

# STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP OF THE CITY OF BONITA SPRINGS COUNCIL

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

## MINUTES

**City Council Chambers**

**5:30 PM**

**1. Meeting called to order by Mayor Nelson**

Mayor Nelson called the workshop to order at 5:30 P.M.

**2. Roll Call**

Mayor Nelson and all Council Members were in attendance.

**3. Public Input (30 minutes maximum)**

5:33:41 PM Dawn Koncikowski submitted a letter into the record from the Bonita Beach Alliance (BBA; Copy in Clerk's file) which reflected responses from committees and citizens on the SWOT Analysis. She asked that Council allow the residents to respond to comments made tonight by Council and Staff in the next few weeks with any follow-up information they feel is necessary for Council to have all the facts.

5:34:42 PM Alex Grantt suggested City Council consider taking over the Bonita Springs Fire Department to a modern municipal operation.

5:37:02 PM Ron Pure addressed the item on page 27 that states "No build, small growth, conservationist isolationists that lack a vision for our future," stating that he doesn't feel that he, or others lack vision. He also addressed concerns he had with billboards, overhead utility lines, and annexations.

5:42:25 PM Fred Forbes stated the City is business friendly, and stated that the senior partner should be the residents. Secondly, he feels a threat would be if they got a box store before the development of architectural standards. He also hopes nothing happens to the City-wide landscaping project, which he feels will draw people here and make the City beautiful. He also feels the flyover is a threat to the City.

5:44:11 PM Pat McCourt addressed growth and development, and stated that his hope is that Council doesn't forget the forty some thousand people they represent; not the developers. He is against over development.

5:47:49 PM Alberto Bailleres, with Community Ministries, furnished several recommendations relating to the creation of an ethics committee. He also commented on the Citizens Water Strategy Task Force.

**4. Business:**

**A. Introductory Remarks**

5:53:00 PM City Manager Carl Schwing began by furnishing a brief overview of the Agenda, which will include a brief review of the status of Council's priorities as established in 2011. They will then

address the mission, vision and values of the City, and ask Council to make any suggested changes. Staff will then bring these documents back for Council's review. There will also be a public meeting to allow all the residents to provide input. They will also address strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and the SWOT analysis from 2011 for Council's suggested modifications. Additionally, they will address where Council feels the priorities need to be. The overall intent is to develop a list of Council's priorities for Staff to categorize and lump together to bring back to Council at a future Council meeting for final review.

#### **B. Review of 2011 Priorities Status & Accomplishments**

5:56:42 PM City Manager Schwing began by addressing the 2011 Strategic Plan Action Registrar reflecting the City's accomplishments (Pages 16 through 23 of the meeting packet) on Completed, Ongoing, projects that are on hold, completed and ongoing, and those with no action taken.

#### **C. Brief Review of Mission, Vision and Values**

6:17:04 PM City Manager Schwing next addressed the Mission, Vision and Values of the City of Bonita Springs (page 4), which Council revised slightly in 2011.

6:18:20 PM Council Member Steve Slachta referred to the portion of the Vision that states "Welcoming features should clearly announce to travelers the location of the City limits. U.S. 41 and Bonita Beach Road should be beautiful commercial parkways to be enjoyed by the residents as well as those traveling through the City." The City has one of the most pristine beaches and yet they left out Hickory Boulevard and the entrance to Barefoot Beach in terms of landscaping. He informed Council of two organizations in the area that are willing to contribute \$9,000 to \$10,000 to help the City with beautifying this area. In terms of the vision, he doesn't feel the City has lived up to it. He was not talking about changing the vision; only applying it to Hickory Boulevard.

6:19:35 PM Council Member Slachta next addressed the need to include something that refers to sustainability in the Mission Statement. City Manager Schwing explained that the Mission speaks to how we operate with Staff – an internal operations mission. He suggested "beefing" it up to be more global. With Council's direction, Staff can address it and bring it back. Council consensus for Staff to re-do the Mission Statement to make it more global and to address sustainability, and bring it back to Council.

#### VALUES:

6:21:31 PM City Manager Schwing next addressed Values listed in the Mission Statement (reflected on page 4.), which he suggested be revised to also be more global. Council consensus to revise to reflect a more global vision and to add "empathy" per the request of Council Member Bill Lonkart.

#### **D. Listing of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

6:24:43 PM City Manager Schwing next referred to page 9, reflecting the Strengths and Weaknesses that are internal and operational to the City which were a result of the 2011 SWOT Analysis Questionnaire.

City Council Minutes of October 24, 2011:

STRENGTHS (Internal) were discussed as:

Capable City Staff  
Environment (natural)  
Citizens / Residents  
Working Environment  
Fiscal Help  
Government Right  
Volunteers  
Size of City Organization  
Contracts with Law Enforcement and other Service Providers  
Positive Working Relationships  
Talented Employees  
Lack of Maintenance Obligations  
Team Work between Council and Staff  
Service Attitude  
Knowledgeable City Council Members  
Respect of Environment  
Shared Goals

6:28:39 PM Mayor Nelson suggested combining “Capable City Staff” and “Talented Employees” and to make those combinations for all four categories (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). He further suggested adding “Flexibility.” Council consensus to also include “Pride” per the suggestion of Council Member Peter Simmons. Council Member Mike Gibson suggested revising the list to reflect “Government Lite” instead of “Government Right,” with Council consensus to revise as suggested.

Council next addressed “Weaknesses,” as reflected below from the October 24, 2011 City Council Minutes.

WEAKNESSES (Internal) were discussed as:

Absence of Strategy or detailed Shared Vision  
Stimulating Community Awareness  
Communication Infrastructure  
Shared Message  
Small number of employees  
Comprehensive changes needed to the Comprehensive Plan and  
Chapter 4 of the City of Bonita Springs Land Development Code  
Processes and communication with City Boards/Committees  
Budgetary Limitations (tied to #1 above)  
Accessibility and ways to make it easier for citizens to communicate  
with City Council  
Not a Full Service City (Police, Fire, utilities not City run)  
Grant Writing Coordination  
No “on the road” meetings by City Council  
Lack of Ownership/Control of Parks, Beaches, Infrastructure, etc.  
Lack of Funding  
Library  
Florida Power & Light (need for updates, tracking, control of)  
High Expectations / Limited Funding  
Full Utilization of Employees

6:31:51 PM Council Member Peter Simmons referred to “Absence of Strategy or detailed Shared Vision” which he stated needs to be turned into a strength. He requested a discussion and the need for enhanced architectural standards. He wants to make sure the City remains a jewel.

6:34:19 PM Council Member Slachta referred to “Grant Writing Coordination” and a brief discussion was held, with Council consensus to remove “Grant Writing Coordination” from the list of Weaknesses.

6:36:46 PM Council Member Janet Martin referred to “No “on the road” meeting by Council,” which she stated is something she didn’t understand, as any time anyone invites a Council Member to attend an event, they do. After further discussion, Council consensus to remove. Council consensus also to remove ““Lack of Funding” on page 10.

6:39:39 PM Council Member Simmons suggested further a discussion on beaches and what can be done to enhance them. He also wants to address beach renourishment and beach parks. Council consensus to remove “Accessibility and ways to make it easier for citizens to communicate with City Council.” Consensus to also remove “Full Utilization of Employees.”

Discussion was next held on Opportunities listed in the October 24, 2011 Minutes as follows:

OPPORTUNITIES (External):

Location  
Affordability for Growth  
Citizenry choose to be here – successful, talented, experienced citizens  
Diversity  
Ecotourism (Bonita Nature Place, River, Beaches)  
Downtown  
Water Supply  
Railroad / Transportation – unpaved roads  
Economic Development (Storefront Vacancies, expansion of existing businesses, best uses of already zoned land, focus on jobs and industry.  
Ease Development Process  
Expand existing uses  
Greenspace / Open Areas that can be utilized  
Cultural Character and Charm / Historic Preservation  
Technology – Wi-Fi in City Facilities, Black Fiber Technology  
Gas Pipeline  
Need to address Bamboo Village property and Shangri-La  
Wonder Gardens educational potential  
Amenities to attract/keep young families  
Greenspace, also need to maintain and associated costs  
CREW Opportunities re: Bonita Trail  
Promote Existing Businesses in the City of Bonita Springs Clean up Water Flow/Stormwater  
Market Community  
Collect Code Enforcement Liens  
More Community Events in Parks/Private Areas  
Promote Educational Collaboration – Technical, High School, Charter  
YMCA

Engage People and allow them to do things themselves

6:44:08 PM Per Council Member Martin, “WiFi” to be removed from “Technology – Wi-Fi in City Facilities, Black Fiber Technology.” Council consensus to also remove “Collect Code Enforcement Liens.” Also removed from the list was “Engage People and allow them to do things themselves.”

Discussion was held next on the list of Threats in the October 24, 2011 minutes, which were reflected as follows:

THREATS (External):

- Lack of Regionalized Force / Cooperation
- Unfunded Mandates
- Declining Aesthetics
- Economic Stagnation
- Legal Liabilities
- Inaccurate Perception of City of Bonita Springs
- Quality of Water Entering the City of Bonita Springs
- Rising Costs of Resources – gas, water, etc.
- Less Revenue
- Bonita Springs Utilities and Fire Perception
- Neighboring Developments – find a way to address
- Natural Disasters
- Prepare for Coming Development – degradation of Old 41, Infill Development
- Annexation Questions
- Not Adequately Protecting Natural and Environmental Resources
- Oil Exploration / Drilling / Spills
- Crime
- Citizen Disconnect / Participation

6:50:36 PM At the request of Council Member Martin and Simmons, Council consensus was to add “Lake “O” and the word “Sugar” after “Quality of Water Entering the City of Bonita Springs.” Consensus was also given to remove the “s” after “Neighboring Developments – find a way to address” to read “Neighboring Development – find a way to address.” Further consensus was to add “fracking” after “Oil Exploration / Drilling / Spills.” Council consensus to also add “Flyover” to the list of Threats and to remove “Annexation Questions.” Mayor Nelson also suggested doing a better job in getting citizen participation.

- E. Discussion and designation of Strategic Priorities based on public input, SWOT Analysis and Discussion**
- F. 7:30 PM – Break**
- G. 7:40 PM – Continued Discussion and Designation of Strategic Priorities**

6:58:59 PM City Manager Schwing referred to the summary of what’s been done, on-hold, on-going, and broken down by objective. The projects that have already been started, that are on-going, or on-hold, will be discussed to see if Council still wants Staff to continue to work on them, to leave them on hold, or take no further action.

City Manager Schwing referred to page 35, which reflects a portion of the list he prepared. He categorized the different items. Once Council votes on the items, Staff will re-group and categorize them, with subsequent Council review.

### **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION:**

7:01:11 PM Council Member Martin addressed Downtown Revitalization, suggesting using the vision of the Artist's rendering for the Bamboo property as a base. She also suggested discussing the future of Community Hall as to whether the City should put more funds into renovating it, or whether there needs to be a new idea for that block. Her priority would be a consolidation of the government offices downtown, and possibly with a relationship with Lee County government offices, and the library. City Manager Schwing stated that there is a vision for downtown in documents created by consultants. The rendering Council Member Martin referred to was commissioned so that everyone would understand what the term "Old Florida" meant in terms of architectural styles.

7:05:19 PM Mayor Nelson feels the need to continue to plan and implement the next phase, which is the parking and water quality. He further feels it is time to go forward with an RFP for the Bamboo property and for it to be as wide open as possible to allow someone to come forth with something really unique. Discussion followed, with Council Member Gibson questioning parking if the Bamboo property was to be developed. Mayor Nelson responded that the plan is to take care of the water situation, and then build on-street parking and other parking. Discussion followed with City Attorney Vance addressing the Revenue Sharing Agreement with Lee County, and John Dulmer, Community Development, addressing the LDC regulations as they relate to the fee in lieu of providing parking of which no fee has been established. He suggested Council direction for Staff to come back with a process to establish a fee and a program.

Mayor Nelson referred to the church property the City owns which is very large and close to downtown, stating it would be easier to get from there to the park than it is from the Bamboo property. He feels there are way more opportunities than there are problems. Council Member Martin addressed comments she received from people who came to downtown that don't know where to park. She stated that the City owned property does not have signage and so people don't know they could park there. There needs to be something that states that it isn't a special event overflow parking area.

7:13:29 PM City Manager Schwing addressed the church property, explaining that Staff had some significant projects lined up for Community Hall, i.e., a new roof, making it ADA compliant, etc., which will cost in excess of over \$100,000. There were also plans for a playground, which he believes they will go forward with since the playground can be moved if need be. The question regards whether they are going to do something with Community Hall. It also regards whether it makes sense to look at leveling the front lot, with the exception of the Bamboo tree, and combining it with the church lot. Council Member Martin stated she felt that made perfect sense and was something she felt comfortable with looking into. She further believes that the frontage part of where Community Hall is located, not in front of the tree, should be commercial. There shouldn't be a City Hall or anything sitting right in the front. It's an opportunity for a great restaurant. She feels the City offices should be to the rear, with the opportunity for something else in the front, along Old 41. Mayor Nelson stated he felt it was a matter of timing. He feels the timing is right with a lot of improvements to be made, and so the best bang for the buck is to go forward with an RFP and get someone there who is going to be paying taxes who will pay for all the improvements so the City can build a new City Hall there. Overall, you have to do the RFP first and get that moving, and get some investment down there, and you can have temporary parking to the back of the other part of it and do a plan at the same time with Community Hall. He supports doing it this way. City Manager Schwing feels that City Hall is good at its current location, adding that there's only so much space downtown with the church property, and if they are looking at a library, it makes sense. He is looking for input from Council on the library that he can provide to Lee County. The question regards whether they want to try to add City

Hall. Council Member Gibson stated he was good with City Hall where it is. Council Member Martin suggested that maybe Community Development should be located downtown because of all the people going in and out. Council Member Lonkart stated he supports an RFP. Council consensus to direct Staff to move forward with putting together a plan for downtown in terms of sequencing and how this might work and bring it back in a separate workshop, with direction to Staff to move forward with an RFP for the Bamboo property.

[7:23:13 PM](#) Council Member Martin next suggested that during budget, that Council consider bringing back the Historic Preservation Grant Program for restoration for both commercial and residential properties in the downtown area.

[7:24:50 PM](#) A brief discussion was held on the Levin property, with direction to Staff to move forward with an RFP for that property as well.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS:**

[7:25:36 PM](#) Council Member Gibson asked that there be no road closures in the downtown area during special events, with the exception of Celebrate Bonita. Mayor Nelson feels it is an issue that needs to be explored further and data gathered. He feels there are things that can be done, and suggested that Staff look at other options.

### **Mobile Food Vendors:**

[7:29:49 PM](#) Council Member Martin suggested looking into the possibility of Mobile Food Truck events, as other cities hold once a week. Staff to look into Mobile Food Truck events. Mayor Nelson suggested starting out slow.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

[7:34:05 PM](#) City Manager Schwing furnished an overview on economic development for the City of Bonita Springs, after which a brief discussion was held, with Council consensus for the City to keep doing what they are doing. Mayor Nelson suggested demanding quality and to watch what we allow while striving to be efficient. Council consensus that economic development is still a high priority, and to keep doing what we are doing, and check for improvements.

### **BEAUTIFICATION:**

[7:40:01 PM](#) City Manager Schwing explained that he added Hickory Boulevard, noting that the question regards whether the City looks for opportunities for Hickory Boulevard, especially since there appears to be some matching opportunities for funds. Council Member Slachta stated they were looking for the placement of flowers and shrubs starting at Barefoot Beach heading north. Mayor Nelson requested adding gateway areas in general. Matt Feeney, Public Works Director, furnished an overview on where the City is at with regards to their approach on the landscaping project. Council Member Simmons questioned the possible placement of a welcome type structure, i.e., a sign, dolphin, etc., near I-75 to welcome the traveling public to the City of Bonita Springs.

### **Landscape Compliance:**

[7:45:51 PM](#) Council consensus to offer incentives to the private sector for them to enhance their landscaping – beautification. City Manager Schwing to propose some resources in the upcoming budget.

## **Architectural Standards:**

[7:49:55 PM](#) Council consensus on the need to enhance architectural standards

[7:53:43 PM](#) Mr. Dulmer reported that Community Development has received numerous applications for cell towers. He suggests updating the current Ordinance since a lot of the technology and construction has changed since the Ordinance was written. Staff to come back with a revised Ordinance to City Council.

## **Signage: Special Event Signs**

[7:56:58 PM](#) Mayor Nelson suggested something such as allowing perhaps 10 signs and to fine them if they don't remove them afterwards. Staff to continue to look at signage for commercial and special events.

## **Lighting Standards:**

[7:59:40 PM](#) Council Member Gibson addressed lighting standards and the issue of bringing everyone up to the current lighting standards, which City Manager Schwing indicated would be within five years for commercial. Discussion followed on enforcement of the regulations. He believes the concentration was going to be in the commercial areas, especially in those areas with security lights. Mayor Nelson suggested taking "baby steps," as it's a long term goal for purposes of avoiding trauma and expense on the City's part because of the amount of man power that would be needed. Council Member Gibson agreed that his belief was that it was something they were looking at for the future.

A short recess was taken.

## **SUSTAINABILITY:**

[8:15:09 PM](#) Council Member McIntosh stated that he sees the City as being on the right track with respect to sustainability. It's about doing things correctly and not numbers. He addressed the need for complete streets. Sustainability also pertains to water, structure presentation, and land use resources. What the City needs to get to are Green Building Standards - smart building that is sustainable. It also triggers the need for some type of regional coordination, addressing examples such as water and transportation.

[8:17:04 PM](#) Council Member Martin reported that the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Board has a couple of projects they would like to move forward with, including artistic bicycle racks for the park in downtown. She also feels that they need to look at healthy streets and complete streets. The Board is going to make a recommendation to City Council that the East/West Terry safety, sidewalks, and bike paths have become a priority. Council needs to look at that entire street holistically and not try to address it in pieces. Discussion followed on whether there existed an overall plan. Council Member McIntosh stated that there was no plan, and suggested looking at other models in the area, i.e., Fort Myers and Sanibel both of which have complete street strategies. Consensus to look at a Complete Street Strategy Mobility Plan.

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

### **Lee Tran:**

[8:22:16 PM](#) Mayor Nelson stated he feels the system is working well and is very successful, adding that both counties right now are depending on the City's participation. Council Member Lonkart addressed costs to the City associated with Lee Tran to date. City Manager Schwing stated that the issue is funding.

### **Bus Shelters:**



Council Member Martin stated that she felt there might be a need for one or two different well used stops. Staff to explore.

### **Old 41 South and Logan Boulevard:**

#### **Old 41 Path:**

[8:27:14 PM](#) Mayor Nelson stated that Old 41 south is very important, and that Logan Boulevard is going to happen. Mr. Feeney explained that what Staff pursued is a multi-use path that's off the roadway. Collier County has agreed to a project that would continue that connectivity. Mr. Feeney questioned whether the City should pursue widening the path in the future, or wait to see how traffic patterns are. Mayor Nelson stated it needs to be part of the Traffic Study.

#### **Bonita Trail Expansion:**

Council consensus to pursue expansion eastward. Council Member Martin stressed the need to pursue expansion to CREW – eastward. Consensus for the City to address I-75 with the Federal Government.

#### **Eco-Tourism:**

[8:31:22 PM](#) Council Member Martin questioned whether it was time for the City to start looking at a designation of jet ski and powerboat free waters for the paddlers, and for protection of the shallows for the oyster beds and fish nurseries. Council consensus on designating jet-ski and power boat free waters. Council Member Gibson suggested including maintenance of the river and creeks and making ease of access, to which City Manager Schwing stated that would fall under “waterways.”

### **WATERWAYS:**

[8:32:51 PM](#) Council consensus for increased access to waterways.

City Manager Schwing addressed the quality and quantity of water in the DRGR in relation to the process. He asked if there was anything that Staff needs to include in the plan that makes a statement about this. Mayor Nelson addressed the importance of City-Wide Water Quality, and suggested including the DRGR.

Council consensus was also given to monitor the dredging plans for Hickory Pass. Council consensus was also given to continue to monitor the Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act.

#### **RPC Study Spring Creek:**

[8:39:16 PM](#) Mr. Feeney stated that the RPC Study for Spring Creek addresses two issues – navigation and dredging. Staff feels they have found a less expensive and more result driven approach to dealing with this. The City has contracted with a coastal engineering firm to conduct a bathymetric and a habitat survey, both of which are critical pieces of information they would have not gotten from the RPC study. They can then engage the State in a dredging program. The other issues that are tied to Spring Creek in terms of water quality and volumetric flow east of I-75 seem to be something that would come out of the DRGR stuff, or the South Lee County Watershed Plan. He was not confident that studying is going to do much towards tangible things they can take action on. They know they can move on the component of dredging

and dealing with navigation issues downstream. The culverts under I-75 are issues that are more regional in nature which he doesn't feel this study will give the horsepower they would need.

Mayor Nelson agrees to the need for maintenance dredging there. Mr. Feeney stated that his recommendation is that they can make an impact with the dredging and that the other things, over time, will come into play. Council consensus to include pursuing Spring Creek Dredging.

Education:

Council consensus to be supportive of a public high school, charter school and university.

Other things:

8:45:41 PM Council consensus was also given for the City to pursue beach access ownership.

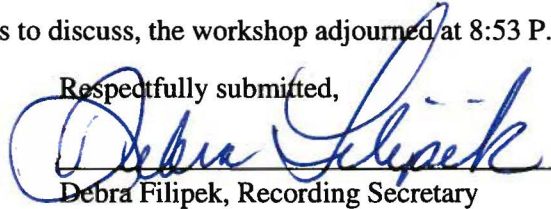
**H. Designation of results desired - how do we know when we are successful? – (if time allows)**

**I. Wrap-up**

**5. Adjournment.**

There being no further items to discuss, the workshop adjourned at 8:53 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Filipek, Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

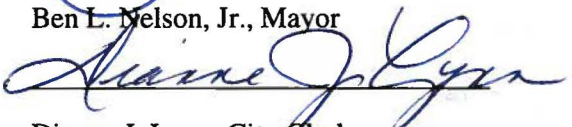
BONITA SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL:

Date: 4-16-14

AUTHENTICATED:



Ben L. Nelson, Jr., Mayor



Dianne J. Lynn, City Clerk