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Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission

Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,
City of Jamestown ss.:
Police Training Room

The regular meeting of the Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Thursday, November 16, 2017 at 8:30 A.M in the Police Training Room, City Hall.

Members Present: Co-Chairman Greg Rabb, Co-Chairwoman Kathleen Eads, Paul Leone, Cory Duckworth, Mike Haines, Cecil Miller, Lisa Hatch, Becky Robbins, Kevin Sixbey, Justin Hanft,

Others Present: Councilman At Large Andrew Liuzzo, Rochelle Mole, Malachi Livermore, Steve Sandberg, Tina Scott

Mr. Rabb: I would ask, as the acting public co-chair, that somebody nominate and second Kathleen as the private co-chair and me as the public co-chair. Would someone be willing to make that motion?

Mr. Miller: So move.

Mr. Leone: I second that.

Mr. Rabb: The motion has been made and seconded. Are there any other nominations? If not, could I have a voice vote approving that? I think that this is the first time, since Kathleen came on, that we are officially the private and public co-chairs. This bodes well for 2018.

The minutes of the November 16, 2017 meeting were approved.

Mr. Rabb: Obviously, we took December off. We decided that was in the best interest because of the holidays and changes going on. I was gone, but I was appointed chairman of the Planning Commission, my old job, so I'll be the Planning Commission liaison to the Strategic Planning Commission.

Ms. Robbins: I was thinking about Jim Domagola. We've never had a quorum to...

Ms. Eads: That's right, he's not here.

Mr. Rabb: We could still approve his membership. Could I have a motion to approve Jim's membership?

Ms. Robbins made the motion to approve Mr. Domagola's membership. Seconded by Mr. Miller.

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Jim Domagola was approved as a member of the Strategic Planning and Partnerships Commission.

Mr. Rabb: I know that we still had a bunch of topics to bring up with respect to downtown and I believe we haven't scheduled these for the rest of this time.

Ms. Eads: Maybe we could get some input and then we can schedule going forward.

Mr. Rabb: Right because some of you – and I should ask everybody to introduce themselves and I will in a moment, but one of the things we did last year after Kathleen came onboard as co-chair, we decided to spend the year focusing on downtown stuff and I think that has really brought a lot of energy into the commission because a lot of people were showing up for our discussions and the fact that we have a quorum, the gods are smiling on us. I think we need to figure out which of these topics we want to do next. Why don't we go around the room? I apologize for not doing this sooner.

The members and attendees introduced themselves.

Mr. Rabb: What topic do we want to attack for the February meeting? We've got a list here of some downtown things that we want to look at.

Ms. Eads: Does anybody have any additional topics that they would like to add?

Mr. Rabb: Beyond downtown?

Ms. Eads: In downtown, that isn't mentioned here.

Mr. Rabb: Okay because then we can do additional topics.

Ms. Eads: Yes. I'm just wondering if the first few discussions brought anything up for somebody that seemed to be an important...

Mr. Duckworth: I don't know if we covered public transportation at all.

Mr. Sixbey: Just as a refresher, what were some of the topics that were previously discussed? From the minutes it looked like, obviously, parking was a major focal point.

Ms. Eads: We had a very robust parking discussion which was great. We've talked about...

Mr. Rabb: We did solid waste; garbage. That was a big one.

Ms. Eads: Garbage was a very big topic.

Mr. Rabb: And an important one.

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Mr. Leone: Lighting.

Ms. Eads: Talking about the new LED lights that are going in and where they're going. Did we do some signage and wayfinding?

Mr. Thomas: The Parking Ad Hoc Committee came in and reported on that.

Mr. Sixbey: Are there any other ad hoc committees as a part of this?

Ms. Eads: Not yet. It was talked about to create an ad hoc committee regarding lighting and garbage, to be a sub-committee for that, because that is actually a very deep subject.

Mr. Rabb: Yes. The Ad Hoc Parking Commission was created outside of the structure of the Strategic Planning Commission. And the Strategic Planning Commission has historically had action teams that come and go depending on the issue. I think that was their recommendation; that there might be an action team around those two issues.

Ms. Eads: Some of the remaining topics from the original brainstorming was signage and wayfinding, for which the city did receive some DRI money for that. We could talk to Vince and Jeff, I think, are heading that up, so I could talk to them about when they might be available to unveil any plans that they might have. Downtown hospitality is something that I believe the Renaissance Corporation is working on. Lisa were you going to be looking for a grant?

Ms. Hatch: We are working on putting together an ambassador program. We have our strategic planning meeting on Tuesday the 23rd and then we'll be prepared to really go at it. We have a lot of good ideas.

Mr. Rabb: Would that be a possibility that we could have a presentation at our February meeting?

Ms. Hatch: Absolutely.

Mr. Leone: I've been thinking about more art downtown. Specifically, the parking ramp; get some local artist to put some murals up on that. I don't know if that's something we would like to think about. We could have a contest for local artists to submit projects and paint up that parking ramp.

Mr. Rabb: I'll put that down as an additional topic along with public transportation.

Mr. Duckworth: When I mentioned the public transportation, what's in my mind is what are the challenges we have, I think, is getting JCC students, particularly those living in the residential halls, connected to the city. It's just far enough away that walking down here very frequently is not going to happen. And we're just one population. I know there's a fair number of people in our community that don't have transportation. And if we want them to come into the downtown area, it seems like there ought to be some way of helping them to do that.

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Ms. Eads: Educate me. Does JCC have any shuttles? And is CARTS the only public transportation in town?

Mr. Duckworth: That I'm aware of, but I don't understand it very well. Vince tried to address it a few times mainly to get some of our students to grocery stores because we're sort of in a food desert. We do actually run a shuttle twice a week. It goes from our residential halls down to Fairmount and Wegmans, Kmart area so they can get back and forth. It's just a small van that we have for some of residents to run down there and back.

Mr. Miller: We might bring CARTS in for a presentation. I know they have both fixed route and on-call service.

Mr. Rabb: I think we should bring them in. I think that senior housing might have shuttles that go out to the stores. But, I think hearing from CARTS, because I think CARTS is forgotten about, maybe they could play a role.

Mr. Duckworth: Which raises another issue. I'm not sure how available it is downtown, but are there groceries available in the downtown area?

Mr. Rabb: Just Brick City, which is a limited grocery store on Fourth Street across from the old Holiday Inn or the new Doubletree. It's gotten to be more than it used to be. I think that's about it. Unless you count Brooklyn Square with Big Lots and the drug stores.

Ms. Hatch: The Jamestown Renaissance Corporation received a grant from the USDA to have a mobile food van that will go around on Tuesdays and address food deserts. That probably won't start until July. The transportation for students from JCC to downtown is something that I've been thinking about a lot because there are so many activities that they can engage in. They should have access to go to the Reg.

Mr. Duckworth: We need them to have that opportunity. Otherwise they're trapped down there and they can only go to the library and the gym so many times.

Mr. Rabb: You can never go to the library enough.

Ms. Robbins: This food van, would it take you places, or would it have food on it?

Ms. Hatch: It would have food on it and we haven't even chosen locations yet. We have to work with the community to figure out where best to serve the population because there seems to be so many opportunities to park it in so many different places. So, the basic premise is, the van would pick up fresh produce from the auction in Clymer and on Tuesdays stop in separate locations and charge a very low rate. It would also accept SNAP and food stamps. So, that might be an option to help with the JCC situation, but bringing the students downtown is essential.

Ms. Scott: I feel like that's the worst thing that's happened to Jamestown over the years is doing away with the bus service because I used to take the bus to work; years and years

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and years ago. We talk about it. We have brought it up before, but I feel like this is an issue for everything that we've touched on.

Mr. Rabb: Absolutely. Are we still going to do the regular farmer's market downtown?

Ms. Hatch: Every single Saturday.

Mr. Rabb: Because I'm thinking that might be something we need to – I don't think enough people know about that and people have talked to me in the community about why don't we promote it better, but I think this would be a good place to have that discussion too.

Ms. Hatch: We just hired a new farmer's market manager who is also going to run the mobile food market and we are looking at a really different approach for the farmer's market this year. Where every Saturday will be an event where you can purchase fresh produce. So, there are some pretty exciting plans coming up.

Mr. Rabb: Is it too soon to try to incorporate that with your ambassador's presentation in February?

Ms. Hatch: Probably because the new market manager we would like to engage in this does not start till January 29th. I'd just like to be a little realistic.

Mr. Rabb: I understand, but I think that's something important too to downtown. It is an attractor if it's done right.

Ms. Hatch: It's both an event and an essential service; in my opinion.

Mr. Leone: How successful has it been?

Ms. Hatch: In the past? I've been to farmer's markets in other areas that I felt were more successful. We only had six vendors by the end of the season which is why we need to completely redo it. I've talked to a lot of local business owners and there are a lot of different options that we are going to utilize. For example, first and foremost, we have to attract more farmers. Then there'd be a better selection of produce. We'll also have more food options. I'd like to see the events that take place more kid-focused, so instead of just having somebody play music for two hours, maybe we'll have a magician one week. We also received a lot of money from the USDA grant to do publicity. So, every single week there will be radio ads explaining what different activity we're going to have. We're going to have yoga. We're going to hopefully work with UPMC to maybe do – somebody had the idea of doing a blood donation one week. Everything we can think of to bring people in. Even the new brewery has said that they're very interested in having their chef do healthy cooking demonstrations with items that you can buy at the farmer's market. So, it's going to look very, very different and we have the resources to do it and we have a really great staff that we've hired that has already worked the farmer's market and mobile food labs and food desert issues for other companies. I think it's going to be a highlight of Saturdays. As it needs to be.

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Mr. Leone: Wasn't it formerly on Thursdays?

Ms. Hatch: Prior to my time it did switch days. We switched from a Thursday to a Saturday. People say that maybe the Saturday was what caused the problems and why it wasn't well-attended, but I don't think that that was the issue. I think it has to be an event. In other cities, it's an event. There could potentially be wine tasting. We're in the middle of wine country. That is an option too other food markets use. It's going to go through a major change and it's going to look very different. People have also posed the idea that we should move it. But, quite frankly, with the way vendors set up, Cherry Street is perfect for it because they have some pretty elaborate stands and it works pretty well. The Mayor's office has always been very supportive of helping us block off streets. I'm not sure that the location in the issue. Publicity, amazing events, making it an event, more vendors in addition to fresh produce, etc. and having food cooking demonstrations, there is absolutely no reason why there couldn't be some retail included. I don't go to a food market to buy corn, but I'll walk away with alpaca socks every week. The food market is going to work very, very different.

Mr. Rabb: Maybe when you have the new person on board and this person gets a chance to work all this up, this would be a great place to come and make that presentation.

Ms. Hatch: We'd be pleased.

Ms. Eads: Maybe in May?

Ms. Hatch: Absolutely. I've never lived in a rural community before now, I've always been a city girl and I've learned a lot about produce. The best fruits and vegetables are really not available until June, so the farmer's market will start in May, but then you'll see it ramp up. So, May will be a great time for that presentation.

Ms. Eads: Alright. I've got you on the February meeting for hospitality and I've got you down for May for the market. And I'll reach out to CARTS and see and I'll talk to Jeff and Vince about the wayfinding and see when they're going to be ready. I will ask Vince if he's willing to talk about zoning in the arts and entertainment district. It's a little peeve of mine, that our supposed arts and entertainment district is zoned for everything. Anybody can bring anything in downtown, but I know that's a much larger conversation, but I would like to hear if there's any thoughts from the development department about controlling and/ or trying to actually create and cultivate an arts and entertainment district as we have outlined in several of the strategic plans for downtown.

Mr. Rabb: I think that's worthy of a meeting. With Paul's suggestion about an art contest, is there any way we can try to shift that over to JRC, potentially?

Ms. Hatch: Yes. Actually, Strategic Planning is January 23rd which is where we're going to find out and narrow down what our scope is. One of the things that I speak to about with Sarah Gilbert all the time, is finding art-related grants, getting funding for additional arts. Our original thought was that we would like to expand Potter's Alley; update Potter's Alley. But, it

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sounds like we're on the same page. We'd like to see more public art. I'd like to see a picture of Freddie Mercury in Aids Memorial Park. But, that's something that we would like to, if we get the support of our board, try to work on receiving additional grants for art in and around the city.

Mr. Rabb: And the biggest one of all, maybe in June?

Ms. Eads: I don't know who we're going to haul in here, but...

Mr. Rabb: Well, I think that's the one we've still got to do a lot of thinking about with the landlord issues. I've been through that several times and that's a tough one.

Ms. Eads: One I forgot and certainly ties into a successful farmer's market is, I would like to address smoking on public sidewalks in the downtown. Because if I have to walk through a wall of smoke to get to the farmer's market to buy my fresh fruit and vegetables, I have a big issue with that. And I would like to be able to put tables and chairs out in front of the Reg when the café opens and the weather is nice and people can have a cup of coffee and I want people to be able to do that and it's not an ashtray.

Ms. Hatch: I would like to bring more families to the public market and I would like people not to blow smoke on children. So, I don't think we're on a different page.

Ms. Eads: Where there are children, there should not be public smoking. I run a public center. I think we have some foundations to hold onto there. I realize it's a very big conversation, but if they can eliminate it out of the parks, I think we can start working our way downtown. I'd love to know who managed to get that through.

Mr. Rabb: I think that all started with – was it the Chautauqua County -

Ms. Hatch: Health Network?

Mr. Rabb: Health Network. I think that's where that came from originally.

Ms. Hatch: They collaborated with a man named Anthony Balanni at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. He runs the Erie County Tobacco Free Coalition. He started the smoke free movement in the park in Erie County and perhaps that's somebody we can reach out to, to see if we could utilize his experience to make it happen here.

Ms. Eads: That would be excellent.

Ms. Robbins: There's been a county tobacco cessation group for years. I don't know who's in charge of it now.

Mr. Miller: Tony DeAngelo from hospital wellness would be a good resource as well.

Mr. Rabb: She works at the hospital? I think we're going to have more than enough stuff.

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Ms. Eads: I'll see if I can plug CARTS in in March and then maybe wayfinding for Jeff and Vince in April and I say that because they're supposed to be working on my sidewalks starting in April if the snow is gone.

Ms. Robbins: The transportation, as you think about the National Comedy Center, there is enough parking, I understand, in the city and people will have the wayfinding that's supposed to help with that, but will they need shuttles.

Mr. Livermore: Yes, we've been looking at that on our end, operationally, and looking into shuttle options; similar to what we did when Jerry Seinfeld was in town and we had 5,000 people downtown at once. We offered a shuttle service that ran to all the parking garages and satellite service and dropped them off right in front of the arena. So, we're looking into a similar option during peak seasons to offer a similar service.

Ms. Eads: Is that a private service that you hired?

Mr. Livermore: We're looking into private services.

Ms. Eads: Okay. I didn't know if CARTS had side jobs.

Mr. Livermore: Yes, we're also in communication with CARTS on that too because I think CARTS actually did the Seinfeld one for us.

Ms. Robbins: I took a tour about a month ago and they talked about, they understood there was enough parking, they were worried about the signage, but now there's a grant for that.

Ms. Hatch: In regards to the shuttle options that are going to be involved with the comedy center, do you think it would be possible to collaborate with the other attractors? That's something that I would like to be able to – if they come for 2 or 3 days and go to the comedy center, they may want to go to the Martz Observatory, so if we could really look at - I'm happy to help talk to the other attractors.

Mr. Livermore: Absolutely.

Ms. Hatch: You've got to move people around is my message today.

Ms. Eads: We are booked through June at this point and I think we're going to have some very interesting conversations in our future and of course as other things come up, we can deal with those. Is there anything else, Greg?

Mr. Greg: On downtown? I don't know. Can anybody else think of anything else that we should be thinking about downtown? Do you want to say anything with the library since you're part of downtown?

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Ms. Scott: We have smoking signs, we got those a few years ago. We have to enforce it, tell people to step away. The police are always there when we need them. We have a parking lot that is used by the church also. The city is very good about working with us when we have events like the race, but nothing that I can think of.

Mr. Rabb: I just thought of something when you said police. I don't think we've had a discussion on public safety downtown. I think we need to have that as a topic from what I know from the statistics and just being here all the time that it's relatively safe, but I've had some people occasionally express some concerns, but nothing overwhelming. Unlike a lot of other downtowns. Lisa's giving me a strange look.

Ms. Hatch: I've never felt so safe in my life.

Mr. Rabb: Part of the problem is because I came here from Buffalo and I still teach in Buffalo and when I leave Buff State, I have to have the escort service in my wallet because I don't feel safe and then I come down here and I don't think about it, but a lot of it is perspective. But, stuff happens unfortunately. But even if we got some reassurance and statistics because that's important because some people do think Jamestown, downtown, is not safe and I've been hearing opposite in the presentation on what really is happening down here. The last time I did a ride-a-long was last year with the police. It was a Saturday night and we were out from 10:00 to 2:00 and I was with two police officers and they kept apologizing that we couldn't find any crime. I turned to the officer and said no, this is fantastic. It's Saturday night, we kept driving by the bars looking for trouble. He said I'm sorry I can't find you any trouble. I said you don't know how happy that makes me.

Ms. Hatch: Even if we had the information. The perception of Jamestown, outside of Jamestown, is that it is the most dangerous place in the world. When you have gangsters in Buffalo who are not willing to relocate to Jamestown based on the fact that they think it's more dangerous here, that's a perception issue.

Ms. Robbins: Well, we were written up, we were on a list for one of the most dangerous places and not even in the state. So, when you get things like that, you have to work on perception.

Mr. In terms of public safety, too, I would tag into that conversation, not just policing in that form of safety, but code enforcement and lighting and all the factors that go into creating an environment that people are safe in general.

Mr. Livermore: I'll just add that I know that it's been brought to my attention that sometimes people make comments that in the parking ramps there is a sign that says make sure you lock your car and when you're a visitor coming and know nothing about Jamestown, that's sometimes sending the wrong message; that this is an unsafe environment. And I know exactly why the sign is there. I had my car unlocked once and had it ransacked for money, but it's just the messaging as well.

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Ms. Mole: And why do we really need that? When people, no offense to you but, you might forget, but when you forget, it doesn't matter if the sign's there or not, so why put up a sign. When you leave your house, don't you lock your house?

Mr. Rabb: It's often put up, and Todd can address this better than me, but it's liability concerns for the operator of the ramps because it puts you on notice that there is potential. I do a lot of work around the country and see signs all the time. Even in suburban locations saying lock your car. It doesn't excuse them from liability, but it does protect them from claims.

Ms. Hatch: Maybe it's just the particular sign and the location of it because you see them everywhere, like you said, so maybe we could make them look more like what you see in every city. When I pulled in this morning and saw the sign, it was the first time I noticed it and I thought locks keep honest people honest and kept driving. Maybe if it blended in with everything else, like other cities do. Not a big, white right there. You're still covered from the liability, yet it doesn't look so pronounced.

Mr. Rabb: One of the things I did when answering the survey in the strategic planning for JRC, I made a comment about the media coverage out of the Buffalo market which is very difficult to work with at times. They just love – if something bad happens here, it gets on TV and I think that's close enough that we should be able to work with them. Maybe that's something that we should do here. A session at some point on media. How can we enlist the aid of the Buffalo media to not just cover us when somebody gets killed or shot, which they have to do and I understand that, but they don't like to necessarily fill the happy stories because there's nothing really to record, but I think part of the problem is we just don't have good relations with them. I've tried and some of the reporters still call me and ask me for contacts, but especially with the National Comedy Center, it keeps booming, but maybe we need to do something with regional media covering us.

Mr. Duckworth: It'd be nice to enlist the support of our own local media to be supporting more institutions.

Mr. Rabb: Well, you're absolutely right Cory. There's media and then there's media.

Ms. Eads: That's a good idea. Because there is no market here, but engaging with the people who do have media officers like BPU, the hospital, the college. There are some major PR people that work really hard and to maybe bring all of them in together and maybe find out the best way to put a good foot forward on that. The communicator's group that Becky runs would probably be a really good help on that.

Mr. Rabb: WRFA, and I'm not just saying this because you're in the room, does a really fantastic job, but a lot of people either aren't aware or don't listen to it, but I think about WBFO which has a transmitter down here. I have one contact with one reporter and it's so hit and miss. They're always asking us for money, but then they don't know how to cover us, or I think of the Buffalo News, which used to have a southern tier edition because Terry Frank used to be their stringer, so there was an actual southern tier edition, but they still sell the paper down here daily, but they don't cover us.

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Ms. Robbins; They don't have a stringer here anymore.

Mr. Rabb: They should. WBFO for a while had a stringer. They used Nancy Bargar.

Ms. Robbins; I don't know about Nancy, but they also had one about ten years ago, who I knew, she wasn't paid.

Mr. Rabb: I think we should – especially public radio, I think, owes us something. If you're going to come down here and market yourself and sell your paper, I think you owe us. Don't just use us as a customer base.

Mr. Leone: I think NPR covers, especially when there's events at the Reg, NPR covers it.

Ms. Eads: We pay top dollar for those NPR spots. It depends on the event, but we do not bring a lot of people from Buffalo down here.

Mr. Rabb: We can do phone interviews over the phone. It's not that hard, but I think we need to get their attention and I think this is the perfect group to do that. And Cory's suggestion about the local media being more supportive of our institutions. I think media is worth looking at, both traditional and non-traditional. The traditional media is still out there doing a lot of stuff. I try to watch the news when I'm getting dressed in the morning, but all I see are commercials for medications. But, I think a media session – I think we've got enough stuff to fill up the entire year, but I think this is the perfect way to do that because who else in town is going to do that except us?

Ms. Robbins: When does the DRI money come through? Or is that up in the air?

Ms. Eads: The DRI money and I'll just speak generally for everybody and specifically for myself. Each project that was awarded money, there are different agencies that are issuing it and so because there are different agencies issuing it, there are different roles for different ones. My money is being issued through the Housing and Community Redevelopment Agency who, these are the folks who have dealt with a lot of the Main Street grants that have come through, I know, Jamestown pretty regularly. My money is all reimbursable, so until I spend \$1 million, they're not going to give me any money. It will be this elaborate scheme of submitting invoices and all that.

Ms. Mole: It's usually a reimbursement policy. They don't really front the money. Most of it is a reimbursement.

Ms. Eads: I know Lucy, Little Theater, they're going through Community Redevelopment and I think the Jackson Center is going through the same agency as well. I know that we are the only project that's started and off and running. A dubious honor. I've asked about forms, well we haven't really made up the forms yet, we think they're going to look like this. Because it's all brand new. I don't know what stages everybody else is at. The money is there,

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it's supposed to get spent by the end of this year. I do know that; everybody's project. So, well see where that's at, but I know Vince was just finishing paperwork to submit for the performance fund. I know he's still working on that.

Ms. Robbins: So, you don't get the money until you spend it.

Ms. Eads: You have to spend it first, yes.

Ms. Robbins: So, how are you supposed to spend the money you don't have?

Ms. Eads: Well, I'm lucky because the majority of my funding was in place before the state poked their nose in. The \$1.5 million from the state was – I'm okay and I probably don't even need any gap financing which is good, but not everybody is going to be that lucky. That's where the DRI money is.

Mr. Rabb: Anything else on downtown? I think we've got a plateful.

Ms. Eads; I think we do. It's exciting.

Mr. Rabb: Yes, it is exciting and I think, again, this is the perfect place for this type of conversation to come up because it's involving so many different partners that wouldn't necessarily be anyplace else except here.

Ms. Eads: And with city council, there's new ears and eyes and there's lots of recommendations that can be made.

Mr. Rabb: And that's our job; to make recommendations to the different actors. Is that it on downtown? Any thoughts on anything else we should be doing?

Mr. Leone: I certainly do and I'm thinking that this is the perfect place for another consideration and I think that we are part of a huge community, meaning the country, and I think the commission here is the place to bring up this issue and so I'd like to bring it up and put it on the table and my thought is that there needs to be a voice raised against the outrages that are coming out of the executive office. And my feeling is that, the city of Jamestown could raise that voice. The way I feel that this might be – the process to do this, might be to place this consideration here on this table of the Strategic Planning Commission and to draft a statement to go before the city council expressing outrage over the rhetoric and the attacks on the Constitution. I'm particularly talking about the attacks on the free press and free speech and also the climate of denial and falsehood coming out of the executive office. I'd like this commission to consider placing before the city council a statement, asking the city council to make a judgement on whether or not Jamestown ought to be a place to raise a voice against – he's outrageous. I'm hoping that there's enough time left here today for a little bit of discussion over this. The way it would work, at least in my mind, is that a statement would be drafted which would be passed on, which would be looked at by this commission and then that statement would be handed to the city council at the regular city council meeting and the city council would decide, as a group, whether or not the city council wanted Jamestown to make a public statement

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in condemnation of that rhetoric and that climate coming out of Washington. So, I would like to hear what you're thinking.

Ms. Robbins: I would say this is a non-political board and if the city council wants to do that, that's a political body. I don't think we should get involved when we're trying to get federal grants. I just don't think it's the place for this.

Mr. Liuzzo: You know, a lot of city problems that we're trying to address, I think we need to keep our focus right here in Jamestown. If we were in a better financial situation, if we were in a growth situation and we were in a prosperous situation, yes, spend some energy. But, I think our energy really needs to be focused on the city of Jamestown. You've made some really good suggestions here today, there's some really good planning here today that focuses on what we can do to build the city. Going off on the federal government sounds nice, but I really think we need to keep our focus here.

Ms. Eads: You know Paul, you and I obviously spoke about this and I've been thinking about it and one of the things that certainly attracted me to Jamestown and has kept me here and will keep me here is what Jamestown stands for and how the community feels. And so, rather than issue a negative against one thing, we could issue a statement that Jamestown is all of these things, all of these great things, and this is how we stand. I don't think we have to make a comment about something else. If you want fairness and equity and good neighbors and good people and the whole thing, that's what Jamestown is; it's a package. It's a wonderful place to be and raise a family and to grow old and to have fun. There's nature here and business opportunity and so I don't engage in what I think is a – I don't like to engage or give power to other things in that nature. I would rather celebrate what we are and that's what we should make a statement about; is what we are and what we believe in as a community because there all sorts of political beliefs in this town and that's fine. That's what makes it a great community. That's just something that I had been thinking about.

Mr. Duckworth: I think framing it that way stays true to the mission of the Strategic Planning Commission as well. Attracting people, making a positive image for the city.

Mr. Rabb: Or make it a statement building on what you just said Kathleen. If it's not where we are, it's what we aspire to be. For the most part we are, but there are some problems. I think it would be perfectly appropriate for us to make a recommendation in a positive manner which we aspire to. Which could include free speech and free press without necessarily attacking anybody. Diversity of opinion and all that I think is a strong statement.

Mr. Leone: It doesn't have the strength. If you are silent, you are complicit. If you are not outraged by what is coming out of this executive office, your head's in a bad place. We could be a leader. We could be a leader in the state and in the country in raising this voice. I can't believe you don't think it's important.

Mr. Rabb: I don't think anyone is saying it's not important. I think it's how it would be expressed.

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- Mr. Leone: Well, that's the matter. The statement would be drafted.
- Mr. Rabb: Are you willing to try to draft a statement?
- Mr. Leone: Yes, and I would take, if anybody would like to be a part of drafting it, I would welcome that.
- Mr. Rabb: I can't imagine anyone here would be against taking a look at it.
- Ms. Eads: No. But I do have to agree with Becky. This is a non-political committee.
- Mr. Duckworth: Yes. It's outside the scope of the committee. There are other bodies within the city -
- Mr. Leone: What other bodies are going to do it?
- Mr. Robbins: City Council. Go to city council and ask them to do it.
- Mr. Duckworth: Bring it forward to the city council, but not from this commission.
- Mr. Leone: That's exactly what I'm proposing; is to make a statement and go through the Strategic Planning Commission to the city council.
- Ms. Robbins: I think you should do it as a private citizen.
- Mr. Hanft: I don't think it's the appropriate voice of this committee to -
- Mr. Leone: Okay. I see what you're all feeling about this. It's sad that you're feeling that way.
- Mr. Rabb: Well I would still, and this is just my own opinion, I would still like to see you try to draft something and bring it to us because maybe without language, we're really not sure what it is you're trying to do. I have an understanding, but I think the language is critical. And we could go from there. If we decide we shouldn't be doing it, but we like the language, that doesn't mean there can't be other ways to accomplish it; without coming through us.
- Mr. Leone: Okay. I'm thinking that the time is right to do this now and if it's going to be a matter of my drafting a statement, bringing it before this commission and then going before the city council, that's months in advance.
- Mr. Rabb: Well we can look at the language at the February meeting. Even if the commission were to recommend it, we'd have to have a meeting to recommend it, so it has to be at least a month away.
- Mr. Leone: Alright. I will draft something.

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Mr. Rabb: You could ask Todd to distribute it between the two meetings, as quickly as possible then people can offer feedback.

Mr. Leone: So, let's get that on the agenda for February.

Ms. Eads: Okay. I'll let Jennifer know.

Ms. Mole: Couldn't we incorporate both? As in, this is what Jamestown represents and these are the good things about Jamestown and we don't agree with maybe some of the stances...

Mr. Hanft: I think you run a slippery slope trying to be an advocacy group here. I think we're supposed to be focused on the issues that we talked about at the beginning of this meeting. I think that's really the core charge, from my understanding, of what this body is put together for. I think when we start getting into advocacy issues, I think that just gets us off task.

Mr. Duckworth: And you could maybe divide the group significantly as people may or may not feel exactly the way you do Paul.

Mr. Leone: I would also suggest that placing this before the city council, puts the city council's numbers on the record.

Mr. Hanft: Which you're free to do.

Mr. Leone: It puts them on record and it's something that the voters need to know. The voters need to know who the city council members are and what is important to them.

Mr. Liuzzo: Well, we just had an election and I think the people of the city of Jamestown picked the people and know who we are and those are the ones that are representing the city. So, for you to make this into a national, on a local level like this, I think that's a pretty big stretch. Okay? Our focus is the city of Jamestown. What happens in Washington, as despicable as it may be, how does that affect me this morning? This affects me this morning. This affects me tomorrow, it affects me a month from now and five years from now. What our executive officer is saying, how does that affect me today? It doesn't. I came here. I got elected to represent the people of the city of Jamestown. I'm not here to advocate for Washington. I'm not here to tear down Washington. It's not my job. They've already spoken; who we are.

Ms. Scott: I can see where he's coming from though. I can see where he's talking about perception and that's what I think he's trying to say. What is the perception of the people in the city and if all the cities in the country were to say – you can get something out of Washington without this rhetoric, in other words. I get what he's saying. I get where he's saying about - we're talking about perception about Jamestown being a dangerous place so we want to change that perception. So, I think what he's trying to say is there's a perception too about does Jamestown agree with what's happening. I get what he's saying. Why he thinks if we made that recommendation to city council...

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Mr. Duckworth: These seem to be fundamentally political issues to me and we're not elected as political officers here and this board was never intended to be taking positions on political issues and so when you start to move in that direction, you're changing the nature of the board and I think it'd fragment the board and I think there will be some that will not choose to participate anymore.

Mr. Rabb: Well, I would still – I agree with a lot of the comments, but I would still like to see language before we completely rule it out. If people think it's too political, I understand, but...

Mr. Leone: The goalposts keep getting moved on what is acceptable and what is condoned out of the executive office. They keep getting moved. You say you're more concerned with what's going to happen to you today and next week in Jamestown. What's going to happen to this country down the road?

Mr. Liuzzo: I don't know. I don't know what's going happen.

Mr. Leone: Are you not concerned?

Mr. Liuzzo: My focus is, the city of Jamestown. With this committee, everything that went through here today, focused on how to make the city better. That's what we're here for.

Mr. Leone: Okay. We can leave it right here until the statement is drafted and looked at.

Mr. Rabb: I would still like to see the language. If we think this is the inappropriate place to make that recommendation, we can talk about it going someplace else. We certainly have advocated over the years for lots of things that directly affected this city. This wouldn't directly, but it does affect the city.

Mr. Leone: Yes. Well, I was just saying that my first thought was to, just as an individual, bring this before the council. Then it was suggested to me that the consideration or the suggestion would have more strength if it were looked at by this commission first.

Mr. Liuzzo: Could I suggest that you and the co-chair have coffee and talk about it and then you can see the language and then if it's something that you need to bring up to this committee, then go ahead and bring it up.

Mr. Leone: Let's do that then. Let's wait until we get the language down.

Mr. Rabb: I would draft it and send it to Kathleen and I and then we can go from there as to whether or not we bring it to the whole body. If that's acceptable.

Mr. Leone: Sure.

Ms. Eads: Any other new business?

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Ms. Robbins: Do we still get reports from HCAT?

Mr. Rabb: We haven't seen anyone from the Health Care Action Team in a long time.

Ms. Eads: No.

Mr. Rabb: I'm assuming they're still active.

Ms. Robbins: They're active.

Mr. Rabb: They've certainly been active on physician recruitment and then they started working on the opioid crisis. Which is still a concern to all of us.

Ms. Eads: I can reach out to Lillian.

Mr. Rabb: Maybe we can find out from Lillian if she's ready to make a presentation to us too. That was probably the most important thing that came out of here in a long time.

Ms. Robbins: And the Hispanic initiative?

Mr. Leone: The latest on that is that JCC has opened a drop-in room for the Spanish-speaking students.

Mr. Duckworth: Actually, I received a grant that's allowing us to employ two people that are directly focused on helping Hispanic students get to college and then be successful while they're there. We have a space where they can come in, but the space is more than a drop-in, it's counselling, it's support, it's social activities and all of that.

Mr. Hanft: What sort of updates were provided by HCAT and the Hispanic Coalition because there might be resources through the manufacturer's association to speak on that side of industry as well. What's going on in the workforce and so forth. If that's the type of updates that would be provided.

Ms. Eads: That would be helpful, yes. The Hispanic Initiative was a sub-committee and it became mostly focused on the performing arts and we ended up doing a couple of events. A lot of what was talked about was employment opportunities and who was bilingual and what opportunities were available in all the different areas. So, if you could speak to that, that might be very helpful. Just as a general update.

Mr. Hanft: Yes. I'd like to bring inwho has aprogram and a lot of that activity takes place in the Jamestown area and given the fact that representation of manufacturing and so forth.

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Mr. Rabb: Maybe there's a way at some point, to have a presentation of that, if Cory thinks it's okay, with the director of our Hispanic center because a lot of people just don't know this is happening and I think it's important. So, in addition to our downtown work, I think we could have those presentations. Maybe another session devoted to that.

Ms. Robbins: Justin, we started studying education and what we could do and you're involved in the Education Coalition, so...

Mr. Hanft: Yes, absolutely. I'd be happy to give a presentation on the broader view which is some of the work that we're doing which is more at the macro-level, trying to align different organizations throughout the entirety of Chautauqua County; to meet the workforce challenges of Chautauqua County.

Mr. Rabb: We have enough stuff to keep us going for the next ten years.

Mr. Duckworth: Weren't there some conversation on Spanish things that came out of that where we were learning some of the businesses and teaching them basic Spanish things?

Mr. Leone: That really didn't go anywhere. The Jamestown Savings Bank, they were mulling that, but that's a really, really hard stretch because they're thinking one day of conversational Spanish a week isn't going to cut it.

Mr. Duckworth: I thought the idea was to help people feel comfortable and welcome and that we were reaching out to them. Not to be able to hold entire conversations.

Mr. Leone: Can I ask you, Cory, do you know is there conversational Spanish courses? Are there courses at the college?

Mr. Duckworth: Not in that sense. It certainly can be something we could look at through our continuing education. We offer Spanish, obviously, and other languages, but they're full-blown degree programs. A limited conversation thing could be something that we put on through our continuing education.

Ms. Scott: The library just subscribed to the Rosetta Stone and you can actually do that from an app on your phone now, so we're trying to get that word out so everybody knows it's available. So, tell everybody. It's on our website.

Mr. Duckworth: Do you check it out?

Ms. Scott: It's actuallyso you can do it within the library if you want.

Mr. Duckworth: But, does the library license, how does that extend...

Ms. Scott: Just yesterday, we have a Hispanic employee, he's actually the one that suggested it and he told me about the app. I haven't tried it yet, but you can bring it up on your phone and you can practice.

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Mr. Hanft: It interprets as well.

Ms. Scott: Great that's awesome. I haven't tried it myself yet. We just got it working because there were some problems with the IP.

Mr. Hanft: But, it's a free resource that's provided as long as you're a member of the library?

Ms. Scott: Yes.

Mr. Sixbey: Along those lines, we began a conversation with some of the folks at the small business development corporation as well, finding a line between what this group is talking about and strategy as to what we'd like to see downtown for businesses in the area and what they're hearing from people coming in to talk to them, maybe aligning people that would like to start a business, but don't know where to start, here's some ideas on things we need.

Ms. Hatch: I've spoken to the small business association and we should probably talk because that's one of the things that the JRC is very, very, very involved in.

Mr. Rabb: Maybe the two of you could work on that and then bring something here. This could keep us going, I know I joked ten years, but there's a lot of stuff on the plate.

Ms. Eads: And it's good. Especially regarding the Hispanic Initiative. One thing that we discovered when we started down that road, there's actually an awful lot going on. All these little entities are doing a lot toward that initiative and nobody knew anybody else was doing anything so to have a nice broad update would be very helpful I think.

Mr. Rabb: So why don't we leave it that you and I will confer about confirming the February meeting and then we'll confirm that with everyone.

Ms. Eads: Yes. And I'll get ahold of some other people.

Mr. Rabb: Paul is going to do some language and get it to you and me.

Ms. Eads: Yes. We'll get the February agenda together.

Mr. Hanft: Is there a document that has everybody's contact information?

Mr. Thomas: I can assemble one.

Ms. Eads: Todd, can we send the language regarding the mission of the commission because there's about 15 appointed members, I think? It just shows all the entities that are supposed to make up the commission, so I think that could be helpful.

Mr. Thomas: 15 total members. Sure, I'll send that around.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Todd M. Thomas, Director of Administrative Services/
City Clerk