

MINUTES
WOODSTOCK CITY COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

October 2, 2014
Stage Left Café

A Special Meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Sager at 4:00PM on Thursday, October 2, 2014 at the Stage Left Café.

A roll call was taken.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Saladin, RB Thompson, Maureen Larson, Julie Dillon, Joe Starzynski, Mayor Brian Sager. Councilman Mike Turner arrived at 4:10PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Roscoe Stelford, Director of Public Works Paul Ruscko, Finance Director Paul Christensen, Assistant Director of Public Works Jeff Van Landuyt, Grant Writer Terry Willcockson, and Executive Assistant/Chief Deputy Clerk Cindy Smiley

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Mayor Sager noted that the purpose of the meeting was a City Council Workshop to discuss three specific items in more depth: The City's Marketing/Branding Plan, The Old Courthouse, and the Prevailing Wage Act. He stated that the goal is to come to some degree of resolution on these topics or to come to an agreement to move forward in such a manner to be able to provide staff with direction.

DISCUSSION:

1. Marketing/Branding

Mayor Sager reminded those present that at the last City Council Workshop, it was agreed that the City would work on a marketing program which would benefit the City of Woodstock, the community, and our local businesses and organizations. At that meeting, the "Woodstock Celebrates" concept developed for Woodstock Celebrates, Inc. was discussed and a presentation of that program was made by Michael Stanard. Mayor Sager noted that Woodstock Celebrates, Inc. is an organization that was founded in large part by Councilman RB Thompson.

Following this meeting and the presentation by Mr. Stanard, it was agreed that Staff would work with members of Woodstock Celebrates to see if there was a possibility of using that concept, namely the logo and the slogan, in the City's branding campaign, working together to promote various facets of Woodstock.

Mayor Sager noted that Woodstock Celebrates, Inc. applied for copyrights on the logo and the slogan and has received a copyright on the logo itself, but not on the slogan, "Woodstock Celebrates." He stated that it is his understanding that WCI could not obtain a copyright on the slogan because it is too generic. He stated that it is his feeling that the logo is not an absolute necessity and that efforts could move forward with WCI for shared use of the slogan by both WCI and the City for its marketing program. He further stated that the City Council should decide if they wish to pursue the "Woodstock Celebrates" slogan. If not, then they need to determine the direction in which to proceed.

Mayor Sager noted that Councilman Turner has met with Gunnar Gitlin, President of the WCI Board and asked for an update of that meeting.

M. Turner stated that approximately two weeks ago, as a representative of the City, he met with Gunnar Gitlin and Michael Standard, informing them that he was not in a position to make any definitive decisions or to negotiation on behalf of the City. He stated that it was his desire as that representative to move the talks between the two groups along. He noted that Mr. Gitlin was representing his own interests as President of WCI but also a broad set of interests of the other members of WCI. He stated that the question is "can we align the goals of the two groups and come to a point were the two groups can support one another's objectives."

M. Turner indicated that Mr. Gitlin raised some items that WCI would like to get out of the collaboration. He further stated that he communicated that the City should have oversight and input on the campaign over and above WCI and that the City should have unencumbered use of the slogan. Mr. Turner also discussed a public/private partnership where another private entity made up of representatives appointed by WCI and the City would execute and have complete control of the campaign with funds coming from the City and possibly other sources.

M. Turner indicated that the WCI Board met this afternoon and came to the consensus that they would like more details but are willing to engage in further discussion. It is Mr. Turner's wish to see the discussion move forward quickly which would allow the Council to make a decision quickly. He stated that he informed Mr. Gitlin that the City Council would discuss the matter further at this Workshop.

To summarize, M. Turner stated that there is interest on the part of WCI and that there is interest in further discussion of the matter but nothing concrete. He noted that the decision is whether the two entities can come together to both use the slogan to the benefit of Woodstock. He feels that WCI should be able to use the slogan any way they wish. He further suggested the creation of a separate entity consisting of members from both organizations plus an outside party agreed upon by both groups. This group would oversee the funds and approve the campaign. He stated that the City would offer support and money and WCI would offer the slogan and the logo. Following discussion, there was no consensus on this approach.

In response to a question from RB Thompson, R. Stelford stated that the City Attorney would have a role to make sure that the project was structured appropriately.

In response to a question from Mayor Sager as to the tenor of WCI concerning working with the City and Mr. Thompson's individual position on this matter, RB Thompson stated that the purpose of WCI is to promote the historic aspects of Woodstock. He noted that the City recognized one historic aspect in the recognition of the 130th anniversary of the City Band. He further stated that WCI is working on developing a detailed calendar of other events that can be celebrated in subsequent years. He noted that marketing is a tertiary goal of WCI. In response to a question from Mayor Sager as to the group's perspective on WCI's unencumbered use of "Woodstock Celebrates," and the City doing a marketing component for the City using the slogan and the logo, with these two fitting together, Mr. Thompson stated he feels that the City should look for a new slogan with a new verb.

Discussion followed of the use of "Woodstock Celebrates" by both groups and how this could support WCI. M. Turner stated that no one would take the entity name but that the City would just use the slogan to build the city up. He stated that everyone thinks this is an effective way to promote Woodstock. RB Thompson stated that many feel that this could lead to confusion.

Peter Carroll, attorney and treasurer for WCI, joined the discussion noting that the Board met this afternoon. M. Turner noted that he and Mr. Carroll just received an email from Mr. Gitlin. It stated that the WCI board made a motion that the Board move forward with discussions with an authorized representative of the City regarding collaboration between the City and WCI. In response to a request from M. Turner to characterize the feelings of the WCI Board, Mr. Carroll stated they are willing to talk. He stated that the groups may be able to work something out but it is certainly something they are not going to just give away wholesale. He noted that this is something the City clearly wants and the WCI Board is willing to talk.

Mayor Sager asked for comments from other members of the Council.

M. Saladin noted that he appreciates the fact that WCI likes the name but stated that if something cannot be worked out soon and the process seems too drawn-out and cumbersome, perhaps it is time to walk away. He stated that if the City has to give up the name in order to get complete control that is acceptable to him because the City needs a marketing plan that gives the City complete control to use when and how it wishes. In response to a question from Mayor Sager about what he would consider an acceptable timeframe, M. Saladin stated that the marketing plan is a big component of economic development and feels that this issue should be settled within no more than 60 days.

J. Starzynski agreed, stating that the City is being held hostage over a word and a logo. He noted that the slogan and logo are great but wonders why the City is stuck on that, stating that the City could come up with its own logo and slogan. He further stated that he does not feel a committee is needed as the City also has an Economic Development Department.

J. Dillon agreed but expressed her disappointment, stating that both groups seem to want to promote Woodstock.

M. Larson stated that she also is disappointed. It is her opinion that the use of the slogan by both entities would strengthen both, while WCI seems to feel that the City's use would weaken them, which was never the intent. She feels that the Council always viewed this as a way to build up both WCI and the City. She, too, stated she feels that if WCI is not interested in seriously exploring the possibilities, she is at the point of "fish or cut bait."

RB Thompson stated that he feels it is too complex to have a third party (a separate body) and the process needs to be simplified.

P. Carroll wished to point out that RB Thompson does not speak for the WCI Board and that the motion cited earlier points to WCI's willingness to continue discussions. In response, Mayor Sager stated that we cannot just continue to discuss, however. He noted that the City has determined that it wishes to move forward with a marketing program and this process has ended up stagnated.

M. Turner believes that the discussion can be completed and an agreement reached in 30-60 days, noting that great efforts have been made over the past six months to get it done. He noted that it

remains his view and that of M. Larson that this is one of the best marketing campaigns he has ever seen. Further, he stated he does not believe in the City's Economic Development Department running this campaign, but rather an outside entity that has the ability to facilitate the program. He noted that the City would provide the funds and WCI would give unencumbered use of the slogan and logo. He further stated that this third party entity could also solicit funds, making this a public/private partnership which will provide more flexibility. He stated that whatever is decided, this marketing plan should not be run like a governmental entity but should be run like a private business running a promotion.

Mayor Sager noted that today's discussion should be about whether we wish to move forward with WCI to utilize that slogan and logo and what timeframe are we willing to implement in order to accomplish this.

M. Turner feels a 30-60 day timeframe would be appropriate.

RB Thomson stated that he feels there should be a budget item and a bidding process seeking a marketing professional's services to create the campaign and perhaps "Woodstock Celebrates" could be part of that campaign. He noted that Mr. Stanard has presented his ideas, but feels that the City needs to put this out for bid.

Mayor Sager stated that at this point we need to decide if we wish to continue discussions concerning collaboration between the City of Woodstock and WCI relative to this type of effort and for what period of time. He asked if the process could be concluded by October 31.

M. Turner stated he feels that a conceptual agreement could be completed and presented to the Council at the first meeting in November.

It was the consensus that M. Turner continue to work with the WCI Board with the intent of presenting a conceptual agreement to the Council at the first meeting in November. M. Turner stated, however, that in his mind, this is not date specific should a short time more be needed to complete the discussions.

M. Saladin noted that he is willing to move forward if there has been substantial progress.

P. Carroll noted that, in his opinion, it makes things simpler if there is a concrete proposal, as the WCI Board cannot act on informal offers. He requested that the Council give them concrete options and choices.

Mayor Sager stated that he is not interested in the logo but wishes to have unencumbered use of the slogan for marketing purposes.

M. Turner stated that representatives of the two entities need to get together to hammer this out. Mayor Sager noted that they should craft language that would place an offer in writing stating what the City of Woodstock would like to have unencumbered use of "Woodstock Celebrates" for marketing purposes and would be willing to protect the use of that phrase relative to the WCI Board's use with regard to historic activities. In other words, the language would make it clear that the City is not getting involved in their efforts.

M. Larson confirmed that this would mean that both entities would have unencumbered use.

P. Carroll noted that if the City wants something, they must give something and that, thus far, all he has heard is taking.

M. Turner responded that the Council is currently discussing the City's use and that the language must be framed to be acceptable to both parties.

Mayor Sager asked what the financial parameters would be. M. Turner stated that is unknown at this time, but G. Gitlin has shown some support and we should ask ourselves how much we are willing to offer. Noting that he is not ruling anything out, M. Turner suggested that some office space could be offered.

Mayor Sager noted he is willing to consider an initial up-front fee but is not willing to consider anything on an annual basis in terms of licensing. M. Larson stated she agrees there should be no long-term support. Noting that he is fine with an initial payment, M. Saladin stated that all marketing plans have a life and a death.

The Mayor asked for the Council's views of whether they would consider an initial payment.

J. Dillon stated she is willing to consider this but is also open to creative ways of compensating WCI.

M. Larson stated this may be saving funds that would have to be spent developing another slogan.

Mayor Sager asked whether Council would consider an initial payment of \$10,000 with a possible additional opportunity for in-kind support such as office space.

J. Starzynski stated this is very generous and he would support this offer but no more than this.

M. Saladin indicated his support.

M. Larson supports \$10,000 but no more.

M. Turner indicated his support

J. Dillon supported a one-time payment of \$10,000.

RB Thompson indicated his support.

Mayor Sager confirmed that everyone is comfortable with these parameters and that the City will work between now and October 31 to come to an agreement with Woodstock Celebrates, Inc.

In response to a question from Mayor Sager, P. Carroll stated this is an excellent start.

Mayor Sager stated the City will try to further the dialog as quickly as possible and bring something to Council at the first meeting in November.

R. Stelford confirmed with Council that the \$10,000 would go against the \$80,000 budgeted for the marketing program. All were in agreement.

2. Old Courthouse Project

Noting that Council is aware of the status of the project, Mayor Sager stated that the purpose of this discussion is to talk about where the project is headed.

He reminded Council that underlying this project was two possibilities:

- 1) The City could continue on as owner of the building
- 2) The City could do another round of RFPs with the idea of turning it over into private hands.

The Council elected to pursue number two and see what ideas were brought forth. Two proposals were initially received in response to the RFP and were vetted by the Review Committee. He stated that one proposal was for both buildings and had a residential component and the other was for the Sheriff's House only, expanding the restaurant that is currently located in that building. Subsequently two additional proposals were received.

In the interim other things have come up, including the leasing of the restaurant space in the Old Courthouse to the Public House. Another idea that has surfaced is looking to the Courthouse for use as a municipal facility for the City Administration and other offices.

Mayor Sager noted that the purpose of the conversation today is not to discuss the on-going improvements, but rather to have a visionary discussion of where to go from here.

In response to a question from M. Saladin, Mayor Sager reviewed that the four proposals were from the Texas developer, the Creperie, the School Proposal, and the proposal from the McHenry County Foundation.

M. Larson, Chairperson of the Old Courthouse Review Committee, noted that while very hopeful and interesting, the proposal from the School would need to be fleshed out with much more information provided. She also feels that Council should discuss whether this would be an appropriate use for that building. She feels that the first step is to determine that before seriously reviewing the School Proposal.

J. Starzynski questioned the financial feasibility of this proposal.

RB Thompson and M. Saladin are not interested in placing a school in the Old Courthouse.

J. Dillon was hoping for more for the building.

Mayor Sager stated that he believes whatever use must have public access. He feels that the courtroom should be a facility that the public can use. He also still is in support of a restaurant in the lower level and feels that a school could preclude these things.

M. Turner is not supportive of the School Proposal.

It was the consensus of the City Council not to proceed with review of the School Proposal.

Mayor Sager noted that the Council purposely avoided previously discussing what they wanted in the building to see what kind of ideas and proposals came in, hoping to solicit interesting ideas. He further stated that now Council must talk about the ideas that they would like to see in that building and asked for Council's thoughts on possible uses for the building.

J. Starzynski stated that he would like to see the building used for cultural purposes, noting that this can change an area. He noted that there already is a strong cultural base and sees it as a cultural center. He would also like to see a brewery or brew pub in the building.

M. Larson stated that the main thing for her is that the building becomes a vital part of the Square to bring people in. She noted that a craft brewer would be a huge regional draw. She further noted that business owners want to see a flow of people that might not be here already. She stated that there should be two restaurants, including one in the Sheriff's House. M. Larson stated that the Council should decide what it wants and what is the best way to make this happen. She is hopeful that the City will find this out through the TAP process. The next step would be to see if there are people who were interested in investing in this vision. It is her opinion that it is time to take a more focused approach.

A discussion ensued of the economic viability of the City remaining as landlord and maintaining the building.

M. Turner stated that there is a strong argument for the City continuing to own the building. He stated the most important thing is not the use of the building but the impact that use has on the building and the Square. He further noted that the project must be viable and that the building must be maintained, which is another reason for the City maintaining control and ownership of the building. He suggested investigating how other communities have brought investors to similar projects. M. Turner stated he would like to see multiple restaurants and would like to see the City reach out to brewers to see if they are interested. He wants to see the Old Courthouse become a regional destination to draw people to the Square and is open to ownership and lease but that the project should be done quickly.

M. Turner also stated he is an advocate of moving City Hall to the Old Courthouse which would be an evolutionary event in the City. Noting that City Hall does not have to take up the whole building, the remaining space could house other uses. In response to a question from J. Dillon as to what would happen to the current City Hall, M. Larson stated that it is more suited to condos. J. Dillon noted, however, that Emerson Lofts, which was the former historic Woodstock Typewriter building, is not doing well which could be problematic. She also feels that City Hall should remain a public use building.

J. Dillon stated that the building is beautiful and needs people in it. She supports a public mixed use, including a brew pub and music.

M. Saladin stated that he likes the ideas he has heard thus far, but wants to make sure they do not burden a Council in 30 years should a private person not have the means to maintain the building, thus creating the same situation in which this Council finds itself. He further stated that he has no problem in keeping it in the City's stewardship and agrees with targeted marketing. He does not mind a residential component.

M. Saladin further stated that he believes the RFP process is leading the City to the conclusion that a single private owner may not be viable due to cost. He noted that looking to the future he can still see

the Sheriff's House as a separate building with a separate entrance which could perhaps lead to revisiting the Sheriff's House RFP again.

M. Saladin stated that the City must take the initiative to market the space, noting that more targeted marketing should be done on the first floor as the second floor consists mainly of the Old Courtroom.

RB Thompson discussed using the building as an incubator. He stated that he also would prefer to see a regional draw and believes the brewery would be a good idea.

J. Starzynski stated that if the proposals are not what we want, he would be supportive in remaining as steward of the building.

M. Turner noted that the Old Courthouse is a wonderful historic building. He further stated that the real estate market will not stay down forever and that the Old Courthouse has great potential.

Mayor Sager stated he would like to see good, solid public uses in the building promoting a lot of traffic. He would like to see businesses with a cultural aspect such as a restaurant, a gallery, small business incubator, community service organization shared office space, and a community room. He is not supportive of a residential component as it carves too much out of the building.

Mayor Sager further stated that he is strongly coming to the conclusion that the City should remain the steward of the building in perpetuity. He noted that he is willing to look at certain municipal functions moving from City Hall to the Old Courthouse and that he believes the community has a vision of a mix of uses in the building. He also stated that he is very willing to look at a brew pub but believes that they need a lot of space which may be prohibitive.

Mayor Sager stated that he would like to focus on two areas in order to take a step forward:

- 1) Is there a consensus that the Council would not object if the City were to become the long-term owner/steward of the building?

It was the consensus that Council is supportive of this possibility.

- 2) Is there consensus for the mixed use of the building as long as the uses maintain public access and draw traffic and people to the Square? In addition, this could be a combination of some business/office space and municipal services.

It was the consensus that Council is supportive of this idea with the following comments:

Councilmembers do not wish to end up with several little spaces that do not draw people. It was the consensus that the building would need an anchor which would generate the primary economic activity.

Discussion followed of the need to develop categories of desired tenants, such as brewpubs, and then possible contacts within those categories. It was also felt that staff should begin to look at the framework of the uses in terms of rent and what the limitations might be on certain businesses. M. Larson noted that the TAP process might help with this, noting that they might move in parallel.

M. Larson noted that the submitters of the Busse proposal were never given a definite answer and she would like to get back to them. It was the consensus of the Council that they are not ready at this time to give this proposal a firm "yes" or "no." Mayor Sager asked that they be reminded that Council and the Review Committee would entertain additional information.

In response to a question from Mayor Sager, while Council was not opposed to exploring the possibility of moving City Hall to the Old Courthouse or of moving some municipal offices there, it was the consensus to explore other options which would make the Old Courthouse a more vibrant destination in the Square. It was the consensus that this idea could be revisited at a later date should no "destination" uses materialize.

R. Stelford noted that staff will begin working on these ideas right away, exploring not only brewpubs, but also making a list of what could potentially go into the building making it a draw. Staff will also share any potential problems that, in reality, could present any hurdles.

Following a discussion of the demolition of the addition, it was the consensus of Council that, as this could not be completed before the Public House moves in and it is not critical, it would not be undertaken at this time.

3. Prevailing Wage Act

M. Turner noted that it is not his intent to encumber staff or vendors or to require any additional work, but that he wishes to have an idea of what the impact of the Prevailing Wage Act is to the City and its taxpayers. He feels that there is a lack of information out in the public concerning this Act. He is requesting to have information provided to the Council on a quarterly basis as to what the additional cost of projects are as a result of having to comply with the Prevailing Wage Act.

Mayor Sager stated that he understands and agrees that it is important to know the impact. He also noted that the Council must realize that the City is not the body that makes the decisions concerning the Prevailing Wage Act. He invited anyone that is interested in change concerning this matter to go to Springfield to lobby their position. He also noted that the City also continues to do this at the COG level and invited anyone who wishes to do so to attend the MCOG meetings and get involved in that way.

Mayor Sager further stated that he is not in favor of adding any further burdens on a bidder through an ordinance, noting that this could discourage responsible bidders from bidding, thus diminishing the City's choices. He stated that perhaps there are ways to get the desired information from staff.

R. Stelford stated that he agrees that some vendors may not bid if they are mandated to provide this information. He did state that the City Staff could provide a very good estimate of these figures using certified payrolls.

It was the consensus of Council that they would like to receive this information but that an ordinance should not be passed to accomplish this. City Staff was instructed to capture this information either through the bid process or using Certified Payrolls and to subsequently transmit this to City Council.

4. Miscellaneous

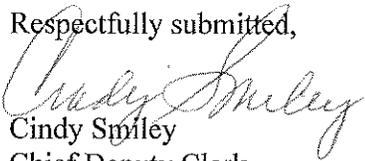
In response to a question from Mayor Sager, it was the consensus of City Council to offer the WHS Political Science class the opportunity to craft an ordinance naming the woods at the Albert Property after William Donato.

ADJOURN

Motion by J. Dillon, second by J. Starzynski, to adjourn this special City Council workshop to a Special Meeting of the City Council, a Manufacturers' Forum, on Tuesday, October 7, 2014, at 4:00PM at Stage Left Café. Ayes: Dillon, Larson, Thompson, Turner, Saladin, Starzynski, and Mayor Sager. Nays: None. Absentees: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Cindy Smiley
Chief Deputy Clerk