



POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting
February 9, 2010

Chairperson Yeh called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. in the Council Conference Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: Yeh (Chair), Holman, Price, Shepherd

Absent: none

1. Oral Communications

None.

2. Policy and Services Discussion and Recommendations on Committee and Council Priorities Workplans.

Chair Yeh said it was important to consider the outcomes from the Council retreat while discussing the Policy and Services Committee priorities. Council Policy and Procedures should be considered. He said there were also a few items that would be connected to the Council Priorities, such as Restructuring City Services, and hosting community-based discussions to create seamlessness between the Policy and Services Committee and the Finance Committee. A few carry-over items from the previous agendas would also need to be discussed as well as prioritizing Staff Workplans and what systems might exist to allow the Policy and Services Committee to be an asset to Staff. The Council Priorities Workplan would also be a large part of the conversation.

Assistant to the City Manager, Kelly Morariu gave some background to the conversation saying that last year the Committee started to discuss methods of having a more structured workplan for the Committee and what value the Committee added to the Council conversations. The Council had adopted a workplan for last year and there were some carry over items including the Social Technology Plan and Restructuring City Services. She said that Policies and Procedures was scheduled to be discussed with Council on March 22, 2010.

City Manager James Keene said the meeting on the 22nd was also to determine, which items Council should take action on.

Ms. Morariu suggested the current conversation focus on the Committee's workplan and how the Council Priorities will fit into it.

Mr. Keene said that a year ago the Policy and Services Committee role seemed more constrained than currently. He said this was an opportunity to be more focused as a city. He said it can be more effective to determine new policy and similar issues in this environment.

Chair Yeh said that the materials in the packet could be useful tools combined with the preliminary workplan. He suggested the Committee call out ideas, and then prioritize them. They should focus on their own work and then determine how it flows into the Council Priorities.

Council Member Holman asked Staff to use the hand held microphone and the Committee Members to make sure they were speaking into the table microphones to help the audio clarity.

Council Member Price asked if there was a clear statement regarding the purpose and role of the Committee

Ms. Morariu read Chapter 2.04.220 of the Municipal Code.

Mr. Keene said that the Committee could add language expanding their role to the Municipal Code.

Council Member Price said there was a broad area of strategies related to operations with specific policies regarding revising operations. She suggested starting with the purposes and goals of the committee.

Council Member Shepherd suggested following Staff's guidance.

Chair Yeh stated that defining planning purposes and goals would be a part of the conversation. He added that proposed amendments to the Municipal Code could be discussed as well.

Council Member Holman suggested organizing the goals by Council Priority.

Council Member Price suggested using what has been adopted as a framework.

Mr. Keene asked if the See It site had been populated with the Council Priorities.

Ms. Morariu said that it had been to some extent, such as Finances.

Council Member Holman said there may be some issues that might not fit under any one Priority but shouldn't be thrown out.

Council Member Price asked what would happen to the rollover issues from 2009.

Mr. Keene said that, for example, the work on an Economic Development Strategy was rolled-over and could fit in where the Committee deemed appropriate. He said the Social Media and Social Networking Plan was also rolled over and could be handled by the Committee as appropriate.

Chair Yeh said that Restructuring City Services should be included.

Mr. Keene added the City Recruitment Strategy to the list and mentioned the boomer generation retiring. He said the culture and how it connects to the community could also be discussed.

Mr. Keene asked if there was anything left over in the workplan.

Ms. Morariu said the only items left over were the Social Media and Restructuring City Services.

Council Member Shepherd asked for clarification regarding Restructuring City Services.

Chair Yeh said that last year the Committee didn't have a chance to focus on it. He said there were two ways to move forward one would be to slot ideas in under the Council Priorities and then determine priorities.

Mr. Keene said the policy discussion could be blended with the discussion from the retreat.

Council Member Shepherd requested more information regarding Youth Well Being.

Council Member Price said they should be broken down by operations and policies. After that there are mandatory and optional distinctions. Then there are others, but they seemed to be a different list. She asked what could be

done to protect the Staff, Council, and the Community while accomplishing important work.

Mr. Keene said a workplan should indicate a way to focus and prioritize what must be done.

Council Member Holman said she was interested in seeing a workplan. She said there should be a horizontal flow chart with timelines, otherwise it would be impossible to determine priorities.

Mr. Keene compared the Council as well as Policy and Services Priorities to the tip of an ice burg. Below the waterline was the operational work of the City. There could always be items that move up above the waterline, or incite policy discussion. The See It sight would record the top of the ice burg, and the organizational workplan would capture the work below the waterline. He said that there was not an organizational workplan. He said the staging of the work to build the workplan was critical as well.

Council Member Price asked if this has been the case for many years.

Ms. Morariu said there used to be a matrix with major projects, but no systematic method organization wide.

Mr. Keene said the City could build these plans in a more general fashion and over time they would become more specific, rather than trying to build the whole system at one time.

Council Member Holman said she wanted to see clear guidance from Council to Staff with clear expectations and goals set for both Council and Staff, which take into consideration the priorities of the community.

Council Member Shepherd said only one agenda item from the previous Council Meeting had direction to Staff. She wondered if a scorecard could be kept to see if they were loading the workforce.

Council Member Holman referred to affordable housing as a priority of the Council. She asked if a priority project would be worked on at any cost, or only within the confines of economic parameters and the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Price said internal contradictions were a challenge for Staff and Council. Finding a way to articulate the priorities to direct Staff was critical.

Chair Yeh said the systems that could be resources for Staff should be discussed. The process or time-frame should also be considered. He asked how the Committee could prioritize all those different areas. He asked if Staff would like to have specific strategies outlined.

Mr. Keene said that would be helpful. The way it had been done, he said, was that Council would identify priorities; Staff would then study them and return to Council with strategies and milestones. The Council would then adopt those strategies without much discussion. The process made it difficult to determine if Staff was meeting Council expectations because there was no meaningful structure in place for discussing the workplan.

Council Member Shepherd said she thought the See It site was helpful, but she wanted to be careful with what was measured. Measured items should fit into specific goals.

Mr. Keene said it would be good to identify strategies they wanted to see on the list, and then ask Staff bring ideas back. For example, Environmental Strategy was a priority. Below that category on the See It site was a list of actions. Then under each action we list each specific action plan.

Council Member Price cautioned that they should only be measuring items that Council wanted to prioritize; otherwise resources would be pooled to increase a measurement on something that wasn't a Council directive.

Mr. Keene asked what strategies Council wanted Staff to take when they listed Finance or Emergency Preparedness as priorities. He said the measures that were already on See It may not have been the best measures to track because they hadn't had that discussion with Council.

Council Member Price said that at the retreat they listed 15 items under Finance with a mix between concepts, values, processes, and product. She said there was no sense of the list being weighted. She suggested the discussion regarding strategies and actions should be postponed until they determine the most significant priorities within the categories.

Mr. Keene agreed saying that, for example, Council could potentially determine that they won't take action on Economic Development. They will have to adopt a budget one way or the other.

Council Member Shepherd asked if they should whittle down the list in terms of priorities.

Mr. Keene said they should have the conversation about what success looks like in these key areas.

Chair Yeh said that the City Finance strategies were value statements. He suggested they should proceed by priority.

Council Member Holman asked when the priorities go to Council for formal adoption and what format Council sees.

Mr. Keene said traditionally there had been a matrix that showed some strategy, action steps, and milestones that previously were never approved by Policy and Services. Going forward, the Policy and Services Committee can determine the process.

Council Member Price said the items on the list did not relate to resource impacts.

Council Member Shepherd said that much of the finance conversation centered on Revenue Generating and suggested they slot that into a value. She suggested the list should be put aside to allow discussions on the qualities and outcomes the Policy and Services Committee wanted to see from the Finance Committee. She suggested they line up these priorities in a way that communicates to the community the services that are provided.

Chair Yeh suggested they stay within the framework of the Council Priorities.

Mr. Keene suggested they put ideas on the flip charts and then organize them later.

Council Member Holman suggested there might be some "low hanging fruit" they should call out to demonstrate success.

Council Member Price suggested they focus on Unfunded Liabilities Related to Infrastructure, Economic Development, and other similar ideas related to Business Vitality.

Mr. Keene said that at the last Policy and Services Committee meeting they were discussing Economic Development and he said that even he, as the City Manager, was unclear on what they want.

Council Member Shepherd said Economic Development could go under Revenue Generation, with Private Sector, Business Community, Business Friendly, and

Neighborhood Retail as subsectors. Infrastructure could go with the Sustainable Paths.

Council Member Price asked for clarification on what Sustainable Paths meant.

Council Member Holman said it meant anything they could still pay for in five years, both short and long term, which includes Long Term Plans. She also said Services should be included.

Council Member Price said that Accountability and Oversight applied to all of these topics as well.

Council Member Holman asked if Economic Development and Revenue Generation are different.

Mr. Keene said they are different, although Revenue can be generated through Economic Development.

Council Member Price said that Labor needed to go under Unfunded Liabilities.

Council Member Shepherd asked if that would go under Sustainable Paths instead, along with Staff Morale.

Council Member Price said the whole issue of expenses should be rephrased into Examination of Expenses or something similar to indicate some room to maneuver. She said it was an operational expense.

Council Member Shepherd said she didn't approve of the word Expenses as a bullet point coming out of City Finances.

Chair Yeh said for Policy and Services the discussion around Finances should be focused on where the money was going, focusing on services. He spoke regarding accountability and oversight. The role of Council, he said, was to determine the resources under each category.

Council Member Holman spoke regarding Accountability and Oversight. She said there was an aspect of expenditures with it that fit under Finance. She said she would support some targeted audits.

Council Member Price agreed with the targeted audits suggestion. She said it may be an operations issue, but it informed other decisions such as prudent use of resources. She said it was important to maximize use of the tools already in place.

Council Member Holman said it was a process piece as well.

Mr. Keene said Accountability and Oversight were a secondary stage. The primary stage was Vision and Direction. If targets were unclear after being measured against that more problems would be indicated.

Council Member Price said the issue of context had not been clear. Economic Development had many studies and reports done and they should be connected to the whole.

Council Member Shepherd said it would be important to know what the Palo Alto Mission was and who held it.

Council Member Holman said that the Comprehensive Plan was basically the City Mission. She said that the Comprehensive Plan goals should be supported in these discussions and the actions taken.

Council Member Shepherd suggested that might be the task at hand. Some goals were already being worked on, such as the Youth Collaborative. Environmental Sustainability has been a long standing goal. Emergency Preparation was new and had a different vision and an important plan.

Chair Yeh asked if moving through the rest of Council Priorities should be done with the same process.

Council Member Holman asked if the priorities should be realigned to be similar to the structure of the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Price said it was hard for her to tell what the outcomes of the meeting were supposed to be. She asked if they were they supposed to be building workplans for the Policy and Services Committee or for the organization.

Chair Yeh said the agreement was to brainstorm under the five Council Priorities and that the Committee Roles were a different discussion.

Mr. Keene suggested they remain on their current track as Council had referred it to the Committee. Everything on the workplan will ultimately relate back to a Council Priority. Staff could organize these ideas and structure them to some degree to help the Committee form the workplan.

Council Member Price asked if they should weight the sub-headings.

Mr. Keene said Staff could organize it under the headings first, and the Committee could weight it at a future meeting.

Chair Yeh suggested the conversation change focus to Land Use and Transportation Planning.

Council Member Shepherd asked if the Housing Element should be an indent under Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Holman said it was a required element.

Council Member Shepherd said the Role of Business and Community Health should be tied to the Zoning Element.

Chair Yeh asked what about Land Use and Planning was jumping out to the Committee. He said there was a mix of projects and products for this subject.

Council Member Holman said the Comprehensive Plan, the Housing Element, and the Planning Process were jumping out. High Speed Rail and Zoning should go under Major Projects, with Role of Business, and Community Needs going under Zoning.

Council Member Shepherd said she wanted to see an evaluation of why the community was frustrated over planning projects. She suggested that should go under Planning Process and should be articulated better. She said that Stanford and High Speed Rail should also be included.

Council Member Holman said there were different levels to the Planning Process.

Council Member Price asked if that was an ongoing study.

Mr. Keene said that some of the issues were semantics. Some of the issues would need to be discussed as they may mean code changes, process changes, operational or organizational changes, establishing a matrix, and some were accountability and oversight.

Council Member Price agreed and added that zoning should be separate as it is the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Holman said she placed zoning there so people wouldn't have the idea that this was about a major overhaul of the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Holman suggested they put Zoning under Comprehensive Plan as a subset.

Council Member Price asked if the Zoning Code had been evaluated in pieces over the years.

Mr. Keene said that it had been.

Council Member Holman said that the Planning and Transportation Commission completed a Zoning Code update about five years ago. But there were some zoning changes in addition to the Code changes that had not been revisited.

Chair Yeh said that the tool for area plans was useful tool for planning at the neighborhood level. He specified the East Meadow and California Avenue areas should be reviewed.

Mr. Keene said working with Stanford, the Housing Element, and High Speed Rail it would be a full year. He suggested they add Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendliness under Environmental Sustainability.

Council Member Holman said one of the tasks that should be done was to lay out a map of the Palo Alto/Stanford area to determine if there are opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle

Council Member Price asked when the Bicycle Plan was last updated.

Ms. Morariu said it was scheduled to be updated this year.

Council Member Holman agreed with the City Manager that the plate is full, but they shouldn't lose sight of the processes or inconsistent outcomes will happen.

Mr. Keene said tasks that need to be completed should be identified. He recommended the Committee think about what they want to achieve over the next four years. He said that while this was a one-year plan it would still be part of their legacy.

Council Member Holman suggested a poll of Department Managers and Staff to determine what issues they should prioritize.

Mr. Keene said within two weeks the results from the Town Hall Meetings would be released. They would be a good resource for Council to use.

Council Member Price checked to make sure it would be distributed to Staff as well as Council.

Council Member Holman asked if the environment at these meetings encouraged participants to speak freely.

Mr. Keene said it did.

Council Member Price asked if Staff believed it was safe to speak in the meetings.

Mr. Keene said yes, but that more trust would build over time. Action would have to be taken based on the conversations in order for them to do any good.

Council Member Holman said there was a roll for Council in this as well. They should be accountable for giving clear direction and not criticizing staff, especially not publically. Council should hold Staff accountable, but that was different from criticizing in public. She said that both Staff and Management needed to trust Council.

Council Member Price said Council and Community behaviors can contribute to a hostile environment.

Ms. Morariu said that there were several elements to the Emergency Preparedness Plan, including potential reorganization of the Emergency Preparedness functions within the City. Staff was directed to evaluate the plan as part of the budget process. A key piece of the plan was the Citizen Core Council, which was a way to start to bring partners into the conversation. Several different workgroups formed under the Citizen Corp umbrella. She said that Palo Alto Neighborhoods was the block preparedness program. That was initiated to take the PANDA Program and allow neighbors to talk to neighbors and communicate backup to the City. The goal was to have 2,500 block coordinators throughout the City.

Mr. Keene said the City can be either prepared for or responsive to emergencies. The community should be organized as well. The problem areas are floods, fires, earthquakes, pandemics, etcetera. Rebuilding was a big part of the preparedness.

Council Member Price asked if there were requirements regionally or sub-regionally and what department they would fall under.

Mr. Keene said a more focused approach was required. It should all be integrated.

Ms. Morariu said that California had standards that had been in place since the Loma Prieta Earthquake. National standards were put in place post Katrina.

Council Member Holman asked where a proactive plan would be placed.

Ms. Morariu said the wild land fire plan was meant to be proactive.

Chair Yeh said during the daytime the population in Palo Alto swelled he thought coordination for that issue during an emergency should be discussed.

Council Member Price asked what would happen if this increased population could not get out of the City in an emergency.

Council Member Shepherd asked if they were accounted for in the block preparedness programs.

Ms. Morariu said the research park has done some work on that.

Council Member Price asked if the Community Watch Program and Block Preparedness Program could disseminate information in the event of an emergency.

Ms. Morariu said that was part of the training.

Chair Yeh said that the City Auditor had looked like she wanted to say something earlier.

City Auditor Lynda Brouchoud said the mission of the Auditors office, as defined by the Municipal Code pertains to accountability and effective use of City resources. In terms of Policy and Services the Audit Office had an annual audit plan and they ask for Council input each year.

Mr. Keene said there will be some crossovers between the Finance and Policy and Services that they will have to find a way to work through.

Council Member Price said there definitely was cross over.

Chair Yeh said that Fiscal Oversight could have to do with policies.

Council Member Shepherd asked if there could be an audit of what was already in place for the next meeting.

Mr. Keene said Staff could do that.

Council Member Price asked if there was a sustainability clause in the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Holman said that sustainability chapters would be integrated throughout the plan. She added that some of the ratings seemed disconnected.

Management Specialist, Greg Hermann said the See It system functioned best when there were metrics assigned to each score card. Only the scoring elements populate up to be color coded.

Mr. Keene said he gave Staff an extremely limited amount of time to assemble the information. The tool was also designed to find the information in just a few clicks, not to be detailed to a minute level. Executive and Council feedback will ultimately be needed, but it hadn't been done yet.

Mr. Hermann said this tool would always be illustrative versus exhaustive. Examples should be chosen with that in mind.

Chair Yeh said there were measures to be defined, and See It is part of that. He suggested they continue the conversation to Community Collaboration and Youth Well-Being.

Mr. Hermann said he was a part of the task force and a member of the executive committee on the task force and the he was heading up the internal responsibilities the task force has.

Council Member Price asked about the 22 Strategies.

Mr. Hermann said the 22 Strategies were grouped under three major headings: Education, Prevention, and Intervention. He said the task force was a collaborative of many different organizations across the community. They outlined three general categories of Education; Prevention, and Intervention early in the process. The 22 Strategies emerged through their work with suicide prevention groups. He said that everybody had a role with this task force.

Mr. Keene reminded everyone that youth well-being is more than just suicide prevention.

Mr. Hermann said it can be looked as a pie; many different groups share in the sphere of influence.

Council Member Price said it's geographic as well and said that faith based organizations should be under nonprofit.

Mr. Hermann agreed. The community at large needed to be activated.

Council Member Price asked if Mr. Hermann had started the matrix for all the elements.

Mr. Hermann said it's been worked on, but it's complicated.

Council Member Price asked if the matrix and performance reviews were built in to that.

Mr. Hermann said they were being developed. He said they had seven on the See It sight.

Council Member Shepherd said they must remember that youth were part of the community. The suicides were national news and affecting the community. It should be linked to City Responsibility. She said they had not put a priority on creating places for children to go after school. She also pointed out that the first items being cut in the budget were the school shuttle, and crossing guards. With the Cubberly lease coming up soon, she said they need a long-range plan for keeping these services.

Mr. Keene said if there were to be an initiative around the developmental assets it would be an organic community process and the City would have to commit to playing its part.

Mr. Hermann said there were different levels of engagement.

Mr. Keene said this was similar to a comprehensive plan for well being.

Council Member Price said if this were to morph a little there would be ways to measure it. Grant applications exist based on these measurements. It could yield some important data, and it's critical that it be done, but she asked how it can be done without overwhelming everything else.

Council Member Holman said the more we do to make ourselves responsible, respectful, and representative the more effectively we will support the entire

community, including the youth. She suggested town hall meetings in the neighborhoods as a method for Council to have a dialogue with the community. She said the media wasn't reporting just about suicides, they were reporting about how the government treats the residents.

Council Member Price agreed and said the community needs to help government as well, and the City needs to build those relationships. Staffs ability to complete these jobs still needs to be considered.

Council Member Holman said this type of event wouldn't require staff reports. It would just require attendance and some note taking.

Chair Yeh said the City was a stakeholder in the Youth Summit, which focused on three key areas; the businesses, schools, and community responsibilities. The youth will tell the City what they were thinking and the City can take action.

Council Member Price said she thought a youth plan was created 10 years ago, which should allow a connection between past and present work.

Chair Yeh said there was no reference to an existing document. He said this brought up the fact that there were existing resources.

Mr. Keene said that the City is the local lead on the Track Watch Program and the primary interface with Cal Train, and will have an ongoing role in the program. He said there were other service areas the City used to connect to youth, such as the Police Department. How the City engages with the youth can help shape who they are. He said those programs should be called out.

Council Member Shepherd said it was important to partner with Stanford to increase awareness of the problems the students at Stanford are having as they impact the youth in Palo Alto.

Ms. Morariu said a good next step would be to schedule another meeting, to give Staff a chance to review this and then discuss the workplan more specifically.

Council Member Price said the City of Sunnyvale sorted through their priorities with a very thorough and efficient process. Council should identify priorities. Staff should come back with information on what they can or can not do. She asked if there was a way to present some of Sunnyvale's ideas into the Palo Alto process.

Mr. Keene said it could be done, but perhaps to a different model.

Council Member Price said that it's important to have a systematic approach to this.

Council Member Yeh suggested Staff send a Doodle Meeting Request for the Committee to vote on.

Ms. Morariu said they will look at scheduling it sometime the last week of February.

Council Member Price asked how long Staff are going convey what they can manage or not.

Council Member Shepherd said clearly youth rose into an important component of what the City would do. Council needs to know priorities will be pushed down to make room for it.

Mr. Keene said that would be a continual question, with continual answers.

Council Member Holman said that was why a chart would be helpful.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.