

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Nikki Bufford called the special meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers David M. Viafore, Shannon Reynolds, Brett L. Wittner, Karen Mauer-Smith, Hunter T. George, and Joe Barrentine were present.

Staff present: City Manager Dawn Masko, Public Works Director Tyler Bemis, Finance Director Allison Deskins, and City Clerk Arlette Burkhart.

COUNCIL GOALS WORKSHOP

Council Strategic Planning Facilitator Andrew Neiditz provided an overview of the agenda and ground rules. The Council engaged in several exercises and discussed communication styles.

Councilmember Viafore expressed concern about the transparency and recording of the meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act. The Council briefly discussed Council Rules, meeting recording obligations, and legal opinion. There was a consensus to record the meeting after Council concluded dinner for historical purposes.

The Council reviewed the City's mission and value statements and existing Council goals and priorities.

Councilmember Reynolds left the meeting at 4:55 P.M.

It was noted for the record that the meeting recording started at 6:45 P.M.

Mr. Neiditz requested Council feedback on goals and priorities for 2027. Council discussions included financial sustainability, anticipated growth, facility maintenance, pedestrian and bicycle safety, employee satisfaction, community events, volunteer recognition, and long-term strategic planning. Council discussed the importance of developing a long-range financial plan that would provide a three- to five-year forecast of City revenues and expenditures. Discussion included using historical financial data, evaluating development-related and other one-time revenues, and making sure one-time revenues are directed toward one-time expenses rather than ongoing obligations. There was a brief discussion on the possibility of transitioning to a biennial budget. Council expressed interest in continuing discussions of biennial budgeting at a future study session.

Further discussions included competitive employee compensation, completing a salary survey, employee satisfaction, the Community Events Coordinator position, the IT Systems Coordinator position, and volunteer recognition.

Council discussed public safety staffing and potential funding sources, including the public safety sales tax and automated traffic-safety camera enforcement. City Manager Masko reported that the public safety sales tax was scheduled for further discussion at an upcoming study session. Council discussed the need for a long-term plan addressing the maintenance and replacement of City facilities and equipment.

There was a brief discussion on the pedestrian safety plan. Council also discussed economic development opportunities in the northwest Mildred Street area, including existing zoning, infrastructure and sewer-service limitations, form-based code requirements, and potential barriers to redevelopment. Council expressed interest in reviewing the zoning and economic development for the area.

Council reviewed its 2026 goals, including enhancing public safety, fiscal stability and economic development, communications and community engagement, equity and inclusion, and community wellness.

There was a Council consensus on the 2027 goals to include long-term financial planning and forecasting, community event coordination and volunteer recognition, public safety funding, long-term facility maintenance and equipment replacement, employee compensation, satisfaction, and retention, continued development of the pedestrian safety plan, and economic development in the northwest Mildred Street area.

Council requested that staff evaluate the goals and develop a proposed implementation schedule identifying work that could reasonably be completed in 2027 and work that may need to continue into 2028. Council also discussed presenting the proposed goals during a future public meeting to provide the opportunity for public input.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Viafore MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.

The Motion Carried (6-0).


Nikki Bufford, Mayor


Arlette Burkhart, City Clerk