

CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
September 15, 2008

The meeting of the Winter Park City Commission was called to order by Mayor David Strong at 4:35 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 401 Park Avenue South, Winter Park, Florida.

Members present:

Mayor David Strong
Commissioner Margie Bridges (via phone)
Commissioner Phil Anderson
Commissioner Beth Dillaha
Commissioner Karen Diebel

Also present:

City Manager Randy Knight
City Attorney Trippe Cheek
City Clerk Cynthia Bonham

Citizen survey discussion

Communications Director Clarissa Howard introduced Phillip Downs from Kerr & Downs Research who was retained to develop an online survey for the City. He asked the Commission to indicate whether they are gearing toward benchmarking versus exploring new ground. Each Commissioner explained what their priorities are for the survey using the strategic plan to guide them.

After comments from the Mayor, the City Manager and each Commissioner, Mr. Downs led the Commission through exercises to determine their priorities and direction. Upon discussion, a list of issues was produced for use in determining the survey questions. Each issue was voted on to determine its importance to the Commission as a whole as to whether it should be included on the survey. In giving citizens an opportunity to choose which initiatives should receive more funding, citizens will be presented with the following 12 initiatives (wording can change) that the City can pursue or continue to pursue. The top priorities were:

1. Funding outside organizations especially the library
2. Revising residential codes affecting building heights, setbacks, density, neighborhood preservation
3. Designing and implementing the Fairbanks Avenue streetscape
4. Spending to "fix" Brookshire School even though it is not, strictly speaking, the City's responsibility
5. Moving the post office from downtown area and the related issue of expanding central park area
6. Continuing the underground electric initiative
7. Continuing to invest in commuter rail initiative
8. Designating areas (e.g., Park Avenue) and buildings as historic
9. Preferred population growth and density
10. Continue "green" initiative
11. Investing in enhancing the Community Center
12. Investing in the top 5 long-term capital investments

It was determined that there are issues that need to go into more depth on the survey. An unidentified lady wanted the question of what services the citizens should like to cut because of the economy. The Commission was given a homework assignment to be returned to Clarissa

by Friday that would indicate from each Commission member the top five areas they wanted to see explored more thoroughly in the survey.

It was agreed that the survey will be, for the most part, strategic and future oriented rather than tactical and oriented on evaluating past performance. Focus will be on:


1. Determining citizens willingness to pay more (taxes, fees, etc.) for City services and/or initiatives
2. Giving citizens an opportunity to choose which initiatives should receive more funding
3. Giving citizens an opportunity to indicate which "regular" services they are willing to cut service levels
4. In-depth questions on a few selected initiatives (as decided by the Commission)

A few benchmarking questions from the 2006 survey will be included in the 2008 survey:

- #2 – satisfaction with quality of services received from City
- #3 – City is better/worse place to live (I do not support this question since so many other factors beyond the City's reach can affect responses to this question)
- #19 - satisfaction with how City spends taxpayers' dollars (or a modification focusing on value received, i.e., considering all taxes and fees paid and all services received, do you receive a good, fair, or poor value for your money)

Another work session scheduled for September 29 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.


Cynthia S. Bonham, City Clerk