

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**

**CITYWIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Don Davis Room, 1st floor, City Hall**

**January 17, 2020**

**12:00 p.m.**

**In attendance:** Commissioners Betzy Santiago (Chair), Nick Howland, W.C. Gentry, Emily Lisska (arr. 12:16)

**Also**: Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Jessica Matthews and Sharonda Davis – Legislative Services Division; Melanie Wilkes – Council Staff Services

**Meeting Convened**: 12:10 p.m.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the January 3, 2020 committee meeting were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

Remarks from the Chair

The telephone conference call with a planning official from Tulsa, Oklahoma scheduled for this meeting will not take place due to a last-minute conflict. Ms. Santiago reported that she and Commissioner Lisska had met yesterday with Charter Revision Commission Chairman Brock who provided them with a copy of a draft report from the Government Structure and Preserving Institutional Knowledge Committee to consider as a template for its report.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Howland discussed the Tulsa, Oklahoma strategic plan, which was created in 2010 after a 2-year, very public process led by their Planning and Zoning Department. A number of public workshops and citizen surveys were held to get public input. A new mayor was elected in Tulsa in 2016 who created an Action and Implementation Management (AIM) plan to tie the strategic plan to annual budgetary decisions. An Office of Performance, Strategy and Implementation was created to oversee the implementation of the plan. He perceives that the implementation and performance measurement are executive branch functions, and he will be asking about the city council’s role and buy-in to the process when he speaks to a Tulsa representative by phone later today. One of the people he talked to in Tulsa felt that development and implementation of a strategic plan probably wouldn’t happen outside of a strong mayor form of government. Chairwoman Santiago asked about performance measurement and Mr. Howland described several goals and metrics from the AIM plan, which are publicly accessible via an online performance dashboard. Ms. Santiago also asked about the use of a consultant in the plan development process.

Mr. Gentry said he sees several common themes in the strategic plans of other cities: 1) implementation seems to be staff driven (Office of the County Administrator, Budget Office, Planning and Zoning Department); 2) gradual process over several years to tie the strategic plan to budgetary decisions; and 3) voluntary reporting by other related but independent agencies of how their actions relate to the city’s strategic plan.

Commissioner Lisska has looked briefly at the strategic plan of Lexington, Kentucky which was done by their Planning Department and skews toward land use and development issues but includes a wide variety of other areas as well. Lexington has an urban growth boundary the drives development and redevelopment in the urban core. Their process had a very extensive public participation process utilizing their local Blue Grass Community Foundation and Leadership Lexington. The plan was funded by the community coalition and a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation through their On The Table civic engagement initiative. They utilized a heavy online and social media effort, citizen surveys, citizen-initiated input parties, etc. and generated 11,000 citizen submissions, which were all tabulated by staff and grouped in topic areas. Commissioner Gentry cited the Jacksonville Public Education Foundation’s very extensive effort a few years ago to mobilize and study public opinion on educational issues as an example from Jacksonville that reached over 1,000 people.

Ms. Lisska also looked at the Austin, Texas planning effort – Imagine Austin. Accountability and performance measurement is handled through the city manager’s office and assignment of tasks to relevant departments. Chairwoman Santiago asked the committee members to report back on the fundamental features of the strategic plans of other communities (what topics are covered, what kinds of measurements do they use) to help the committee develop its proposal. Commissioner Gentry recommended the Blueprint for Improvement II’s strategic planning proposal as a good model because it covered all of the factors the committee has been discussing.

The committee discussed specifics of a proposal. Commissioner Lisska suggested June of 2022 (the bicentennial of Jacksonville’s founding) as a good symbolic date for the debut of a new strategic plan. Commissioner Gentry recommended that timing of major revisions to the plan in the future not coincide with a mayoral election and recommended a requirement for an annual performance report. He also recommended finding a way to get the implementation out of the sole purview of the executive branch so that it is not perceived as belonging to the mayor. He noted that City CFO Joey Greive had said at a previous meeting that his Department of Finance and Administration has absorbed a number of functions that don’t fit logically anywhere else in the government structure. He suggested that to keep the size of a strategic planning committee reasonable, one mayor be selected by the Beaches cities and Baldwin to represent their interests and one CEO from all of the independent authorities be selected to represent their interests. The size of the group needs to be kept small for the sake of efficiency. Commissioner Santiago suggested using the 5 at-large council members, a representative of the current mayor and most recent past mayor (either the mayor or their CAO or Chief of Staff) as the basis for the planning committee, with a separate advisory committee representing a wide range of other interests providing input to the official committee. She acknowledged Commissioner Gentry’s caution that using 5 council members overweights the City Council versus the Mayor’s 2 appointees.

After more discussion the committee arrived at a general consensus on the outline of a Strategic Planning Commission recommendation, which would include the 5 at-large council members, the City’s Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer, the School Superintendent and the Sheriff as the voting members. They would be assisted by an Advisory Committee incorporating: the Mayors of the Beaches cities and Baldwin; the CEOs of the 5 major independent authorities; a military representative (preferably the Commander of Navy Region Southeast); a health issues representative; and others to be determined later to be inclusive and widely representative of the community at large

The group discussed who should be chair of the strategic planning commission. One thought was that naming the City’s CAO or CFO as the chairperson would counterbalance the weight of the 5 City Council members, one of whom would be Vice-Chair. The President of the Chamber of Commerce was suggested to be the chair of the Advisory Committee. The group also discussed the timing for creation of the initial strategic plan. A potential calendar would have the CRC reporting its recommendations by end of March 2020, City Council adopting the recommendations in mid-202, a referendum on Charter changes in November 2020, organization of the Strategic Planning Commission and Advisory Committee early in 2021, then a 9 month plan development process and report to City Council, with City Council taking action to adopt the strategic plan by the June 2022 bicentennial of the city’s founding. The committee anticipates that the charter change would grant authority to the commission to hire staff and consultants as necessary. They anticipate recommending a requirement for an annual report of implementation progress to the Strategic Planning Commission. A thought was offered that the strategic planning commission might also act as the Charter Revision Commission in the future, identifying obstacles in the Charter to the accomplishment of strategic plan goals.

Commissioner Gentry said he will refine his draft proposal as discussed today and will include relevant language from the Blueprint for Improvement II recommendation on strategic planning.

Public Comment

Stanley Scott of the African American Economic Recovery Think Tank thanked the commission for the work it is doing on behalf of the community. His main concern is with the lack of participation from the community at large in the CRC’s process which will lead to a lack of buy-in at the end of the process. A way needs to be found to get more public input. Work needs to be done on distinguishing the responsibilities of the City Council versus the Mayor. Commissioner Gentry asked Mr. Scott for his ideas on better ways to generate public interest and participation.

Next meeting

January 23, 2020 12 to 2 p.m.

**Meeting adjourned:** 2:04 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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Posted 1.21.20 2:30 p.m.