

Park Board/City Council Meeting – Warrensburg Community Center – 5:30 p.m.

Attendees: Daniel Baldrige, Tarl Bentley, Erica Collins, Danielle Dulin, Danielle Fesler, Mason Floyd, Scott Holmberg

- Prior to this meeting, Scott sent out his list of 5 goal items to help get structure, so if the group can flesh those things out, staff can draft a new resolution to send to both WPR Board and City Council.

PREAMBLE

- This section is good, no changes needed.

SECTION 1

- Danielle Fesler: We need to get some of the documents outlined in Section 1 in writing, rather than in the minds of HR/Finance/Admin/etc. and the WPR Board and City Council need access so they can govern effectively.
 - Daniel Baldrige: Agreed, and the personnel policies have seemed to be a shifting platform over the past years, so there needs to be more stability or universal access to the most updated version.
 - Dulin: We now make employees acknowledge and sign off they received the policy, know where it is, what it says, etc.
 - There is universal agreement that people should have access to the policies, in advance, for accountability and transparency.
 - If policy is updated, it will go out via KnowBe4 every time.
- Daniel: Clause beginning “by this resolution...” in first paragraph of section 1 should be a separate section.
 - How does Fesler know she is following those policies? Where are they?
 - Dulin: This is not a WPR-only issue, we are working on the intranet which will have all policies, forms, procedures, etc. for all employees to access.
 - Daniel wants each referenced document sectioned off/bulleted list for clarity.
- Section 1, para 2: Fesler asked if WPR gets access to CIP funding or if they just need to provide requests for what projects they would like to do capital related.
 - Dulin: Council usually does not give general fund money to WPR, but they could always make a request.
 - Fesler: The resolution should tighten up language if they do not actually have access to the money.
 - Dulin: It is not that they *do not* have access, it is a policy decision by Council each year.

- WPR has their own fund, but the resolution supports having WPR put a document in front of both their Board, City Council, and therefore also citizens for all capital requests.
- Daniel: A past project was denied by Council, so he wants to protect what they can do with their own money. It should not need Council's support if it is their own fund.
 - So, this resolution could give Council authority to strike mowers?
 - Fesler: Yes, in theory, but Council already could deny that funding through the normal budget process.
- Dulin: In the resolution, we should remove language regarding project management and public works from this section, they are a separate issue no different than interactions with IT, HR, etc.
 - The language is clunky where it is.
- Section 1, para c: Fesler asked if we could take out the specific dollar amounts regarding project management, so WPR cannot be told no just because the project is worth less than the mandatory minimum.
 - The resolution states that project management is required if >\$50,000, but it could still be optional if less than that amount.
 - Daniel: By adding "or at the request of WPR department" after the stated amount would allow coverage for WPR and the city.

SECTION 2

- Daniel: He knows this section has been a problem in the past because WPR has not always followed the language, but if Fesler is okay with the system, then he is okay with it as well.

SECTION 3

- Erica: A joint orientation needs to happen because it creates one understanding of knowledge, understanding for all Board members.
 - Communications are streamlined if the mayor/city representative and WPR are involved in the same comprehensive, collaborative orientation.
 - Suggested language: "a joint orientation will be conducted by WPR director and mayor/city manager rep..."
 - Dulin: We did train Tarl Bentley when he joined the WPR Board, so Fesler has a very thorough reference document.
 - A lot of training from WPR and city will overlap but educating Board members on their relationship between the WPR Board and City Council needs to be more robust.
 - Daniel asked if Fesler had access to the documents from the 1980's that he sent her for reference during Tarl's orientation.
 - He thinks those documents are important and need to be in the orientation, as they have proven to be helpful for guidance on what exactly an administrative Board is.

- Tarl clarified that it would be Fesler and a city representative (mayor, city manager, etc.) doing those trainings.
- Daniel said the Missouri Secretary of State has an excellent new sunshine law training.
- Scott: It is also important to address the future plans of the city, and what is going on, in the orientation for WPR.
 - If we would share dreams, knowledge of growth/trends, etc., it would be a benefit to all.
- Dulin: A lot of talk has been had about having an annual/recurring joint session between WPR Board/City Council to check in.
 - Erica: Maybe an annual joint session could occur in January.
 - Scott: The annual WPR report to Council is supposed to happen in June annually, so it would be good in June to ensure two equally distant points of contact.
 - Daniel: This discussion also aligns with key point 5 from Scott, since Fesler always does update to Council annually anyway.
 - Scott: Ideally, he would have *every* department report to Council at meetings, not just WPR.
 - Fesler's presentation on inclusivity and WPR was a great first step to this new goal.
 - It would be good to add language to the resolution stating WPR would provide update monthly to Council.
 - Erica: This would also be good because then the community also gets to hear about WPR' status updates.
 - Dulin: Reminder that Fesler *does* submit a biweekly report in the city manager report, included in the Council packet. It is not as if the city is excluding her, but a verbal monthly report would still be good.
 - Scott: The report out is like what is expected of other departments also.
 - Fesler: City Manager and WPR director already have monthly meetings, so having that in writing could be helpful as well.

SECTION 4

- Scott: This section is mostly fine; we may just need to freshen up the wording.
- Tarl: Wanted to confirm that there is no existing problem with IT, right?
 - Fesler: Correct, in fact, we may not even need this section because of good relationship. The language seems like common sense.
 - Erica: Common sense is not always common, so let us keep it in there to be safe.
- Dulin: Maybe we could talk more globally about coordination efforts. Instead of just calling out IT, also mention coordination between Public Works/Streets, etc.
 - Scott: Yes, globalize the language would be a good step.
 - Tarl: Keeping this section on IT to ensure long-term software/hardware compatibility purposes is also good.
- Daniel: Everything mentioned in this resolution that is not changing should also be in the new resolution.

- The resolution should also state a shared legal counsel.
 - Ex/ “We agree to cooperate and use the city’s legal counsel, financial procedures, procurement, etc.....”
- Scott likes the WCVB agreement/resolution better because it has cleaner language and more clarity, so we should base this off that one to the extent that is possible.

FROM SCOTT’S LIST #3:

- Erica: Asked for clarification about the administrative hearing process.
 - Scott admitted he was not sure; it was an idea stolen from an administrative Board in Lee’s Summit.
 - Scott: You cannot prevent an action from a Board/Council, but there should be a process to talk through events afterward before escalation reaches this point again.
 - No specific information right now
 - Essentially, Scott wants more conversations like this one moving forward *before* things get bad.
 - Erica: Clarified this would essentially be a mediation between representatives from both Boards before we get to this point again.
 - Scott: We can assign research into this policy to a committee or staff.
 - Daniel asked if this addressed concerns about Council/Board accountability.
 - Dulin: She does not think accountability falls into administrative hearing process, that is achieved through the previously mentioned joint session that Council agrees with WPR’ direction.
 - Scott: By checking in regularly, we can foresee bigger issues coming down the pipe and not be caught off-guard.
 - Scott and Daniel discussed the history of West Park.
 - Scott knew, as a private citizen that the city was expanding north and east.
 - Daniel said West Park was chosen after extensive citizen input.
 - We need better communication between city and WPR to prevent another example like this.
 - Erica: Both groups also need a better understanding of each other’s strategic plans, because that would clear up some issues in the future.
 - She stated that Fesler is doing a good job about tracking growth/development.
 - But she can only know what she can access, so the lack of information needs to be cleared up.
 - Daniel said administrative hearing process is good, and it could be modeled after this meeting with 2 WPR representatives, 2 Council representatives, etc.
 - Erica said, as a lifelong resident and not a Council member, she understands the importance of steering clear of weighing things out in the court of public opinion
 - Administrative hearing is the better solution, to just chat it out before issues are taken to Council.
 - Theoretically, Dulin/Fesler would work things out together and there would never be the need for an administrative hearing,

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

- Dulin said one thing she wants included in the new resolution is a contract for Fesler with the WPR Board, as she is only non-city employee in the department
 - All other WPR employees are city employees, while Fesler works *for* the Board.
 - Erica and Daniel disagreed Fesler is not a city employee.
 - Daniel: The attorney WPR consulted was explicit that the city could fire WPR' director.
 - The Board could hire them back, then the governing bodies could be in a cycle.
 - The Missouri Attorney General affirms the director is a city employee and city can fire but Board hires.
 - The contract would provide some additional protection for WPR director from a political shift since the Board has term limits, etc.
 - Erica: Protection from whom or what?
 - City Councils and city managers also come and go, not just the WPR Board.
 - Scott wondered about a contract since he also worked for a Board, with some additional terms of employment, etc.
 - A potential contract does not have to limit action from Board/Council, but clearly outlines duties and direction of the director.
 - Daniel asked if those were not already clear? What does the contract achieve? Who is it for?
 - He already has expectations that there are ways to handle concerns just like any other employee.
 - He, and many others, work for a Board without a contract so he is not sure why it is necessary in this case.
 - He is not opposed to one, just interested in hearing what it could possibly entail.
 - Tarl compared it to his teacher contract.
 - Erica has one called "professional privileges" with specifics information and extra things related to her, but mostly she abides by the employee handbook on a day-to-day basis.
- Scott: We need to wordsmith the entirety of the resolution and ultimately get buy in from the 14 stakeholders on the Board and Council.

NEXT STEPS

- Mason will send meeting notes to Dulin/Fesler, who will work on a draft resolution.
 - They are dedicating Monday morning to work on the resolution.
- They should get the resolution done by 17th-21st for this group to review, then let the full governing bodies weigh in on the rough draft at their meetings
- This group will meet on June 2nd from 11:30-1 to create a final draft of the resolution.
- Scott will tell Council on Monday that we had this meeting and are moving forward. He will also provide recurring updates at Council meetings.