets of parades and other City events. This might generate interest in the community and increase attendance at events.
- Implement evaluation and review process for City Manager, which includes performance of individual Departments' operations.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce, DDA, and non-profits to develop more robust relationships with the entities that impact the City.

Development

- Review Cady Street density with the Planning Commission.
- Develop a plan for Wing Street property next to the Post Office, and issue a Request for Proposal if appropriate.
- Develop a plan with Parks and Recreation for Ford Field improvements, such as the play structure and other infrastructure, including restrooms.
- Complete the cemetery build out.

Boards and Commissions

- Implement regular training for City Council, and all Boards and Commissions, with emphasis on Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Open Meetings Act (OMA), and Board standards and conflicts.
- Implement operational detail training for specific boards, such as Historic District Commission training on standards, Planning Commission training on new urban planning and design.
- Review the Boards and Commissions to determine which boards are actively meeting, and which boards might be mandated, but do not meet. This will assist with matching citizens to board positions that utilize their talents.

Administration

- Schedule short presentations from various community groups to improve the understanding of the contributions these groups make to the City (i.e. Northville Historical Society, Art House, Beautification Commission). This could be done under "presentations" at a Council meeting.
- Improve the City's energy efficiencies. Consider retaining a consultant or establishing a committee to analyze the City's current carbon footprint. The report would include recommendations on short-term/long-term goals to meet a set target date for all City Departments to be 100% carbon neutral. Objectives would include: purchase electric vehicles, turn off computers and office lights, LED office lighting, purchase wind systems, purchase solar systems, and have Department Heads identify carbon-neutral opportunities.

DDA

- Addition of recycling trash containers in Town Square during concerts and events.
- Develop and improve the connection of the downtown to Highland Lake.
- Continue bicycle-friendly efforts to encourage citizens to ride, for recreation and for their health, including the placement of more bicycle racks.

Parks and Recreation

- Establish goal to protect and enhance the natural resources of our parks, as Northville is the headwaters of the Rouge River.
- Focus on restoration project for Fish Hatchery Park (two grants were awarded to aid in funding this project).

Department of Public Works

- Develop a vision and implementation plan for the Department of Public Works, including but not limited to improving and modifying vendor contract language to include completion goals and dates, and hiring the same engineer for same-type projects. Look at the qualifications of contractors, including their experience and past success in completing projects on time.
- Implement high construction standards for water, sewer, and road projects to increase long-term viability.
- Establish qualification standards for bid evaluations – not simply awarding to the lowest bidder.

As the City Council had been given written documentation of the Staff's goals and objectives prior to the meeting, it was determined Department presentations were not necessary. Staff responded to questions from City Council, and are summarized as follows:

Building Department

Revise goal: Revise the goal to “continue monitoring the implementation of the Building Department reorganization” as this goal is mostly complete. Review goal of contracting for code enforcement services. Should the City continue to contract for this as a part-time service or is there a need for a full-time code enforcement officer, and what is financially feasible.

Add goal: Implement operational detail training for Historic District Commission (historic standards), Planning Commission (new urban planning and designs), and Board of Zoning Appeals.

Add goal: Self-serve options need to be very visible and accessible on the new website (online inspection scheduling, payment options, etc.).

Add goal: Building Official to improve inspections for new construction that continues for long periods of time (i.e. beyond one year). Follow up to ensure builders and property owners comply with site work clean up, time limits, porta-johns, and dumpsters that remain onsite for projects that have stalled and have no activity.

While the ordinance was amended to address keeping sidewalks open during construction and the issue of blocked sidewalks have improved, Staff should review ordinances from other communities to see how these issues (length of time a dumpster or porta-john may remain on-site, projects that stall and are not completed after one-two years, on-site trash issues, etc.) are addressed, and if an ordinance amendment is warranted.

Add goal: Reevaluate part-time Building Official shared with the City of Plymouth. Evaluate if this is still working, is there a need for a full-time Building Official, and the financial feasibility.

City Clerk and Elections

For the goal of increasing the collection of parking ticket revenues, Staff announced that a new online payment option for parking tickets was launched earlier that day.

Add goal: Explore other online registration and payment options, such as business license registrations, and dog licenses.

Add goal: Review the Boards and Commissions to determine which boards are actively meeting, and which boards might be mandated, but do not meet. This will assist with matching citizens to board positions that utilize their talents.

The status of the “on-hold” goal to relocate the polling location for Precinct 2 to the Community Center was given. This goal is on-hold until Northville Public Schools completes the redevelopment of Old Village School and Main Street School. Parking in this area will be reduced if any of the property is sold to a private developer. Using schools for polling locations and keeping doors unlocked to allow voters into the school is a building safety issue.

Communications

City Council asked for more explanation on the website action plan to create new typography for the “City of Northville” and its use on the website and in publications.

It was explained that new typography will be a different “look” for the website masthead. CivicLive will offer masthead design suggestions. In response to a question from City Council, it was confirmed that the City’s current logo will not be redesigned. Comments from Council voiced concern with creating new typography and this leading to the unintended action of having a mismatch of what is used on the website redesign versus the City logo, which creates additional redesign work. Council requested more detailed information on what specific typography will and will not be redesigned.

Add goal: Consider expanding participation in other social media platforms, such as “Next-door.” This is a smaller platform for specific neighborhoods. There is a large presence of residents and neighborhood associations on this platform, and this could be a useful tool for additional communication.

Add goal: Review the community organizations listed on the website to ensure that groups are still operational.

Add goal: Annual review of all website content to ensure it is current.

Expand goal – community affiliates/partners: During the spring/summer, look into holding a City Council meeting in a neighborhood, and bring in a food truck. See if this is financially feasible.

Downtown Development Authority

Revise goal: Revise action step for holding semiannual joint Planning Session to address issues of common interest. This should be revised to be “hold as-needed semiannual joint Planning Session...” This goal has been implemented and now is more “as-needed.”

In response to a question about overseeing contractor to provide “window washing,” it was explained that this pertains to the windows in the parking deck stair towers.

Revise goal: The goal to “develop and implement phasing plan for high pressure sodium light replacement” should be reviewed to determine if induction lighting is the most efficient return on investment or if technology has moved beyond, and LED lighting is the better option. Need to determine if the DDA is pursuing the correct goal.

Revise goal: The marketing goal to increase the number of subscribers to “Northville Times,” should be reviewed with the Communications Department to create efficiencies and avoid duplication of effort in creating the content of any publications.

Revise goal: Revise the goal of purchasing recycling receptacles to install in high traffic locations, to also include adding more during special events. The DDA goal is to have the recycling option be daily, but increased during special events.

Discussion pertained to the goals of exploring incentives to encourage extended hours of operation for businesses, and communicating the list of available properties and leasing options posted on the DDA website.

Add goal: The City of Detroit is offering a training program for managers of retail space to improve the business climate in Detroit. The DDA should contact Detroit for information to see if this is a training opportunity that is also suitable for Northville businesses.

Finance, Tax/Assessing, and Technology Services

Add goal: Determine and implement the cemetery maintenance fund investment plan. Staff explained that this goal was not included in their FY2019 Departmental goals as Staff expects to complete this in FY2018.

Staff further explained the purpose of the goal pertaining to analyzing “overhead charges” from the General Fund to other funds.

Fire Department

Questions were raised pertaining to the personnel evaluation program.

Added goal: Comments from City Council spoke of the Fire Station and its inadequacy regarding capacity for current equipment (new ladder truck that must be stored at Plymouth), lack of parking for fire fighters responding to runs, and if a new facility or relocation of the fire station is warranted. When reviewing all of the city-owned property, the long-term needs of the Fire Department should be considered before any city-owned property is sold. The long-term needs of the Fire Department should be part of the goals for the comprehensive financial analysis, and as part of the review for land use needs of city-owned property.

Staff explained that the Fire Department’s long-term needs are not a part of the financial analysis project. Some of the Fire Department needs would be addressed during the proposed renovation of City Hall. The Fire Chief and City Manager will further discuss the matter and return to City Council with recommendations.

Housing Commission

A comment from Council noted that a frequent complaint from Allen Terrace residents pertains to timely response to resident concerns. City Council would like to have a “defined” timeframe. Discussion ensued pertaining to the Allen Terrace Resident Council’s fundraising activities, and coordinating programming with the Community Center senior program.

As the Housing Director is new to the Department and has not had the opportunity to fully assess Allen Terrance and its operations, City Council suggested the Housing Director return to Council at a later date (i.e. five-six months) with updated Housing Commission goals.

Parks and Recreation

Further explanation was given pertaining to the training standards and vision to achieve the “gold standard” of customer service. Written standards and expectations will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the impending reconstruction to Hillside Middle School, the footprint of the new Parks and Recreation location at Hillside, and how the construction will impact Parks and Recreation operation. The reconstruction project is still in the design phase and Parks and Recreation hopes to have input in the design process. Reconstruction is expected to take 18 months and Parks and Recreation may need to curtail some of its activities and operations during this transition phase. The parking lot will not be available during the reconstruction project.

It was noted that the Fish Hatchery Park retaining wall replacement project was already included in the Parks and Recreation departmental goals (Johnson Creek retaining wall replacement).

Add goal: Develop a plan for Ford Field improvements, such as the play structure and other infrastructure, including restrooms.

Police Department

In response to a question from Council, it was explained that the Police Department will continue its current downtown parking enforcement program. The Police Department is short-staffed, which curtailed some of the enforcement effort. New officers are being hired, which will allow more officers to be assigned to parking enforcement, including time-limited parking.

Add goal: Consider expanding the social media presence to include Facebook and Twitter, and integrating Nixel with the Communications Department’s current communication platform.

Department of Public Works

Discussion ensued pertaining to water leak surveys and unmetered water and how this impacts water loss.

Add goal: Find method to estimate water use for unmetered water so it doesn’t show as a water loss. Define “off meter” water and how to quantify that number.

Revise goal: Pertaining to Phase 3 of the Wayfinding program for the city entrance signs, this goal should be revised to more narrowly define the goal to investigate the project cost and determine if there is funding to complete the project. While the signs are old, they are serviceable. Staff noted that the signs will need some repair and paint if they are not being replaced.

Add goal: Annual application to the State to secure critical bridge funding to repair/rebuild the bridge at Rural Hill Cemetery.

The Mayor and City Council recognized that this was the DPW Director’s last City Council meeting as his last day is January 11, 2018. Northville was fortunate to have Jim Gallogly as the DPW Director and City Engineer. Gallogly had the ability to work with people to find a consensus solution that was fair

and reasonable. His care and compassion for the people of Northville will be missed. There is a farewell event on January 12, 2018 at 3:30 at Northville Sports Den.

Gallogly thanked the Mayor and Council and spoke of his 22 years employed with the City of Northville. He will miss everyone.

Youth Assistance

As the Youth Assistance Director is new to the Youth Assistance Department, and the strategic planning process is still ongoing, it was suggested that Youth Assistance return to Council in a few months to provide Council with enhanced goals.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor and Council

Darga spoke of the first “Art Crush” fundraiser event being held in February to benefit Art House.

Staff

None

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment: 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Massa, CMC
City Clerk

Ken Roth

Approved as submitted: 02/05/18