



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

February 13, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tempore Trautmann called the work session to order at 5:08 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

Council Members Present: Simon Trautmann, Mayor Pro Tempore; Sharon Christensen; Sean Hayford Oleary; and Ben Whalen

Council Members Absent: Mary Supple, Mayor

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager; Melissa Poehlman, Community Development Director, Jay Henthorne, Public Safety Director; Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Karl Heumiller, Recreation Services Director; Mike Dobesh, Fire Chief; and Chris Swanson, Management Analyst

ITEM #1	PRESENTATION OF THE 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT.
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the topic and Management Analyst Chris Swanson. Analyst Swanson presented the progress on the 2023 Strategic Plan Progress Report. He talked about the history of how the report was created, the input from the community, staff, and council that went into the report and what the report measures. Analyst Swanson spoke about the progress that has been made on the five strategic priorities. He specifically detailed some of the successes of the past year and some of the areas of disruption that staff is experiencing, specifically with staffing, in accomplishing those goals. He talked about what the next year will look like for the strategic plan work.

Council Member Whalen asked to define the progress bar and what that percentage captures. Analyst Swanson said the progress bars show the number of tasks completed for each initiative and priority. He said staff are still working to capture all the work done in an effective manner. He noted a majority of the tasks are still undone but that this shows some of the initial planning work that is being completed.

Mayor Pro Tempore Trautmann thanked staff for the work on the plan and asked if the dashboard, specifically the progress bars, were helpful metrics for staff. City Manager Rodriguez said that those are the conversations staff are having now. She noted that staff are still evaluating and learning the software. She noted that there were more actions early on so the progress may seem a bit further along. Analyst Swanson mentioned that he thought this was helpful in guiding staff work and that it does help show the community the progress.

Analyst Swanson presented on the public facing dashboard and talked about some of the targets that council have set in the past year.

Council Member Whalen asked how the city has been promoting the dashboard to the community. Analyst Swanson said that staff have been promoting the progress in the Richfield Recap after the quarterly presentation to council. He noted that there were 4,596 visits to the dashboard in 2023 and many of those visits are driven in the quarterly updates.

Council Member Hayford O'Leary asked if the KPIs will be updated if it is recognized that some may not be attainable. City Manager Rodriguez said that is something staff are talking about now and can plan to discuss more at the two-year mark.

City Manager Rodriguez went over the full report with council. She did not the 39 percent listed as done in the report may be overstated due to the way the action items are reported. Said this is something staff will be reviewing in the coming weeks. She talked about the progress made and where there are disruptions. She had the various directors provide updates on the specific items. This included updates on finances, community development, human resources, and technology.

Council Member Whalen asked about updates on the economic development work being done by the economic development manager. Director Poehlman outlined the work being done. She talked about the business and housing inventory currently in process and about the sewer access charge (SAC) program recently created. She spoke about how the staff is meeting with the Richfield Chamber and Visit Richfield and is also working on redevelopment projects.

Mayor Pro Tempore Trautmann said he is excited to hear about the SAC program and would like additional information. Director Poehlman said she will send the HRA report on the item.

Council Member Whalen asked about the new housing sales tax and when it needs to be spent. Director Poehlman provided a timeline regarding the funds. She talked about how staff is still catching up to a lot of the legislation that was passed last year.

Director Asher talked about the progress on the assets management plan. She noted this work has been delayed due to the GIS coordinator position being vacant. Council Member Hayford O'Leary asked what was included in the inventory. Director Asher said this encompasses all assets in parks except buildings as this is part of a larger planning process.

Director Huemiller talked about the focus work in Parks and Recreation, specifically the work around the Climate Action Plan. He spoke about the work that has been done on LEDs in city facilities and looking at electrifying the fleet. Council Member Whalen asked if anyone besides Xcel Energy provides fleet review. Director Huemiller said they are the main players in this work and that he will follow up if he gets any more information.

Assistant City Manager Thongvanh talked about some of the training programs being evaluated and what the next few years will look like in terms of recruitment, retention, and staffing. City Manager Rodriguez talked about some of the staffing graphs and what they show. She outlined some of the disruptions from staffing being seen in this area.

City Manager Rodriguez presented on the equity initiatives. She talked about how most of the disruption was a delay in getting the Equity Coordinator onboard. She spoke about some of the work being done by the new coordinator and how this is driving progress. She did note staff are not meeting some of the targets but are making progress. Council Member Whalen asked when to expect the equity toolkit, staff noted the plan is 2025. Mayor Pro Tempore Trautmann said he appreciated the truthful response about hiring in equity. He talked about how the city is building these systems.

City Manager Rodriguez provided some final comments. Council Member Whalen asked if there was any disruption we cannot recover from. Director Poehlman did note that some of the community development items may be less likely to be accomplished as much of this work is dependent on outside forces. She specifically talked about the current office space market and the volatility. City Manager Rodriguez said staff would have to evaluate that around the two-year mark. Council Member Hayford O'Leary noted that he liked the detail in the reports and that the narratives were very helpful when talking with the community.

City Manager Rodriguez moved the discussion onto the policy proposals. The Council presented their various policy proposals including regulating short-term rentals, evaluating ways to better support housing efficiency upgrades, defining "Downtown Richfield" name use in official contexts, consider establishing official boundaries for the area, clarify and establish liquor store names, and updating the city brand and website. Staff were able to ask questions of the council on the various policy proposals. City Manager Rodriguez talked about the next steps in the process as staff will provide additional information on the feasibility of each policy and the group will discuss what the council wishes to prioritize for the coming year.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tempore Trautmann adjourned the work session at 6:56 pm.

Date Approved: February 28, 2024



Chris Swanson
Management Analyst



Mary B. Supple
Mayor



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager