

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, December 1, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

via Zoom

Present: Members: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Dougherty, Alderman Witte, Alderman Gonzalez, and Alderman Robinson. Others: Alderman Panus; Alderman Anastasia; Mayor William Aiello, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all Aldermen were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, November 17, 2020)

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2020 meeting was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. Discussion – Use of Zoom License for alternative City activities

Alderman Crawford explained that he would like to have a discussion about how the City might be able to utilize its Zoom license to reach out to the community and provide a little bit of service during this crisis to help strengthen our community connection. He explained that with the probability of activities being slowed or shut down, he wonders how the City can utilize its Zoom license to allow for interaction for the elderly and those who use the Senior Center, as well as interaction for the kids that use the St. John's program.

Mayor Aiello explained that he has done some research and has reached out to Mr. Shewairy. He explained that Mr. Shewairy has spoken with his workers, and there may be some things that can be done such as virtual tours of the Bartlett House for school and business groups. He explained that these virtual tours will begin this month. He explained that it may not be a good idea to utilize Zoom for the Senior Center because the senior population may not know how to use the computer, or they may not have access to a computer.

Mayor Aiello explained that the City currently utilizes Zoom for meetings, and he has authorized the purchase of cameras for stand-alone computers for this purpose. He explained that Youth

Court is another place that Zoom could possibly be utilized. Alderman Dougherty asked if it could be used for community service, and Mayor Aiello explained that it would most likely be used for training, mock trials and intake sessions.

Mayor Aiello explained that the Fall and Winter Program at St. John's could find it difficult to utilize Zoom because a lot of things there are hands on, and the building itself does not have internet access. He explained that he has talked to the IT Department and hotspots could be done throughout the building, but we are still working on that. He explained that there are a lot of physical activities highlighted in the program, but using Zoom is not out of the realm for some of the activities. He explained that there are some doable things that they will continue to work on.

Alderman Crawford explained that Mayor Aiello has presented a great list. He explained that he has spoken with some members of the community who would like to see the City step up in the virtual world if another shut down happens. He explained that members of the community would like to see some of the services from the City going. He explained that the City could possibly look into homework support through Zoom, as he knows that there are a lot of parents and students who are struggling with virtual learning. He explained that if there is a way to reach out to seniors as well, that would be wonderful. He explained that if additional funding is needed for this that the Mayor should advise the Council so that funding can be transferred. He noted that some communities have Zoom chair exercise for senior citizens.

Alderman Witte explained that her granddaughter has gym through her virtual classes two days a week, and they do exercises and scavenger hunts. She explained that she is at the Senior Center Tuesday and Thursday, and perhaps Ms. Belli could put up notice that there are people at the center who could help with Zoom. She explained that she thinks that some of these ideas sound great and we should do what we can to keep social interaction. Alderman Gonzalez agreed, and explained that we have this ability and this opportunity so we might as well make use of it, especially since it shouldn't cost us more than effort.

Mayor Aiello explained that one of the popular programs at the Senior Center is help with income taxes and he can see that being done through Zoom, even if seniors come to the center and use computers to speak with helpers through Zoom. Alderman Crawford asked if this is something that the City usually does, and Mayor Aiello responded that this is something that has been going on for years. He explained that volunteers come in and help seniors with their income taxes.

Alderman Crawford explained that from his perspective, this interaction is important. He explained that people who are younger and older need this interaction, and we shouldn't wait for things to begin shutting down. We need to be proactive. Alderman Dougherty explained

that if senior citizens do not have access to computers, that perhaps Boundless Connections has some sort of guidance as to what sort of computers they could purchase that would be inexpensive and efficient. He explained that he could see seniors going to the library to use computers, which would defeat the purpose of being online.

Alderman Crawford explained that he feels that during these past six to eight months senior citizens with very little technical knowledge are learning how to use Skype and Zoom. He explained that they have had to learn to have interaction with their families, and we might be selling them short. Alderman Witte explained that she knows that her granddaughter's other grandparents don't have WiFi, and they are just learning how to use their cell phones. She explained that there are different levels of knowledge and there are some seniors out there who are perfectly comfortable using Zoom. She explained that we should put it out there to see who is interested. Alderman Crawford added that we need to market this as well. Mayor Aiello explained that if we offer training, some seniors might decide that it is time to learn and take advantage of the training.

Alderman Crawford explained that he will follow up in a couple of weeks to see if anything further has developed. Mayor Aiello explained that he has a Department Head meeting a week from Friday, so he will see if he can get some ideas from the other department heads. He explained that he is thinking that this can be utilized at the recreation and senior centers, but he questions if it can be used in other places throughout the City. Alderman Crawford explained that his family decided to keep the kids home from school this year, and they are missing the interaction with their friends. He explained that social interaction is very important.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.