

**AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
CITY OF ARCADIA
THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2014
4:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & ROLL CALL

The Mayor called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. with the following members and staff present:

Arcadia City Council

Mayor Alice Frierson

Councilmember Robert R. Allen

Councilmember Robert W. Heine

Councilmember Keith Keene

Deputy Mayor Joseph E. Fink was not present.

Arcadia City Staff

Interim City Administrator Tom Slaughter

City Clerk Penny Delaney

Administrative Assistant Carol Jones

Finance Director Beth Carsten

Deputy Finance Director Ashley Killmon

Code Enforcement Officer Carl McQuay

Interim Public Works Director Steve Underwood

Shop Supervisor Bobby Skinner

Maintenance Supervisor Jeff Collins

Parks Supervisor Carrie Taylor

Utilities Director A.J. Berndt

Systems Director Fred Lewis

Golf Course Director Michael Kotzker

Roll call was taken.

Staff and Consultant Introductions

The Interim City Administrator introduced Jim LaRue of LaRue Planning and Management, Jeff Matthews who is a Planner and Architect, and Ben Smith, a Planner from LaRue Planning and Management. Mr. Slaughter explained that the City is looking at a strategic plan. He further explained that the City is able to coordinate the effort through direct funding by the Department of Economic Opportunity with a \$25,000.00 grant which does not require any matching funds. He stated the City would like to link up better its decision making process as it relates to land use, the servicing of that land use through infrastructure, and the capital improvement budget. He advised it will take a 3-4 month process. During the process, there will be several engagements of Council. This meeting is the kickoff engagement. Later, the small group will meet with stakeholders to get their input and then return to Council with preliminary assessments that identify a vision statement, a mission statement, and the priorities for the community. This is a planning document that allows Council to direct the staff effort specifically and it sets the priorities with the City's spending ability towards improving both infrastructure as well as taking advantage of opportunities for new growth and development within the City and possibly through annexation along the peripheral of the City. He then turned

the discussion over to Mr. LaRue who gave a brief presentation. After the presentation, Mr. LaRue introduced Jeff Matthews. Mr. Matthews stated that from 2000 to 2010, the nature of the community has changed dramatically. There has been over a 15% increase in population. The Hispanic population went from 20% to 30% in that timeframe. There have been changes in the workforce and changes due to Hurricane Charley. The citrus community has lessened in the last 10-15 years due to agriculture problems in terms of disease. Solar energy is coming about which will be positive and it takes land which DeSoto County has a lot of. By acreage, there is a lot of growth potential. There is room to grow in the industrial and business areas.

Mr. LaRue addressed the purpose of the organization. He asked how Council would describe the mission. Council Member Keene stated that it was to serve the community and residents, to provide utilities, police protection, recreation, planning/zoning, and code enforcement. Mr. LaRue asked what Council expects out of their staff. Council Member Keene replied that he expected efficiency and effectiveness. He stated that there had to be a balance with being empathetic to citizens. We need to be driven by the mission, but have common sense in providing same.

Mr. Matthews stated that it is important to ask who the community is. Mayor Frierson stated that with that is the economics of the community. She further stated that she always thought it would be good for one person to walk a citizen through something rather than numerous departments (one stop).

When asked what Council's vision was for Arcadia twenty years from now, Council Member Heine stated that he would hope we would have better roads, better water and better sewer. Mayor Frierson stated that she felt they needed to recognize the Spanish community and their needs because they are a vital part of the community. Council Member Keene stated that it had always been his vision to see downtown grow vertically rather than horizontally, making use of the upstairs in a lot of the buildings. Mr. LaRue asked about attractions in the area, pointing out canoeing. He pointed out the attraction in the nature area. Mr. Matthews stated that there are neighboring counties that are heavily involved in eco-vacation places, stating if you could bring in 1,000 people a year, the economic impacts are tremendous to a community. Mr. Matthews pointed out that it would be good for the County and City to work together on this instead of fighting against each other. Council Member Heine stated that he felt there had been improvements in that area over the last couple of years. Council Member Allen commented that they needed to promote the development of industry. He stated if they could attract industry, it would create jobs. Comments were also made about retaining the architecture in the area to keep the traditional look.

Mr. LaRue asked for everyone to turn their attention to values. He asked what they expect out of the people who work for the City. Councilmember Keene stated that staff needed to be ambassadors for what the City's vision is and they need to conduct themselves accordingly. They need to be at their best. He stated they needed to provide the best service that they can and to be empathetic of people's situations. Mayor Frierson indicated patience is to be expected. Comments were made about the golden rule being for staff and policymakers as well. Councilmember Keene stated that they needed to provide what's needed to staff. Mr. Matthews

stated that Arcadia is not a big city and cross training is important. Team values were stated as being important.

The following was listed as strengths of the City: Peace River, antique district, central location, Peace River Campground, older buildings, friendliness of town, and Turner Center.

The following was listed as strengths of the organization: talented staff, institutional knowledge, new water plant (capacity), efficiency, effectiveness and the airport.

The following was listed as weaknesses: lack of opportunity for business and industry, lack of work force, lack of middle class housing, infrastructure (water and sewer pipes) very old, tax exempt properties, sexual predators, need more businesses like Tremron.

The following was listed as opportunities: find a way for City government to diversify revenue, communications open to industry and development, education coordination, technical schools and economic coordination with county on regional basis.

The following was listed as threats: lack of money, competition with other communities for businesses we want to try, storm events, greening of citrus and lack of solution to it and pension reform (threat for organization).

Mr. LaRue advised that would come back to Council with what they have compiled. He further advised that there will be having group meetings in which they will be participating with the County and stakeholder meetings. Then they will come back to Council with the issues that will be placed in the strategic plan.

Councilmember Keene stated that you have to be careful what you want. He stated he wants development and jobs, but he doesn't want the community to lose the character it currently has. He felt there needed to be a balance.

ADJOURN

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 P.M.

ADOPTED THIS 10th DAY OF May, 2014

By:



Alice Frierson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Penny Delaney, City Clerk

8470

