

A Retreat of the Chesapeake City Council was held Saturday, January 20, 2007 at 9:00 a.m., at the Towne Hall Meeting Room, 137 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, Virginia

**Present:** Council Member Rebecca C. W. Adams  
Council Member Bryan L. Collins (arrived 9:13 a.m.)  
Council Member John M. de Triquet  
Mayor Dalton S. Edge  
Council Member Clifton E. Hayes, Jr.  
Vice Mayor Dwight M. Parker  
Council Member Ella P. Ward  
Council Member Patricia Pritchard Willis

**Absent:** Council Member Alan P. Krasnoff (excused)

**Present from Administration:** Acting City Manager Anne Odell, City Attorney Ronald Hallman, Deputy City Manager Wanda Barnard-Bailey, Deputy City Manager Amar Dwarkanath, City Clerk Dolores Moore, Budget Director Betty Meyer and other staff members.

**Also Present:** Ms. A. Tyler St. Clair of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service/University of Virginia, Meeting Facilitator

Mayor Edge called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present before introducing Facilitator Tyler St. Clair.

Ms. St. Clair welcomed everyone; she provided introductory comments and a general review of the day's activities with anticipated accomplishments. She also defined the roles of the Council Members and the facilitator for the day. Council Members would dialogue about the direction in which they want the City to go and their perspectives on the issues; the facilitator would record the dialogue and help guide the expanding conversations.

Ms. St. Clair advised that she wanted to first focus on the vision themes identified in the Planning Session September 29-30, 2006 and see what the Council had to say about those themes now. She then reviewed the visions from the September 2006 Retreat, the results of the On-Line Priorities Survey conducted by City Staff, and the budget priorities.

Ms. St. Clair outlined the exercise for Council Members. She asked Council Members to identify 15 goals they believed were critical to achieving their vision for the City's future. The following list was developed:

Two-Year Goals identified by each Council Member:

Vice Mayor Parker:

- Address funding to build new Gilmerton Bridge
- Begin to address the homeless population in the City; commit financially to regional Single Room (SRO) project
- Improve police coverage by filling existing positions through improved methods; add more police coverage and assign to areas of needs

- Have an agreement with the school system regarding new school construction and the funding schedule that insures the City's financial soundness (location of new schools, enrollment)

Council Member Willis:

- Fund the Stormwater Department so that key drainage problems can be addressed
- Create incentives for developers to build more affordable housing
- Adopt the Emergency Reserve Policy
- Focus on the recruitment of large corporations, especially those that offer high paying jobs, to fill up the Oak Grove Office Park and other spaces
- Cooperate and invest in public/private partnerships to get needed roads built
- Increase the number of police officers on bikes in communities

Council Member Hayes:

- Plan and implement a fully functioning Technology Commission
- Establish a central place or point of contact for gang related issues to provide coordination
- Begin a formal study for constructing a Performing Arts Facility in Chesapeake
- Merge the functions of public communications and information technology where they overlap
- Build at least one public swimming pool
- Establish a "tax trust fund" so that citizens can designate additional taxes to support specific projects
- Study the need for a lodging facility near the Dismal Swamp Trail

Council Member de Triquet:

- Reduce the City's bonded debt
- Reduce the annual overall debt service to 10% of General Fund revenue  
Establish a specific revenue sharing policy with the public
- Identify and appropriate funds for improved animal control facilities and increased staff
- Design and begin the replacement of Dominion Boulevard Bridge

Council Member Ward:

- Procure grants and take other creative measures to assist residents with water/sewer connections in un-served areas of the City
- Implement an enhanced City-wide recycling program, including consideration of private recycling and regional cooperation
- Focus efforts and attract a large hotel and conference center
- Locate funds to revitalize older, established areas of the City as BelHarbour in South Norfolk
- Expand the jail facilities in Chesapeake to provide for more jail space

Council Member Collins:

- Design a 2-year plan for industrial and residential property development along the riverfront
- Develop a plan for resurfacing of roadways throughout the City based upon condition and age
- Install wireless access in all City public buildings

Council Member Adams:

- Study design procedures for public buildings, including co-location of public facilities
- Seek to purchase property to expand Tidewater Community College
- Expand funding available for mental retardation services, especially adults
- Put the Public Works schedules for filling potholes and their major projects on the City's website (coordinate posting/doing)
- Expand public art at each library by setting up a public art fund
- Design a housing corporation fund so that when properties become available for redevelopment, we can purchase them and develop or sell to a developer

Mayor Edge:

- Improve the City's Bond Rating
- Implement an equitable and stable employee compensation plan (pay and benefits)
- Design and provide for a sports complex at Camp 22 (City Park)
- Identify and increase a reliable funding stream for open space preservation
- Make a proactive effort to get a terminal for high speed rail and fast rail on the Southside

Council Members recessed for lunch at 11:40 a.m. and reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

Ms. St. Clair then explained the next step to Council Members. By using the Nominal Group Technique, each Council Member was to select their top 14 choices by placing a green sticker next to each of their selections.

There was extensive discussion by Council Members at the end of this process concerning their choices and the top priorities.

Ms. St. Clair consolidated the information from the discussion and listed the top 14 priorities in no particular order, following the Council's input.

- Design and develop a funding strategy for the replacement of the Dominion Blvd. Bridge
- Identify and appropriate additional funding to build a new Gilmerton Bridge
- Fund the storm-water department so that key drainage problems can be addressed

- Procure grants and take other creative measures to assist residents with water/sewer connections in the un-served areas of the City
- Seek to purchase property to expand Tidewater Community College
- Implement an equitable and stable employee compensation plan (pay and benefits)
- Improve police coverage by filling existing positions through improved methods; add more police coverage and provide coverage based on areas of need
- Identify and increase a reliable funding stream for open space preservation
- Cooperate and invest in public/private partnerships to get needed roads built
- Locate funds to revitalize older areas such as Belharbour Station in South Norfolk
- Establish a specific revenue sharing policy with Chesapeake public schools
- Expand the money for mental retardation services, especially for adults
- Study the need for a lodging facility near the Dismal Swamp Trail
- Expand the jail facility in Chesapeake to provide more jail space

It was the consensus of Council Members that the list established a clear vision for the next two years.

Discussions between Council Members and Acting City Manager Odell ensued about how these goals could be achieved and incorporated into the FY 07-08 budget proposal. Ms. Odell stated that she would have discussions with the Management Team and develop recommendations for accomplishing each of the two-year goals.

The retreat was adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

/dah

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Mayor

Attest:

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City Clerk