

May 8, 2002

Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission ----

Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,
City of Jamestown ss.:
Mayor's Conference Room

A meeting of the Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Wednesday, May 8, 2002 at 8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Co-Chair Lillian V. Ney, Co-Chair Michael Lyons, Miles Lasser, Todd Trantum, Michael Sullivan, Walter Haase, George Spitale, Gregory DeCinque, Brent Sheldon, A. John Calamunci, Betsy Wright

Members Absent: Raymond Fashano, Mayor Teresi

Others Present: City Clerk Shirley A. Sanfilippo, Council President Mike Mistretta, Larry Senn, Councilwoman Carolyn Bloomquist, William Rice, Jennifer Harkness, Len Faulk, Russ Linden, Maclain Nichols, John Whittaker of the Post-Journal

Co-Chair Ney called the meeting to order. She notified the members that the BPU made a contribution, which brought them to their goal. She introduced Dr. Linden.

Dr. Linden asked the members to introduce themselves. He outlined the following perceptions:

IMPRESSIONS

- I. Purpose "Action oriented strategic plan" for city government
- II. Process – Phase I, Phase II
- III. Community Involvement Plan
- IV. Measure of Success "Own Progress"
- V. What can we control in "bigger picture"
- VI. Communication "synergy"

Dr. Linden asked how they would measure their success.

Mr. Lasser wondered what the City of Jamestown could do about local and national problems.

Dr. Linden understood Mr. Lasser's concerns in regards to economic challenges. He understood him to be asking what could they control given that they are a part of a larger economically challenged region.

Mr. Haase believed the data in the fact pack was over 10 years old.

Co-Chair Ney wished for more synergy.

Dr. Linden stated his understanding to be that this commission wanted to establish a strategic plan for city government.

Co-Chair Lyons said that the term strategic plan made him nervous because there were so many other plans already in place. He wanted to see something more action oriented.

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Dr. Linden understood Co-Chair Lyons not wanting more “books on the shelf”. He said they were looking for something to translate into action, not more reading material.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the self image of implementing the plan would be crucial.

Dr. Linden said that they need to be able to demonstrate what is going on so that it may be communicated, so that people don't stay in that negative attitude that nothing ever works.

Mr. Tranum felt that they need to do a good job of selling the ideas.

Mr. Senn believed that the group had struggled over what the plan really was, whether it was a plan for city government or the community.

Mr. Tranum thought that this was a plan for city government. He felt that it was the members' job to create the plan, not support it. He was concerned about getting too broad of a focus.

Co-Chair Ney explained that there was a lot of meaning in what they were doing in that the government was asking members of the community to help with the plan. She stated that they were looking at a strategic plan for City Council to help with the budget shortfalls.

Mr. Mistretta felt that the focus should be on the critical items that had been identified.

Dr. Faulk felt that the question to ask would be “What can I do about it?”, “What can we do about it?”.

Mr. Sullivan thought that they were coming at this from various different directions.

Dr. Linden wondered how comfortable the members were with the idea of implementing an action plan for city government, realizing that they can only control so much.

Ms. Wright was more comfortable with implementable strategic plans. She did not believe it was the charge of the Commission to implement the plan.

Dr. Linden discussed the following:

- ❖ Phase I, would be how to deal with the immediate things
- ❖ Phase II, would focus on what are the long-term strategies.

He wondered how do you turn attitudes around. He wanted to know how the members would know when the attitudes were turned around in terms of success.

Mr. Tranum felt that they needed a measurement of the level of buy-in and quality of community input. He believed that buy-in was critical.

Dr. Linden said that they wanted to see steps taken and see successes.

There was discussion regarding the budget process being included in this plan.

Mr. Tranum believed that they could define some measurable outcome to the process. He thought the outcomes would start to appear within a year and a half.

Mr. Rice brought up the thought of monitoring the “good ideas” to see if they really were good ideas.

Dr. Linden said that long-term success could be measured, if there was an impact on the community. He suggested that they should hold forums to:

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- ❖ Validate the issues and perhaps add a few (issues)
- ❖ Ask people why do you think “the problem” is a problem
- ❖ Action – what can city government and others do to address these issues

He asked how the members felt regarding committing to a few issues and holding the respective feet to the fire on those issues.

Mr. Lasser felt that they should start from the bottom up and concentrate on one thing at a time. Successes need to be seen.

Dr. Linden wondered if forums generated ideas. He explained that when a forum does not work, it's likely due to the forum not generating what is sought.

Co-Chair Lyons felt that the perception was that there have been more than enough studies, not enough action. He thought they must be careful.

Mr. Sullivan explained that they are very good at pointing out problems that have occurred, but not any solutions that they may have. He felt it was important to know what the meeting was going to accomplish and what the expectations were of the people and make sure that those expectations are met.

Dr. Linden wondered if they should market the meetings on solutions kind of like, from problems to solutions.

Mr. Spitale explained the need for media to be on your side.

Mr. Lasser felt that they should have the result guided in advance.

Dr. Faulk said that government needs to have a plan to fix what needs to be fixed. He discussed raising expectations too high.

Dr. DeCinque felt that the community meetings needed to be approached carefully. He told the members they should not be overly optimistic about the effect of the meetings.

Dr. Linden offered the commission an alternative course of action and suggested that the group come up with a first draft of action items and strategies and ask the community what they think.

Co-Chair Lyons felt the idea had some merit because so much time has been spent in studying the problems.

Mr. Sullivan explained the need to show the community that this was not going to be the same old same old.

Mr. Spitale thought that they may want to hold the forums in a neutral place, such as Jamestown Community College, instead of City Hall.

Co-Chair Ney spoke about action plans and taking courageous steps to show credibility. She felt that speaking on problems alone would be too negative of an approach.

Dr. Linden heard the members emphasizing that the focus should be on solutions, not on problems. In regards to marketing, he felt that they should go beyond studies and come up with action items instead. He asked how to do this in a way that people don't feel left out of the decision making process.

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Mr. Haase agreed with Co-Chair Lyons and Mr. Spitale that the forums need to be conducted at JCC.

Co-Chair Ney felt they need to partner with the media to gain recognition and to possibly gain feedback.

Mr. Sullivan wondered about running a poll in the newspaper following the meeting to give others a chance to comment.

Dr. Linden discussed the idea of handing out comment cards after meetings.

Mr. Haase questioned about televising the forum.

Mr. Senn felt they may want to identify critical leaders to attend the forums and seek their input.

Mr. Sheldon said that they already have a list of community leaders.

Dr. Linden stated that if they were to expect a group of 100 people at a meeting they need a room for 75, so there is a sense of excitement.

Mr. Tranum felt they needed some of the community block leaders. He was comfortable with the idea of bringing forth a plan. He explained the importance of having the average taxpayer included.

Dr. Linden summarized the Commissions ideas. He said for June they would come up with a draft of strategies and specific actions. He discussed communication with the media, individuals, and informal activist leaders. For July, they might have one or a series of community forums, going beyond the studies. The purpose being to review, comment on and improve their draft plan. Perhaps using TV or the Web.

Mr. Lasser questioned who was going to draft the plan.

Dr. Linden replied a small group. In August they would review and inspect what they have received and make revisions. Council needs to aid them in this process.

Mr. Mistretta felt there would not be any issue with City Council. He explained that there were three people representing Council at the meetings on a regular basis.

Mr. Tranum wanted to see communication from the employees and Department Heads.

Co-Chair Ney thought that employees should be included in developing the draft.

Ms. Wright wondered about the Mayor. She explained that his buy-in was important.

Dr. Linden clarified that whenever he stated Council, he meant Mayor and Council.

Mr. Tranum stated that he wanted to see the Mayor more involved in meetings also.

Mr. Mistretta explained his concern over being able to deliver this idea within the time frame. He said that people need to know what action is going to be taken that is different from before.

Dr. Linden expressed the opinion that the Mayor's involvement was necessary in order for this process to be successful.

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Dr. DeCinque was concerned with how to encourage the department heads to buy-in.

Mr. Haase stated that someone was going to have to support the Department Heads.

Dr. Linden cited the recent support and training given by Chautauqua County to their middle managers.

Dr. Faulk stated that the only meeting scheduled was for May 22nd. He was also concerned over the amount of work for a short period of time.

Co-Chair Ney explained the importance of addressing the list of items that they had in front of them.

There was discussion regarding a small group focusing on the issues. They also discussed whether they were going to meet on the 22nd of May still.

Ms. Harkness stated that she would be willing to work on the issues.

Mr. Sheldon, Mr. Trantum, Mr. Rice, Ms. Nichols, Co-Chair Lyons and Ney stated that they would be willing to help Ms. Harkness on the issues for the May 22nd meeting.

The dates for the June meetings will be decided later.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Shirley A. Sanfilippo, CMC, RMC
City Clerk