

Council/Staff Retreat
April 13, 2023

A City Council/Staff retreat was held on Thursday April 13, 2023, beginning at 8:00 am at the Bigwood Event Center. Those in attendance were Mayor Schierer, Council Members Hicks, Job, Rachels, Kvamme, Rufer and Fish. Thompson and Kremeier were absent. Staff members in attendance were Andrew Bremseth, Bill Sonmor, Brian Yavarow, Gail Hedstrom, Mike Hartwell, Len Taylor, Ryan Muchow, Jean Bowman, Klara Beck and Lynne Olson.

The focus of the retreat was to review policies and process, roles and responsibilities of the council and staff, communications, ethics, discussing a Code of Conduct for elected officials and planning/prioritization for upcoming projects and priorities of the city. The council members reviewed the open forum policy, the process of adding items to an agenda, and discussed a new system of hosting community meetings.

Prior to the retreat city department heads and council members were asked to provide a list of their top ten projects and priorities of the city. After that list was compiled, the same group was asked to rank their top 20 projects and assign them a point value (highest priority 20 points, second highest 19 points etc...) Staff compiled this list and the any project receiving 50 points or more was brought to the council at the retreat for further explanation and discussion.

The council and staff discussed each project and the council decided on the following priority areas for the city to focus on over the next year:

- Streets and infrastructure, including providing public education on upcoming projects, road conditions and finding additional funding sources for street improvements including franchise fees
- Focus on maintaining/taking care of current assets before starting new projects and understanding the city's financial position and commitments
- Financial planning for capital improvements, equipment replacement purchases
- Planning for technology and software system updates

Additional projects the council would like the city to prioritize include an updated Capital Improvement Plan, redevelopment of the dairy property, campaign ethics, the future of the Regional Treatment Center, an economic development and business subsidy plan that will help attract new businesses, planning for water plant improvements and redevelopment of the mall area.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm

Lynne Olson