

**HENDERSON CITY COUNCIL
ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT
19-20 FEBRUARY, 2014**

**Henderson County Club
Wednesday, 19 February 2014**

PRESENT: Mayor Pro-Tem D. Michael Rainey: Council Members James C. Kearney, Sr., Sara M. Coffey, Michael C. Inscoc, Brenda G. Peace-Jenkins, Garry D. Daeke, Fearldine A. Simmons and George M. Daye.

ABSENT: Mayor O'Geary (medical reason)

STAFF: City Manager A. Ray Griffin and City Clerk Esther J. McCrackin

FACILITATOR: Madeleine Henley, of The Walking Stick Associates, Raleigh, NC

The retreat began at 6:00 p.m. with dinner at the Henderson Country Club. Council Member Peace-Jenkins asked the blessing.

CALL TO ORDER:

At 6:45 p.m., Mayor Pro-Tem Rainey called the meeting to order and formally introduced Ms. Madeleine Henley.

OPENING REMARKS:

Mayor Pro-Tem Rainey said he is looking forward to this retreat and then asked Ms. Henley, to provide a little background about herself and her company as this is the first time she has worked with Council.

Ms. Henley shared she actually served the City of Henderson while working for the League of Municipalities. Prior to coming to North Carolina, she worked as town manager for municipalities in both Maine and New Hampshire. Recently she established her own business, *The Walking Stick Associates*.

Council Member Kearney was curious about how she decided to name the business. Ms. Henley said walking sticks provide support, balance and are a tool to uncover obstacles in the path ahead.

City Manager Griffin said overall, the plan is to do the routine matters this evening so Council can focus on discussion items in the morning. Staff will join the meeting Thursday afternoon. With that, Ms. Henley encouraged Council to continue eating and began the meeting.

GETTING STARTED by Madeleine Henley

Ms. Henley reviewed the agenda for the evening and then read the Retreat objectives, as previously submitted by Council. There was an overall consensus to keep the Objectives as presented.

Ms. Henley reviewed her *Role as Facilitator* and the *Ground Rules/Guidelines for a Productive Meeting*. She asked everyone to feel free to participate and said her job is to sort the comments into logical order. Ms. Henley asked if Council wished to make any changes to either her role or the ground rules. No changes were requested.

Individual Motivators

Council Members then participated in an *Individual Motivators* exercise where everyone shared what motivated them to seek office and what criteria they will use to judge if their time was well spent. A brief summary of each Council Member's response is listed below:

James Kearney was originally appointed to fill Mary Emma Evans' vacant seat. His motivation to continue to serve was because he was still in the learning stage and he hopes he adds something to each meeting that helps Council make good decisions.

Sara Coffey ran three times before being elected. She wants to help the City make positive changes and hopes when she is no longer seated on Council that she will have left the City better than when she began.

George Daye feels Council provides an opportunity to learn. He appreciates this Council for its concern and willingness to share information without coming across as "know it all's."

Brenda Peace-Jenkins had no burning desire to serve on Council; however, she was active in the community and this is one way she can serve the community. She hopes to look back with pride in what has been accomplished when she no longer serves as Council member. Ms. Peace-Jenkins added since becoming a Council Member she has desired to learn more and recently received her BA in Public Administration.

Mike Rainey served on the Planning Board for many years and worked his way through the ranks, so to speak, to become a Council Member. When he leaves he would like to be remembered for his accomplishments. He said it is an honor to serve the citizens in this way.

Mike Inscoe is now in his fourth term. He was approached by friends and associates to run and feels it is both an honor and privilege to serve. He mentioned the challenges the City faces and feels Council looks for solutions to its opportunities (rather than calling them problems). When he no longer serves on Council, he would like to leave Henderson a better place but he will reserve judgment until he leaves and see how he feels at that time.

Garry Daeke was never asked to run. Although he lost several elections before becoming a Council Member, he always wanted to be involved in his community. He served for approximately 10 years on the Zoning Board and also served on the Downtown Development committee which he feels provided a good background for serving on Council. He feels this Council brings different, important perspectives for serving a diverse community and hopes to leave as being known as a voice of reason.

Fearldine Simmons said she decided to run literally 5 minutes before filing closed. She wishes to serve as the voice of the community.

City Clerk McCrackin said she initially interviewed for an entirely different position. After the interview, she was asked to consider the position of City Clerk. She would like to leave the position well organized.

City Manager Griffin has served the public for approximately 38 years. He enjoys working with this Council because they come together to make the best overall decisions and do not take disagreements personally. He would like to leave knowing he has been part of the team which made a positive difference in the community.

Ms. Henley summarized what she heard by saying each council member seems to want to be part of something larger through hard work by coming together to reach agreements for the betterment of the community.

Mission, Vision Purpose Core Values and Customer Expectations

Reviewing the existing Mission, Vision, Purpose, Core Values and Customer Expectation statements led to a brief discussion where both Council Members Peace-Jenkins and Simmons felt staff should be more patient with customers. Council Member Daye gave an example of when customers who should be more patient and/or understanding.

City Manager Griffin said he would weave Council's sentiments into Customer Expectations KCE 1 and KCE 3 which will be brought to a future Council meeting for approval. Ms. Henley asked if this was agreeable with all everyone. There was no disagreement.

Ms. Henley asked the newest member, Council Member Simmons if she had any questions at this point. Ms. Simmons asked what the difference is between the vision and the mission. Ms. Henley said the vision is what you want to happen. Mr. Griffin the mission is how you try to accomplish the vision.

The overall consensus of Council was to accept the Vision, Mission, Purpose, Core Values and Customer Expectations with two (2) changes to Customer Expectations: 1) Professional/courteous service and 2) exhibiting patience.

Discussion Items

Next, Ms. Henley directed Council to the list of discussion items compiled from Council's pre-Retreat questionnaire responses.

City Manager Griffin explained the discussion items are grouped into seven (7) categories, as expressed by Council. If items are not sufficiently covered during this Retreat, they will be added to future work sessions.

Ms. Henley asked if the list properly reflected Council's wishes for discussion. Council Member Kearney said the list seemed aggressive and asked how it will be prioritized. Council Member Rainey asked that discussion center on attainable goals, not dreams. Council Member Daeke thought it would be best for Council to come prepared Thursday morning with a prioritized list to expedite the discussion which was what Council ultimately decided to do.

Roles & Expectations

City Manager Griffin explained the Roles & Expectations of the Mayor, Council and City Manager were first developed during the March 2008 Retreat. Each year these expectations are revisited and minor tweaks have been made over the years. He said he felt one of the reasons Council works so well together is because Council has established its own guidelines.

Ms. Henley said she had not worked with a Council that had set this type of guidelines and will suggest the format to other municipalities. She then asked if Council's needs of each other needed any tweaks. There were no suggestions.

Ms. Henley asked if Council's needs/expectations of the Mayor needed any adjustment. There were no suggestions.

Next Ms. Henley asked for any changes to the Council's expectations of the City Manager. There were no changes suggested by Council.

There were no changes requested by Council regarding the City Manager's needs of the Mayor and Council; however, the City Manager asked that the item below be added:

- j. Understand & appreciate critical issues of staff capability and capacity.

Mr. Griffin said the difference between staff capability and capacity is something that needs to be considered when Council reviews human resources issues. Council Member Kearney said you often get what you pay for, and Council Member Coffey commented the City needs to attract good employees and that if it affects salary, so be it. Ultimately, it was the consensus of Council, to add this item. .

Ms. Coffey asked for confirmation that if it is brought to Council's attention that an employee is perceived as not doing the job, that information should be brought to the City Manager's attention. Mr. Griffin said yes and then, according to State law, concerns would be reviewed and appropriate steps taken, some of which are discipline, training, and/or dismissal. Council Member Kearney said it is not the Council's job to become involved in personnel issues, but did ask the Manager to say what he can, when he can --- to provide feedback on how the issue is resolved without disclosing anything confidential.

Ms. Henley now reviewed the agenda for Thursday and explained staff would join Council in the afternoon when everyone would break into teams to set action items for the most important issues as determined by Council Thursday morning.

Council Member Kearney thanked Mr. Griffin and Human Resources for compiling the Diversity Chart he requested on the pre-Retreat questionnaire.

Mayor Pro-Tem Rainey thanked Council for participating this evening. He also thanked Ms. Henley for facilitating the meeting and said he is looking forward to Thursday's discussion.

The meeting recessed at 8:40 p.m. and will resume Thursday morning at 8:00 a.m. at the Perry Memorial Library.

**Perry Memorial Library
Farm Bureau Room
Thursday, 20 February 2014**

The Strategic Planning Retreat reconvened at 8:11 a.m. on Thursday, 20 February 2014 with Facilitator Madeleine Henley asking Council for comments about the objectives of the meeting, and/or the discussion during dinner. No changes were suggested.

Ms. Henley then led Council in an exercise designed to uncover their individual strengths, as described by their peers. The exercise helped each member appreciate the strength and talents available within the group.

Council Member Daye said it is surprising the strengths brought by each member. Council Member Daeke commented the exercise showed the importance of listening to others, and Council Member Coffey said the discussion Wednesday evening reinforced how Council comes together. City Manager Griffin stated Council's dependence on each other shows as Council has delayed decisions at times until all the members are present to voice their opinions/insights and everyone is available to participate in the decision.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Ms. Henley assisted Council in reducing the list of discussion item. As Council went through the items, they were able to further consolidate issues into the following topics:

Continuous Improvements – Council Member Rainey felt improvements need to be made in the area of visual projects and dissemination information to the public.

Council Member Incoe said the new wastewater plant should stabilize if not lower expenses once completed due to modernization and suggested ways to keep the public information such as the web, radio and media. He also mentioned a monthly/quarterly message from the Mayor.

Council Member Peace-Jenkins mentioned residents do not seem to read notices in the water bill so the City needs to determine what avenues citizens utilize most. She added some media charge, so costs need to be considered.

Council Member Daeke suggested developing a plan for the web page and having a story from each department weekly. He said people do not understand their utility bill and thought it should be explained better. Mr. Daeke mentioned graffiti and the need to have it removed quickly is another area where the City can improve.

Council Member Coffey suggested a newsletter /message box in the Collection area that people could read while waiting to pay their bill. She also said citizens do not relate to major projects such as the wastewater project but they do relate to sidewalk improvements.

Council Member Simmons asked if these ideas would add duties to staff and if so, would they create any problems.

As a side note but as part of the discussion regarding continues improvements, Council Member Daye reminded Council that it should be careful not to promise anything specific to customers/citizens, but should listen and help in a responsible way.

Council Member Kearney felt the objective of the discussion was a public information plan.

City Manager Griffin summarized the discussion by saying Council needs/wants projects such as street paving/sidewalks which citizens can see. He reminded Council that only \$50,000 was allocated in the budget for resurfacing projects.

Overall goals set by Council for Continuous Improvement for disseminating public information: 1) Public Information Plan; 2) Messages; 3) Determine audience; 4) develop venues

Performance Excellence – There was a brief discussion regarding performance excellence with an emphasis on communication, and understanding cultural diversity.

Overall Goals for Performance Excellence: 1) Improve workforce image; 2) establish workforce training to improve on diversity understanding.

One-Stop Permitting – This is an on-going process that began in 2011. The desired outcome is to ultimately make the process more user-friendly between both the City and County for new and existing businesses.

Council Members Coffey and Inscoe both said this was added to the Strategic Plan because the process required making many trips back and forth between the City and County offices.

Council Member Kearney said improvements have been made and felt once a one-stop process for the City is refined the next step is to interact with the County for a true one-stop process. Council Member Simmons asked if one office could be established for both City and County to further perfect the process and decrease costs.

Council Member Inscoe said ideally one office should be responsible for issuing all permits and only one check should be required for all permits. Currently, individual checks are needed for each permit (i.e. fire inspection, zoning, privilege licenses, etc. He also mentioned the need for more clarification regarding FOGS (Fats, Oils, Grease).

City Manager Griffin said County Manager Ayscue has directed the County staff to delay issuing permits until approval is received from the City regarding FOGS issues.

Overall Goals Set for One-Stop Permitting – 1) Check for gaps; 2) Complete the process.

Recreation - Council Member Daye feels more people should take advantage of the facility and its programs. He has been told children do not want to go to the Recreation Center and felt inner city parents really do not care if their children participate in recreation.

Council Member Kearney asked if there was a way to improve transportation to Aycock Recreation Center and if KARTS could establish a schedule to transport children/seniors to the facility.

Council Member Coffey said insurance is a problem; Council Member Daeke mentioned the need for adult supervision.

Council Member Simmons said the facility is not well kept making the fields unsafe. Council Member Daeke said at one time he noted shrubs which needed to be cut back and added it all gets back to funding. Council Member Coffey indicated she felt staff does not work at capacity.

Council Member Simmons asked what incentives the City offers to make employees happy. City Manager Griffin explained certificates are given for exceptional service; gift cards are given to recognize workers who are required to work additional hours for issues such as snow events. He said the City does not have a policy for merit, bonuses or special recognition because the money is just not available. Council Member Coffey mentioned things council members can do as individuals to recognize staff such as providing meals.

Overall Goals for Recreation: 1) Increase upkeep; and 2) increase usage.

Other - These items did not specifically fall under a specific discussion title.

Council Member Daeke would like to have yearly reports from the individual Boards and Commissions Committees. He said some committee by-laws specifically state a yearly report is to be given to Council. He added the Downtown Development committee recently presented an excellent report to Council.

Council Member Daeke would like a quarterly report regarding graffiti locations, cleanup, etc.

Overall Goal: 1) Yearly Reports from the Boards and Commissions Committees; 2) periodic graffiti reports.

Finance & Budget – Ms. Henley began this discussion by asking who asked to discuss managing the budget after property re-evaluation. Council Member Daeke said this was his comment which he feels is a big issue but since re-evaluation will not occur this year, it probably is not necessary to discuss at this time.

Council Member Kearney then asked if there are long-term debts that should be restructured now, while the loan rates are low. City Manager Griffin said most of the debt held by the City has been recently refinanced and most of the new debt is being financed by State Revolving funds at a very low rate.

Council Member Kearney asked if any of the new sales tax will come to the City. Mr. Griffin responded he was unsure how much, if any, the City would receive. He added after six months, the City has only received approximately \$10,000 over sales tax budget estimates. Mr. Kearney then mentioned adjusting privilege license fees and perhaps the need for enforcing collections. Mr. Kearney also inquired about possibly outsourcing the utilities billing.

City Manager Griffin said billing is already outsourced at a cost of approximately \$60,000 per year. He added the cemetery was outsourced to save money. Garbage collection was outsourced due to lack of funds at the time to make the necessary repairs/replacement of vehicles. Garbage collection is now reliable but there are yearly cost increases from Waste Industries.

Mr. Griffin suggested Council ponder the reasons and overall expense when considering outsourcing --- is it a short term solution or will it save money over the years. Mr. Griffin also mentioned the loss of personnel creates a loss of flexibility. If outsourcing occurs, other departments may not have the ability to assist during times of emergencies.

Council Member Rainey spoke about finding ways to encourage people to come to Henderson and the possibility of offering incentives to companies. Ms. Henley reminded Council this is more an Economic Development Commission (EDC) matter.

Mr. Kearney said he would like to see the sanitation fee reduced closer to the actual cost. He understands this is one of the areas where the City can add revenue but would like to see it remain level when the new sewer plant is up and running.

Mr. Kearney asked when cost reductions might be evident with the upgrading of the sewer plant. Mr. Griffin said the first indications will occur in FY16 with a reduction in the use of chemicals and electricity and could not predict any specific dollar amount. A discussion then ensued regarding whether it would be best to reduce rates for customers when the plant is more efficient or to hold the line. Overall, Council felt it would be better to hold the line.

Council Member Inscoe commented economic development is what drives costs.

City Manager added the cost for City water is very competitive. He said about half the "utility" costs relate to garbage fees. Council Member Coffey added fees can be changed and taxes cannot, so this is an area that can be used to balance the budget.

Council Member Coffey said the garage is an area of great expense and would outsourcing to be considered during budget deliberations.

Overall Goals for Finance & Budget: 1) Set Fee Schedule; 2) Look at outsourcing garage

Stewardship – Ms. Coffey said citizens need to feel confident that their dollars are going to justifiable projects. Ms. Henley said people think differently about what justifies a project and explained this is why there is a Council --- citizens rely on Council to make good decisions.

Council Member Coffey questioned why the Fire Chief has two new vehicles. She also asked for information regarding the cost of "babysitting" mental patients at Maria Parham Medical Hospital (or other facilities). Council Member Inscoe felt since the Hospital is now a for-profit institution, an agreement of some type of restitution of should be crafted. Council Members Simmons and Peace-Jenkins agreed.

Council Member Daeke asked about reviewing the city vehicle tax as a means for additional revenue.

Council Member Peace-Jenkins asked about reducing/eliminating fees for non-profits.

Other issues raised were fire inspection costs, and collection of unpaid business license fees.

Council Member Inscoe said when it comes budget time, he will not agree to any cuts in the number of police officers in the department. He explained to Ms. Henley that ten (10) positions

were cut several years ago which were unfilled for a long period of time due to non-competitive salaries. By cutting the unfilled positions, the department was able to hire qualified officers at a competitive wage. Council Member Daeke added there was discussion at that time that some of those positions might be gradually added back to the force in the future. Mr. Inscoe said he would prefer to reduce the number of fire hydrant replacements over reducing safety personnel.

City Manager Griffin explained fire inspection fees are State mandated and until recently the inspections were performed at no cost. He also mentioned an alternative to privilege fees is to use the percent of gross sales, which the state allows. Mr. Griffin said some of the larger cities use gross sales but it can be seen as not being business friendly.

Mr. Griffin asked for guidance regarding the General Fund. He said approximately 51% of the General Fund budget is comprised of the police/fire and EMS services. He said if you take 51% out of the General Fund first and then take out debt service, you have a limited amount remaining. He asked if Council is willing to stop doing other things as a way to balance the budget. He said costs continue to increase for utilities, chemicals and products, along with career development costs that are required in some departments, which will again make for a difficult budget year. He said he has been advised to expect a 10-12% increase in medical/retirement costs due to new taxes from Obamacare. Mr. Griffin reminded Council there are only two revenue sources for the General Fund -- taxes and the garbage fee, and possibly a third, which would be controversial, is a new method of collecting privilege licenses. He again asked if Council is willing to stop doing something as Council cannot continue to shrink the General Fund.

Council Member Kearney said the pool has become a pond so something has to be done. Council Member Rainey said the largest expense of this portion of the budget is personnel costs. Council Member Daeke mentioned there are core services which are necessary for quality of life and the City must continue to provide but there are other things the City can discontinue and feels Council needs to sit down and have a serious discussion about what is not necessary.

Ms. Henley said she's hearing Council say they have no desire to increase revenue. Council Member Daeke agreed and said everything seems to be "bleeding."

Mr. Griffin said there is no money for replacing very old fire department vehicles, and there is no money for street resurfacing this year. He said the recession is still very much alive in Henderson and mentioned departmental changes such as the Planning Department which is now functioning with only two (2) staff as opposed to five (5) staff several years ago. He also said there has been no resolution from the State about the Hospital's appeal regarding valuation which adds to the budget frustrations.

Ms. Henley encouraged Council to stop by and talk with Mr. Griffin about budget issues while they are fresh in their minds.

Mr. Griffin thanked Council for its input and guidance regarding the upcoming budget. He also asked Council to call or stop by to see him if they have any questions or need input.

Overall Goals of Stewardship --- 1) Look into agreement with Hospital; 2) consider privatization of garage; 3) consider city vehicle tax increase

Reducing Crime --- Over crime is lower than it has been in several years.

Council Member Rainey said citizens do not see a reduction in crime unless the criminal is caught and put in jail. They remember the bad parts. Council Member Kearney sees part of the problem as the judicial system and the ties to old habits when offenders return home.

City Manager Griffin said the new Police Chief, Marcus Barrow, is in the process of compiling an action plan which includes furthering partnerships with the faith community, working with the Federal Court System and continuing segments on the local radio station.

Safe Community – Facilitator Henley asked what specifically Council would like to see regarding a safe community.

Council Member Kearney said he would like to find a way to scare the crooks. Council Member Rainey felt Community Watch groups are effective. Council Member Peace-Jenkins would like to see some type of program for ex-offenders.

Housing – Council Member Daeke would like to see plan/revenue source and timeline for demolitions. Council Member Simmons asked how demolition is a revenue source. Mr. Daeke clarified the term revenue meaning how to find the funds for demolitions, not to bring in dollars. Council Member Rainey asked about selling lots owned by the City and/or County for development. Council Member Peace-Jenkins inquired about donating property to non-profits.

City Manager Griffin felt Council could create a policy with restrictions for donating property. Council Member Simmons felt this is a wonderful idea.

City Manager Griffin explained currently the City has close to 300 abandoned structures that need demolition. At an average cost of \$6,000, approximately \$1.7M is needed to eliminate the blighted structures.

Council Members Kearney and Daeke were thinking of a discussion regarding new buildings, not demolition. Council Member Coffey said she would like to see a limit on Section 8 housing. Mr. Griffin said the City has a need for more affordable, more decent housing.

Discussion continued around demolition, urban homesteading and increasing roof tops (new construction). Council Member Daeke also would like to establish a plan for improving the housing stock.

Overall Goals of Housing – 1) Urban Homesteading; 2) Increasing roof tops; and 3) demolition

Economic Development – This is not a main function of the Council; however, Council would like to see business incentives, regional partnerships and government/private partnerships developed to bring more dollars to expand the tax base. Ms. Henley said regional partnerships are effective in other communities.

No specific goals were set.

Council Members agreed one of the problems in Henderson, other than crime, is the lack of trainable employees. Council Member Rainey said the city can offer as many incentives as it want but unless people feel comfortable, they are not going to come.

Mr. Griffin said businesses relocating are the ones that will bring jobs to the community. Council Member Coffey added reaching out to existing businesses to show appreciation would be greatly appreciated.

(Clerk's Note: Council Member Kearney left at approximately 11:50 a.m.)

Sensitivity Training – Council Member Rainey said Council Member Simmons suggested earlier a class regarding sensitivity training and said he felt overall staff on the front lines do an excellent job dealing with the public.

Council Member Simmons feels periodic workshops will help staff better understand diversity issues. She said “we know you’re human” but you still have to maintain your cool. She said staff needs to understand that you need to keep calm no matter what.

Council Member Peace-Jenkins said cops on TV are always nice and wondered why it is different in real life. Council Member Coffey spoke to the power that comes with certain positions. She said a more mellow type of attitude is needed but added personalities contribute to different situations.

With no further discussion, the group recessed for lunch at 12:00 noon. While eating lunch Ms. Henley asked Council to select the four (4) major topics that will be discussed with staff in the afternoon.

LUNCH

The meeting resumed at 1:00 p.m. with the following Department Directors in attendance: Assistant City Manager Frank Frazier, Finance Director Kathy Brafford, Police Chief Marcus Barrow, Fire Chief Danny Wilkerson, Human Resources Director Cathy Brown, Henderson Water Reclamation Facility Director Tom Spain, Kerr Lake Regional Water Plant Director Christy Lipscomb, Recreation and Parks Director Alan Gill, Engineering Director Peter Sokalski, Code Compliance Director Corey Williams and Planning and Community Development Director Erris Dunston.

Mayor Pro-Tem Rainey welcomed the staff and turned the meeting over to Ms. Henley. Mr. Griffin asked that staff introduce themselves before beginning since Ms. Henley has not had the opportunity to meet everyone. Ms. Henley explained that groups would be forming shortly to discuss the most important issues as determined by Council during the morning discussion. She said Council began with 14 items this morning and selected nine (9) for discussion this afternoon. However, before going into the action plan discussion, City Manager Griffin reviewed the existing Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr. Griffin said all the prior action plans are included so there is a trail of understanding regarding the Plan. He then touched briefly on each Key Strategic Objective (KSO) as follows:

KSO 1 – Implement Performance Excellence - Mr. Griffin suggested removing AP 1-2b *Create a Brand for City*, as it is an Economic Development issue.

KSO 2 – Reduce Crime - Mr. Griffin suggested changing the title of this KSO to *Safe Community*. He added the Police Chief is working with faith based organizations to develop a partnership similar to what exists with the Community Watch Groups.

KSO 3 – Economic Development - Mr. Griffin recommended removing AP 3-7 *Develop Annexation Plan*, due to State restrictions. He suggested creating a liaison for ex-offenders.

KSO 4 – Improve the Housing Stock - Mr. Griffin complimented the Code Compliance Department for doing a great job with a very limited budget.

KSO 5 – Viable/Reliable Infrastructure - Mr. Griffin focused on the wastewater facility upgrade and the recent approval of the Sandy Creek project.

KSO 6 – Maintain Qualified Municipal Workforce - Mr. Griffin said AP 6-1, *Perform Pay-Class Study*, is nearing completion. He commended Human Resources Director Cathy Brown for her continued work on the personnel manual and also updating the policies and procedures manual.

KSO 7 – Leisure Services - Mr. Griffin said a Master Plan is being created with the assistance of the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments. Fox Pond continues to be upgraded. Recreation and Parks Director Alan Gill is working with the Rails to Trails group.

KSO 8 – Adequate Funding for Municipal Operations and Capital - Mr. Griffin spent a few minutes explaining that in 2000 the Fund Balance was at \$4M; in 2005 it was \$28,000 which is unacceptable to the Local Government Commission. The fund has now reached about 20% of Council's 30% goal. He said although AP 8-2, *Create Fleet/Equipment/IT Replacement Fund* has no current funding, it should remain in the plan. He commended Police Chief Barrow for his forward thinking regarding the development of a sustainable financing plan for the Police Department so there is less reliance on asset forfeiture funds.

Overall there has been really good progress with some action plans.

Council Member Daeke asked Recreation Director Gill about youth using the Aycock Center. Mr. Gill said there are about 15 groups that work with youth within the community that utilize the center and are scheduled as priority. There is no fee for many groups such as the Boys and Girls Club. Council Member Rainey asked if the Scouts use the facility. Mr. Gill said yes. He added several Eagle Scouts, along with Cub Scouts have received merit badges for completing activities at the Center and/or Fox Pond.

Council Member Coffey asked about transportation. Mr. Gill said most groups provide their own transportation. Council Member Simmons inquired about fees. Mr. Gill said fees are waived for many groups.

Mr. Griffin asked for Council's wishes regarding the proposed action items on the KSO's. Mayor Pro-Tem Rainey asked for Council's pleasure. It was Council's decision that the report was self-explanatory and did not wish to discuss further today. Mr. Griffin then walked everyone through the attachments.

At this time, Ms. Henley reviewed one last time the nine (9) discussion items for this afternoon. They are ranked by points below from highest to lowest priority:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Goals public can see (17 points) | 5. Recreation (4 points) |
| 2. Housing (roof tops and demolition) (10 points) | 6. Jobs (4 points) |
| 3. Reducing crime (8 points) | 7. One-Stop permitting (4 points) |
| 4. Performance excellence (8 points)
(workforce training and image) | 8. Expanding tax base (3 points) |
| | 9. Increasing revenue (2 points) |

It was agreed that since finance and budget will be covered during budget work sessions no action plans are needed today. It was also decided that the workforce portion of *Performance Excellence* would not be the best use time during this planning retreat. Ms. Henley asked if this list met Council's approval. There was no discussion.

Ms. Henley now asked Council to select the issues they wished to discuss further in teams and the City Manager helped select staff members appropriate for each team. The teams are as follows, along with the team reports for further discussion and/or action plans:

Recreation – Council Members Simmons and Inscoe; Staff members Alan Gill, Kathy Brafford, Cathy Brown

Report summary: 15 Parks/2 Major Facilities (Fox Pond & Aycock = 125 acres
3 Maintenance Staff/2 vans
Transportation issues (determined not feasible for City to provide)
Liability issues/supervision issues/collecting data for each participant (contact & consent information)

- a) Lease park to Henderson Collegiate School for \$1.00 a year with agreement the school maintains the park. Do the same with churches such as Davis Church directly across from city park – lease for a \$1.00 with agreement to maintain.
- b) Approach Vance County to take over day-to-day running of the Recreation Department and the City will continue to fund its existing debt service obligations.

Goals the Public Can See – Council Members Daeke and Rainey; Staff members Erris Dunston, Danny Wilkerson Tom Spain and Ray Griffin

Report:

- a) Identify media used by citizens & create database
- b) Seek least costly methods to communicate
- c) Explore/survey customers regarding media usage
- d) Generate more in-house publications
- f) Staffing problems (meter readers as notice carriers)

Council Member Inscoe asked if bullet points of Council action could be added following meetings.

Housing – Council Members Coffey and Daye; Staff members Corey Williams, Christy Lipscomb, Peter Sokalski, Marcus Barrow and Frank Frazier

Report: Problem is poor housing stock (depressed economy, taxes, lack of desire to live in Henderson due to schools/shopping)

- a) Adopt/amend/revamp Housing Code to better housing (include property managers) higher rental population
- b) Create affordable housing for “our” population
- c) Work with non-profits/fire department regarding demolitions

Mr. Griffin mentioned the lack of modern housing stock and the fact that no permits have been issued in recent years for new houses.

One-Stop Permitting – Council Members Inscoe and Coffey; Staff members Erris Dunston, Corey Williams and Peter Sokalski

Report: continuation of existing action plan

- a) Everything in one place with one check (fire, utility, zoning, etc.)
- b) Send to Fire Dept. for sprinkler system requirements
- c) Ultimate goal – streamline City/County process

Crime/Safety – Council Members Simmons and Daye; Staff members Marcus Barrow, Alan Gill, Tom Spain, Danny Wilkerson and Frank Frazier

Report: Chief Barrow explained the difference between perception and reality regarding crime in Henderson. He said the rate of crime is based on population thus, if Charlotte has two murders and Henderson has one murder, Henderson is placed in a higher crime bracket because Henderson has a smaller population. He said volume-wise, Henderson is seeing a reduction in crime.

- a) Visibility
- b) Do job pleasantly
- c) Judicial System has a great deal to do with crime (i.e., Judges/District Attorneys are elected officials that public can influence)

Performance Excellence – Council Members Peace-Jenkins and Rainey; Staff Kathy Brafford, Cathy Brown, Christy Lipscomb, and Ray Griffin

Report: looked at image and workforce training which relates to what the public sees. Need to do more positive communication

- a) Workforce training to improve image – expand orientation
- b) Public recognition (employee of the month/year)

- c) Expand City Academy (include diversity training)
- d) Positive communication
- e) Always represent City in positive manner
- f) Conflict training

At this point Council chose to delay discussion on jobs, increasing revenue and expand the tax rate as they relate to each other and the budget process. Ms. Henley and Council thanked all the staff for its input and told them they are welcome to stay for the remainder of the meeting or they are now free to return to the office.

In summary, it was the consensus of Council to make the following changes to the existing KSO's:

Add:

- KSO 2 AP 2-5 Create Partnerships with Faith Based Communities
- KSO 4 AP 4-6 Redevelop Flint Hill
- KSO 4 AP 4-7 Aggressive Urban Homesteading
- KSO 6 AP 6-4 Training for sensitivity and diversity training
- KSO 7 AP 7-4 Develop Action Plans for Master Plan once completed

Remove:

- KSO 1 AP 1-2b Brand for City since this is more an EDC Issue
- KSO 3 AP 3-2b Revise/realign land use & sign ordinance due to lack of funds
- KSO 3-AP 3-7 Develop an Annexation Plan due to new State restrictions
- KSO 4 AP 4-5 REEF Project which failed
- KSO 7 AP 7-3 Sports Tourism due to limitations on staff/facilities

Other:

- KSO 1 AP 1-4 Improve Citizen Engagement (expand)
- KSO 4 AP 4-1 Aggressive Code Enforcement (expand)

Revive:

- KSO 8 AP 8-3 needs to be revived for reevaluation of City/County joint programs

There was a definite consensus of Council to go forward with the possibility of removing the City from the area of recreation. City Manager Griffin said he will amend the existing plan and bring it to Council hopefully during the March Work Session.

RETREAT CRITIQUE AND WRAP UP

Ms. Henley commended Council for spending good time and working hard for the benefit of the citizen of Henderson. She asked Council if there was anything else they would like to consider. There was no response.

Ms. Henley asked Council to critique the Retreat.

Liked:

Dinner
New Look (meaning the retreat)
More specific/detail oriented than past years
Better setting than in the past

Atmosphere of Farm Bureau Room
Good job of organization
Enjoyed the brainstorming

Disliked:

Library chairs hard & uncomfortable
Get groups together more efficiently

Organize groups better
Group time too short

As the newest member of Council, Ms. Simmons said she learned a lot and thought the pacing was excellent.

Council Member Inscoe asked the City Manager when the budget might be ready for review. Mr. Griffin said early May.

The City Manager asked if Council would like to move the 2015 retreat back to January. The general consensus was to meet in January 2015.

Mayor Pro-Tem thanked Ms. Henley for her leadership and asked if Council was prepared to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Council Member Daeke and seconded by Council Member Inscoe to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

D. Michael Rainey
Mayor Pro-Tem

ATTEST:

Esther J. McCrackin
City Clerk