

City of Marshalltown, Iowa Goal Setting Report

February 3, 2010

Mayor

Gene Beach

City Council

Bob Schubert

Andrea Maxwell

Marla Grabenbauer

Al Hoop

Bill Backoff

Bob Wenner

Bethany Wirin

City Administrator

Richard Hierstein



Facilitated by:

Jeff Schott

Institute of Public Affairs

University of Iowa

CITY OF MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
2010

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CITY OF MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA

GOAL SETTING SESSION

2010

Introduction

The City of Marshalltown requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the city with goal setting. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns, potential new initiatives/programs/policies, and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness.
2. Conduct a goal-setting session with the elected officials
3. Preparation of this report.

Goal Setting Work Sessions

City elected officials and staff held a work session conducted by the IPA on February 3, 2010. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Gene Beach, City Council Members Bob Schubert, Marla Grabenbauer, Al Hoop, Bill Backoff, and Bob Wenner. Also in attendance and participating in that session were City Administrator Richard Hierstein, City Clerk Shari Coughenour, City Attorney Roger Nowadzky, Acting Police Chief Jack McAllister, Human Resources Director Nathan Stucky, Fire Chief Larry Squiers, , Housing and Community Development Director Michelle Spohnheimer, Library Director Carole Winkleblack, Finance Director Lori Stansberry, Parks and Recreation Director Terry Gray and Public Works Director Lynn Couch.

Major Accomplishments

The following were identified as major city accomplishments during the past two years:

- Streets
 - Center Street Viaduct repair
 - Resurfacing of North 3rd Street, Westwood Drive, South 12th Avenue, and Iowa Avenue
 - Merle Hibbs Boulevard extension to west
 - Highland Acres Road Project
 - Crack sealing of all streets with recent overlays
- New road patching equipment
- Successful transition from sand use for snow and ice control on streets
- Street light inventory
- Fisher Controls improvements, including Center Street median
- Carnegie Rehab project funded and started
- Measurable Management program
- Hampton Inn development
- Cooperative attitude of elected officials and staff
- Housing improvement programs (CDBG Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation, Neighborhood Stabilization, Grant Park, Property Maintenance Loan)
- Stable financial condition of city in light of economic situation
- Progress in storm and wastewater improvements
- Raised sewer rates to finance SSO and related projects
- Reorganization of Water Pollution Control Plant Department
- Sanitary sewer cleaning (17-1/2 miles) and televising (10 miles)
- Turner Street Lift Station
- Dog and deer control program improvements
- City support of IMAGINE initiatives, including bike trail marking and sidewalks
- New LEED Gold certified library
- Arbie Feeds demolition
- Employee communications and Newsletter
- All-city training day
- Meeker and City Center parking lot improvements
- Completed flood damage repairs
 - Corps of Engineers dike armoring project
 - Bank stabilization on Iowa River
 - Bank repair on Linn Creek
 - WPCP administration building repairs
 - Start of 33" sewer lining project
- Fire Training Facility at MCC
- Lead Hazard Control grant
- New buses and ridership increase
- Health Savings Account establishment for funds at retirement
- Tasers and radio replacement and software upgrades in Police Department
- Traffic Officer

Major Accomplishments (continued)

- Purchase of 2nd K9
- Purchase of new fire truck
- Senior Center tuckpointing and bathroom remodeling
- City response to Swift project potential
- Redefining employees who qualify for sick leave payout upon separation
- Purchase of properties west of Coliseum
- Mechdyne expansion project approved – city incentives
- Orpheum Theater project
- Skate Park and Dog Park progress
- Fiber Optic ring initiated by Emerson
- Successful completion of condemnation case for Merle Hibbs Blvd improvement

Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances or operations:

- Mandated wastewater improvements and stormwater programs
- Road improvement and other infrastructure needs
- Job growth at Swift and Lennox – be responsive to economic development opportunities
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Police and Fire (411) retirement cost increases
- Be even handed in policy implementation
- 2010 Census
- Aging population challenges
- Flat or declining revenues, including falling Road Use Tax revenues
- Employee concerns over potential pay freeze and/or job losses
- Committee of the Whole needs more discussion
- No sprinkler system in Carnegie building
- Work with department concerns
- City/County radio communication - lack of inter-operability
- Falling electrical license revenue
- Issues with traffic signal vehicle detection systems
- Need to increase tax base
- Need to enhance services such as Community Service officers, Crime Free Housing, Volunteer programs to assist police and nuisance enforcement
- Skate Park need
- Kid friendly businesses
- Turnover in upper management
- Budget
- Customer Service and Positive attitude at work

Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities (continued)

- Need to educate all employees on complete city operations
- Vacant residences and commercial buildings
- Large number of unskilled and poorly educated workers during economic downturn
- Need to expand IT department
 - Need for back-up
- Facility security
- New Police Station
- Better recruitment of employees
- Continue contacts with Alliant regarding Power Plant
- Prepare plans for Iowa Avenue upgrade
- Implement City-wide use of GIS system
- Shift to 800 MHz radio system
- Eliminate street lights in excess of city street lighting policy
- Eliminate traffic signals in downtown
- Rehabilitation of private sanitary sewer laterals
- Actively promote SSMID for downtown
- Recruit new businesses in downtown
- Ad-hoc committee to schedule monthly community events
- Publicity campaign for positive visibility
- Leaf pickup or other “freebie”
- Equipment storage building
- Lack of enforcement of city ordinances/policies
- Upcoming union negotiations
- Compost facility hours/open burning
- Police officer awareness of city ordinances
- Avoiding a tax increase
- Public safety
- Concern that sidewalk construction has not yet been done
- Need for everyone (Council, Staff and neighborhoods) to be more observant and diligent regarding housing and nuisance issues
- Website improvement
- Opportunity to open up to public the city’s document management software
- Maintenance of city facilities

On-Going Priorities

The following were identified as on-going priorities for the upcoming 12 – 24 month period:

- Nuisance/property maintenance code enforcement
- Downtown development
- Street repair
- Storm and sanitary sewer redevelopment
- Establish railroad quiet zone
- Support Imagine initiatives
- Highland Acre Road improvements
- Implement bus service recommendations regarding bus replacements and route revisions
- Continue lead abatement program
- Make a decision regarding animal control
- Maintain customer service emphasis
- Upgrade city website
- Enhance public image of city
- Riverview Park development – Phase I
- Carnegie Building improvements

Priority Projects, Programs, Policies and Initiatives

The participants reviewed potential projects, programs, policies and initiatives for consideration and selected the following as priorities for the upcoming 12 – 24 month period (listed in order of priority). (Note: Council Members Wirin and Maxwell were unable to attend the session but submitted their selections for priorities subsequent to the session.)

- 1 Comprehensive road improvement plan
- 2 (Tie) Review zoning ordinance to compare to competition to ensure openness to new business without sacrificing quality of life
- 2 (Tie) Review overall city yard waste program – leaf pick up, hours at compost facility, burning ordinance, etc.
- 2 (Tie) Downtown sidewalks and gutters

A complete list of all programs and initiatives considered by the Mayor and City Council members is attached as **Exhibit A**.

Organizational Effectiveness

Mayor and Council reviewed and discussed a variety of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the selected goals and priorities. After this review and discussion, the following initiatives were to improve organizational effectiveness:

- Customer service training
- Find appropriate replacements for retiring department heads and City Administrator, and inform them well on current operations
 - Orientation/training and support (mentoring) for new department heads
 - Conduct exit interviews with outgoing City Administrator and department heads
- Continue Measurable Management
- Review employee evaluation process and training and tie employee goals to city goals wherever possible
- Tours of facilities/operations for Council
- Council/Mayor/City Administrator doing ride-along with each department to better understand department jobs and concerns
- Make employee morale an important priority
- Consider holding State of the City address by the Mayor
- Review recycling practices in city operations

Note: The agenda for the Goal Setting Session and the Preliminary Questionnaire are attached to this report as **Exhibits B** and **C** respectively.

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Marshalltown with this goal setting process. I was extremely impressed with the level of cooperation and positive attitudes of the elected officials and staff.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur. Items that did not receive highest rating may still be worked on by the departments to which they apply.

It is recommended that staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa
February 10, 2010

Exhibit A

CITY OF MARSHALLTOWN
Goal Setting Session – 2010

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

(Parentheses indicate selections of priorities by mayor/council)

- Comprehensive road improvement plan (5)
- Review zoning ordinance to compare to competition to ensure openness to new business without sacrificing quality of life (4)
- Review overall city yard waste program – leaf pick up, hours at compost facility, burning ordinance, etc. (4)
- Downtown sidewalks and gutters (4)
- Make sure new Fire Chief is willing to look at restructuring and use of on-call/part-time staff as we experience attrition (3)
- Southside Fire Station (2)
- Marion St realignment – Swift to 3rd Ave (2)
- Develop a program for city building/facility maintenance (2)
- Increased effort by City to buy dilapidated residences in downtown area, especially near new and old library (1)
- Enforce sidewalk cleaning policy (1)
- Equipment storage building – Public Works/Parks Departments (1)
- Implement bus service recommendations regarding new routes and expanded times (1)
- Rental program review (ordinances, inspections, fees, etc.) (1)
- City Wide Energy Audit and energy savings initiative (0)
- Change one-way streets to two-way (0)
- Review city solid waste programs 0
- Implement sidewalk construction program 0
- Upgrade city parking lot north of Carnegie Building 0

(revised February 16, 2010)

Exhibit B

AGENDA

**CITY OF MARSHALLTOWN
GOAL SETTING SESSION - 2010**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Library
107 West Boone Street**

1. Introductions and Opening Comments
 - a. Name, Tenure, and Background
2. General Overview of the Meeting and the Goal Setting Process
 - a. The Ground Rules for this session
3. Progress Report and Update –2008 Goal Setting Report
4. Review Recent City Accomplishments (2008 - 10)
5. Review Issues, Concerns, Opportunities, and Trends
6. Identify On-Going Priorities
7. Programs, Policies, Projects and Initiatives
 - a. Review Results of Questionnaire
 - b. Explanations, clarifications, revisions, deletions, additions of Programs, Policies, Projects and Initiatives
 - c. Ranking of Priorities
8. Organizational Effectiveness
 - a. Review Results of Questionnaire
9. IPA Report to the Mayor and City Council – 2010 Goal Setting Process
 - a. Development of Action Plan
 - b. Importance of Quarterly Updates
10. Questions, comments, and suggestions

11. Adjourn

Exhibit C

**CITY OF MARSHALLTOWN
GOAL SETTING SESSION – 2010**

QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

The City of Marshalltown’s Goal Setting Session will be held on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, at the Library. The purpose of the session will be to identify and prioritize the City’s overall goals and objectives for the next two years.

In order to prepare for this session, you are requested to identify key issues and potential objectives that will be reviewed and discussed at the session. Please complete all sections of this questionnaire. If you need additional space, please feel free to attach additional page(s).

Major Accomplishments

Please list the major city accomplishments over the past two years. These accomplishments could be as large as a street project or as simple as a newly adopted city policy. The items do not need to be in any particular order.

Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities

Please list specific issues, concerns, trends and opportunities that affect future city services, policies, finances or operations (for example, loss of population, major new economic development success, employer or resolving a policy question). You do not need to identify potential solutions to your concerns.

Significant Initiatives or Programs

Please list any initiatives, programs or policies that you think the City should consider in the next two years (for example, downtown revitalization, updating employee job descriptions, adopting a policy on open burning, conducting an annexation study, reviewing water and sewer rates, etc.)

Organizational Effectiveness

Please list several things that the Mayor/City Council and/or staff could do in the future to improve organizational effectiveness, decision-making process, teamwork and the ability to accomplish the City's stated goals and objectives.

RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Please return this questionnaire to Dick Hierstein by **Monday, January 4, 2010.**