

CITY OF KETTERING
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL RETREAT
MARCH 24, 2022

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in a special retreat session on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Marriott Cincinnati North – Glendale Room, located at 6189 Muhlhauser Road, West Chester, OH 45069. The meeting came to order at 9:05 a.m.

Council Members present included Mayor Lehner, Vice Mayor Fisher, Mr. Klepacz, Mr. Duke, Ms. Duvall, Mr. Scott and Ms. Hall.

Staff Members present included City Manager Mark Schwieterman, Assistant City Manager Steve Bergstresser, and Law Director Ted Hamer. Ms. Susan Bodary, Retreat Facilitator, was also present.

Mr. Sterling Abernathy was also in attendance.

Mayor Lehner opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the retreat and turned the meeting over to Ms. Bodary, who reviewed the agenda and objectives for the day. The primary objectives for the retreat were for Council to: engage with each other, through reflection, dialogue and exploration of each other's key skill sets; to build a positive working culture among Council and with the City Manager and staff; identify issues where Council members have common purpose/agreement and differing perspectives to determine where there is opportunity to advance in a common direction; identify where there is need for additional dialogue and/or information to define a way forward for planning and decision making; and agree upon initial priorities Council must address in the coming year. Ms. Bodary also reviewed the rules, norms and expectations for conduct during the retreat, as well as various housekeeping items.

Ms. Bodary then began a presentation on the findings of the research conducted prior to the retreat through interviews with Mayor Lehner and members of Council, Mr. Schwieterman, Mr. Bergstresser and the Department Directors. A survey of City employees was also conducted. Ms. Bodary explained that Council members and staff leadership largely agreed on the City's strengths and challenges. Strengths included: staff and Council members who are committed to serving residents; talented, experienced and dedicated staff; financially strong and very well-managed; strong amenities, including parks, public safety, and schools; a sense of community and helping one another; and a strong reputation among other cities. Challenges included: a lack of overall strategic direction or goals going forward; an aging population; aging and declining properties; lack of land for new development; difficult zoning processes and lack of support for businesses; and an increased number of residents experiencing poverty.

Mr. Scott asked if the strengths are current or dated based on the Kettering of the past. Vice Mayor Fisher said that other cities' perception of Kettering is that we lead and other cities follow our lead. Ms. Duvall mentioned that our area is commonly referred to as the Dayton-Kettering region. Mr. Klepacz asked if these strengths and challenges are the same as seen by the city's residents and that the lists may not be the same. Mr. Duke stated that the greatest strength is our residents. Ms. Hall stated that the spirit of volunteerism is a strength. Mayor Lehner noted that the challenges are similar to the ones from her previous time on City Council 12 years ago, and many of the challenges are not easily fixed. Mr. Duke stated that social issues in our community have gotten bigger and more complex, and they are more talked about and communicated. Ms. Duvall agreed. Mr. Klepacz mentioned that the data show our median age has actually gone down, which is a positive, and what are we doing to bring younger people into Kettering, such as our relationship with Kettering City Schools.

Ms. Bodary then explained that four elements were common in a vision among Council and staff: commitment to providing high quality core services; community engagement; fiscal sustainability; and innovation.

Ms. Bodary displayed a chart showing priority issues (high/medium/low) based on interviews with Council members. Highest priority items included hiring a new City Manager due to Mr. Schwieterman's pending retirement at the end of 2022; property maintenance; economic development, redevelopment and retention; poverty; more housing; and transportation. Medium priorities included the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds; a charter review committee; and environmental sustainability including an electric vehicle charging plan. Low priorities included diversity and inclusion; a dog park; mental health; home internet access; and career and technical education.

Mr. Duke commented that mental health is shown as a low priority but it should be higher. Mr. Scott asked what roles the City should have in mental health with all the other agencies and jurisdictions regionally that already provides services. Ms. Hall suggested partnering with the County on this issue and gave an example of other cities purchasing online apps for mental health for their residents to use for free. Vice Mayor Fisher suggested Partners for Healthy Youth play a role in this issue. Mr. Klepacz stated that Council needs to identify core services, where the City's funds should be spent and how to

work together with other agencies to solve problems. Mr. Scott commented that there are parallels with mental health and the methods used to address substance abuse problems regionally, and wants to research the lessons learned that can be applied to mental health. Mayor Lehner asked how to measure who is addressing what in the community and is there a comparable level of concern with mental health as there is with the Board of Community Relations addressing diversity and inclusion with resources dedicated to the issue. Ms. Duvall stated that diversity and inclusion may not be talked about as much as it should, given the demographics of the community. Ms. Hall noted that the demographics around poverty and hunger are concerning with the example of single parent families that struggle to feed their families and having no extra money to pay bills. Mayor Lehner stated that we need to be careful about using statistics around free and reduced lunch since there are policies that govern that benefit. Mr. Scott commented that the vast majority of housing stock in Kettering is older and wondered how it can be made to be sustainable going forward. Mr. Klepacz asked what else besides food security needs to be addressed with regard to poverty. Ms. Hall commented that transportation and child care are key issues around poverty. Mr. Scott stated that with regard to priorities, Kettering residents would likely gravitate toward hiring a City Manager, property maintenance and economic development as the highest priorities. Several Council members agreed that public safety is also a high priority/core service because we invest in it.

Council then engaged in a group activity exercise to rearrange the priority issues that were discussed using the strategic plan, immediate action and learn/discuss/deliberate areas of focus, along with a short rest break.

After the short break, Ms. Bodary made a presentation about the components of a Strategic Plan. A Strategic Plan articulates long term vision and goals, clarifies high priority strategies to get there, measures progress and outcomes, provides a tool for decision making and keeps everyone on the same page.

At 10:50 a.m., Scott Inskip, Kettering City Schools Superintendent, and Dan Von Handorff, Kettering City Schools Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, entered the meeting.

Mr. Schwieterman joined Ms. Bodary's presentation to explain that a full community-based Strategic Plan is important for the City, and it is time to have that information from the community. As an administrator with a new Council, it is important to know how the City staff should be prioritizing their time and efforts. Mr. Schwieterman discussed an example time line for how a Strategic Plan process could evolve over the next 18 months and include the new City Manager in the process. Ms. Bodary explained that a strategic plan process is a learning and discovery process, in which Council does not need to wait for the plan to be finalized to move forward on key initiatives, such as community engagement.

Mr. Inskip and Mr. Von Handorff then gave a presentation on the Strategic Plan process that the Kettering City Schools (KCS) began in 2018. The KCS Strategic Plan covers a six year period, with a refresh scheduled for 2024. KCS hired Battelle to conduct the process, with strong participation from KCS leadership and community focus groups. Mr. Inskip explained that everything in their Strategic Plan is cost neutral, so choices had to be made as to where to prioritize funds. Mr. Klepacz asked how the School Board measures progress. Mr. Inskip explained that he gives them weekly progress reports and engages in quarterly evaluations with the Board. KCS administrators are assigned key focus areas within the Strategic Plan and they use a framework to track progress toward established goals. Mr. Duke asked about the cost for the Strategic Plan. Mr. Inskip stated that Battelle's cost for a one-year planning process was approximately \$125,000.

At 12:00 p.m., Mr. Inskip and Mr. Von Handorff left the meeting.

Council then engaged in discussion around whether to update the City's existing Strategic Plan that is found in the annual Budget Document with new goals and objectives, or to start from scratch. Council also discussed the overlap between a Strategic Plan process and selecting a new City Manager. The consensus was to begin the process to hire a consultant to conduct the process for a new Strategic Plan while the search process for a new City Manager is ongoing. The consultant should begin the Strategic Plan process with the community once a new City Manager is selected and begins work in early 2023.

At 12:25 p.m., Mr. Duke made a motion to enter Executive Session under Section 121.06 (k) of the Codified Ordinances for purposes of Negotiations with Organizations or Individuals; and Personnel Matters, seconded by Mr. Scott. The motion passed unanimously upon roll call.

At 1:09 p.m., the Council exited Executive Session, went back on public record and the doors were re-opened.

At 1:10 p.m., Matt Lindsay, Manager, Environmental Planning, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) entered the meeting.

Ms. Bodary introduced Mr. Lindsay to give a presentation on Sustainability in the Miami Valley. Mr. Lindsay explained that three terms tend to overlap each other when discussing sustainability. Mr. Lindsay defined sustainability as the ability to continue over a long period of time; environmental sustainability as the ability to continue over a long period of time without diminishing environmental quality or ecosystem services; and climate action as environmental sustainability with particular attention to carbon emissions and resiliency. Mr. Lindsay explained that the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability frequently overlap one another, and that consideration of all aspects of a community is important to sustainability. Mr. Lindsay then described several sustainability efforts ongoing in the Miami Valley, including Dayton Regional Green; MVRPC's education efforts such sustainability roundtables, climate change seminars, local sustainability committee participation, and alternative fuel corridors relating to electric vehicle (EV) charging; Power a Clean Future Ohio; the Hanley Sustainability Institute at the University of Dayton; and the City of Dayton's sustainability office and climate action plan. Mr. Lindsay also explained several big picture sustainability issues such as transportation electrification, renewable energy, municipal operations, and environmental equity.

Mr. Klepacz asked how the City of Dayton justifies the cost of having a staff dedicated to sustainability. Mr. Lindsay responded by saying the City of Dayton felt they needed to take those steps to remain competitive and incur cost savings, among other priorities. Mr. Duke asked if Power a Clean Future Ohio provides a solar analysis for City facilities. Mr. Lindsay said yes, he understands that is something they can do. Mr. Duke asked if local governments provide cost sharing for residents to install solar panels on residential structures. Mr. Lindsay said not to his knowledge, but method to do this is to provide information and ease of zoning and permitting for property owners wishing to install solar panels. Mr. Duke stated that cities could look at combining solar power with EV charging. Mr. Duke asked if City codes require the removal of underground storage tanks when gas stations close. If not, he recommends we include this provision in the City's codes. Mayor Lehner asked if there is a way to get past the political aspects of sustainability. Mr. Lindsay suggested focusing on projects that are good for the City financially and also have positive sustainability aspects. Mr. Scott asked about the trend for heavy EV vehicles, such as dump trucks or fire equipment. Mr. Lindsay replied that heavy duty EVs are not really an option right now, but compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles are more readily available and practical now. Light duty EV fleet staff cars are a more realistic option at this point. Electric transit buses are becoming more available. Plug-in hybrids are a realistic transitional technology.

At 2:00 p.m., Mr. Lindsay left the meeting and Amy Schrimpf, Economic Development Manager, entered the meeting.

Ms. Bodary introduced Ms. Schrimpf to give a presentation on Economic Development. Ms. Schrimpf began the presentation by explaining why communities invest in economic development, and the relationship between economic developers, successful businesses, and the community. Several factors that impact economic development include proximity and quality of the local workforce, quality of life and diversity, real estate stock, demographics of the local market, taxes and regulatory environment, and financial incentives. Ms. Schrimpf described the regional cooperation locally in economic development, including entities such as JobsOhio, the Ohio Department of Development, Montgomery County, BusinessFirst!, the Dayton Development Coalition, local chambers of commerce, and cities. The City of Kettering interacts with businesses through daily conversations via leads and referrals, news articles, conversations with realtors, activity with other City departments, direct communication with businesses and entrepreneurs, and networking at events. Ms. Schrimpf explained how state incentives work through JobsOhio and the Ohio Department of Development, and incentives that the City offers to businesses. City incentives can include income tax rebate programs through the Kettering Incentive Program (KIP); demolition of structures; façade and site improvement grants; a new program offering microenterprise grants to minority-owned businesses; business loans; and the ED/GE program through Montgomery County. Ms. Schrimpf explained that although the demolition and façade/site improvement programs have mostly occurred along the Wilmington Pike corridor, City staff recommends that this program be expanded city-wide. Ms. Schrimpf gave several recent examples of economic development grants to businesses. Ms. Schrimpf then explained how the City assists small businesses and works to retain existing businesses, gave an update on Tenneco, and then discussed several known problem properties in the city that have not yet seen redevelopment. Ms. Schrimpf explained that property owners sometimes do not make financial decisions that are not in their best interest. The City cannot control the free market and tell a property owner what to do or how to develop/redevelop their property. Staff will provide more details and examples of problem properties at a future Workshop.

Mayor Lehner asked if JobsOhio fact checks a company's desire to relocate or locate in another State. Ms. Schrimpf replied that there is a certain level of fact checking with companies seeking incentives to confirm they are actually looking at out of state locations. Mr. Scott asked what is preventing the City from expanding the Wilmington Pike improvement plan to be city-wide. Mr. Schwieterman replied that nothing is preventing it; just direction is needed from Council. Mayor Lehner asked how many minority-owned businesses are in Kettering. Ms. Schrimpf replied that the number is unknown, but the Kettering-Moraine-Oakwood Chamber of Commerce may be able to help identify the number. Mr. Scott and Vice Mayor Fisher expressed concern that the City should be checking in with our small businesses more often

to identify their needs, ask how they are doing. Ms. Schrimpf replied that the large number of small businesses in Kettering makes this very difficult, but we do network through the KMO Chamber and will meet with any business that wants to talk with us. Some businesses do not want to talk to us even if we reach out to them. The best way to support small businesses is to have a vibrant local community and customer base. Mr. Duke asked if there are things the City could look at regarding policies or zoning to incentivize or spur redevelopment. This could be something to come out of the strategic plan process.

Mr. Klepacz asked if companies know that they can ask for Economic Development money from the Wilmington Pike plan and how is this promoted. Ms. Schrimpf replied that this would be great information for us to publicize through Contact with Kettering and our other communication channels. Mayor Lehner suggested that it might make sense for us to contact some of the problem property owners directly. Mr. Klepacz suggested a formal program to go out and do more business relationship visits. Mr. Duke suggested looking to add staff to the Economic Development program in the future as a strategic priority.

At 3:00 p.m., Council took a 15 minute rest break. Ms. Schrimpf left the meeting.

At 3:15 p.m., Ms. Bodary opened a discussion about property maintenance, home ownership and housing stock by showing background slides on poverty and housing stock being concerns of Council.

Ms. Duvall stated that the Property Maintenance Task Force sounds like something the City uses to cite residents for violations and not look at the root cause of why some residents have trouble maintaining their properties. Mr. Duke asked how many properties are non-compliant or have property maintenance issues. Mr. Schwieterman replied that the most recent property maintenance annual report showed approximately 2,800 total violations and approximately 1,000 tall grass violations. Mayor Lehner expressed hesitancy to conclude that residents with property maintenance violations are not able to afford improvements as much of what she has observed is un-kept grass and junk in the yard. Mr. Scott stated that unwilling to comply vs. unable to comply is an important distinction. Ms. Hall expressed concern about landlord and tenant issues and asked what can be done to protect renters from landlords that don't keep up their properties. Mayor Lehner, Ms. Duvall and Vice Mayor Fisher suggested refocusing landlord workshops and conducting tenant education on rights and responsibilities; weak attendance at these types of workshops is typically an issue. Mr. Scott explained that most lease agreements put the responsibility for daily maintenance on the renters, not the landlord. Mr. Scott asked if staff knows how many rental properties are in Kettering. Mr. Schwieterman replied that the City does not have a rental registration program, but the County might have data to answer that question. Mayor Lehner suggested the City look at starting a rental inspection program like other cities have. Mr. Duke stated that an interior inspection program is much different than an exterior inspection program. Mr. Scott expressed concern about commercial property maintenance as well. Mayor Lehner stated that two groups have been identified, renters/landlords and residents who keep junk in their yard in a hoarding-type situation. Ms. Duvall said that hoarding can be a tricky issue since there are mental health issues at play. Mr. Duke asked if the City can intervene on a case-by-case basis for these types of issues. Mayor Lehner suggested having volunteers help with these issues. Mr. Hamer expressed concern with liability issues by letting volunteers on private property or inside homes; property owners and tenants also have rights that need to be respected. Mr. Schwieterman explained that the Cities of Service program has helped out neighborhoods in this regard.

Mr. Klepacz said that the focus should be on the process and speeding up compliance for exterior property maintenance violations and known problem properties around town should get the enforcement priority. Mr. Scott suggested an ongoing program like Cities of Service that can be city wide for people that cannot take care of exterior maintenance. Mayor Lehner asked if there was capacity to expand this through our volunteer program. Vice Mayor Fisher said one of the main issues is getting homeowners to say yes to help or even contacting the City in the first place.

Ms. Bodary asked what programs are necessary to make older homes more attractive and what options are there for new housing. Mayor Lehner said it is very difficult to fundamentally change the housing stock in Kettering. Ms. Bodary suggested that programs like the new DayAir low interest loans could be an option. Mr. Duke said some cities have demolished and combined lots to build larger homes as part of a housing infill program; the City has done some of this in the past in the Wiles Creek neighborhood. Vice Mayor Fisher said over time this could reduce the number of homes citywide with lot consolidation. Ms. Duvall asked what happens to the people who lived in the homes. Ms. Hall said the housing shortage will continue and suggested the City look at zoning code changes to allow for new types of housing, more density, expedited permitting and allow accessory dwelling units. Kettering starting its own housing trust fund might be an option. Ms. Hall asked if the City's current zoning code has density and height restrictions for residential zones. Mr. Klepacz asked if there has been any interest from developers wanting to build higher density housing. Mr. Schwieterman replied that there has been interest from developers. Mr. Schwieterman said that he has not heard from developers that current zoning code is a hindrance to residential development. Mr. Schwieterman also said that residential tax abatements are a tool to spur higher density residential development that other cities use. Research Park land could be used

for housing, but would take rezoning and covenants/restrictions changes. Mr. Duke suggested forming a committee to start looking at these issues more in-depth.

Ms. Bodary then led a discussion to prioritize strategic actions into the strategic plan/immediate action/lead, discuss, deliberate buckets based on discussions and presentations from today in preparation for the continuation of the meeting in the morning.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

PEGGY LEHNER
MAYOR

LASHAUNAH D. KACYNSKI
Clerk of Council

CITY OF KETTERING
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL RETREAT
MARCH 25, 2022

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in a special retreat session on Friday, March 25, 2022, at the Marriott Cincinnati North – Glendale Room, located at 6189 Muhlhauser Road, West Chester, OH 45069. The meeting came to order at 8:35 a.m.

Council Members present included Mayor Lehner, Vice Mayor Fisher, Mr. Klepacz, Mr. Duke, Ms. Duvall, Mr. Scott and Ms. Hall.

Staff Members present included City Manager Mark Schwieterman, Assistant City Manager Steve Bergstresser, and Law Director Ted Hamer. Ms. Susan Bodary, Retreat Facilitator, was also present.

Mr. Sterling Abernathy was also in attendance.

Ms. Bodary opened the meeting by explaining the agenda for the day.

Ms. Bodary then began a presentation on innovation and what it means for an organization to be innovative. She explained that innovation matters for all organizations who desire to sustain leadership in their market and ensure long-term success. Most executives are dissatisfied with their organizations' innovation performance and feel it is an existential threat. Established companies struggle to maintain systems that can produce consistent innovation. Established companies fail to innovate not because they cannot start new things, but because they struggle to grow their ideas and follow through.

Ms. Bodary explained several conditions for innovation. These conditions include: common principles for innovation processes, decision-making routines, critical mindsets and skill sets; effective clear and accessible communication habits; diverse teams and workstyles; resource commitments with clear restraints and expectations; and removal and detection of common obstacles to innovation

Ms. Bodary then led a discussion with Council regarding innovation. Mr. Duke stated that the City should govern for today through core services and innovate for tomorrow. Mayor Lehner expressed that the City needs to give recognition for what ceases to work--Is the City open to new ideas or just comfortable with what it has always done? Mr. Klepacz and Ms. Duvall agreed and said that just because other cities are already doing things doesn't mean it is not innovative for Kettering. Mr. Scott said that the speed of analysis, decision-making and execution can be a form of innovation. Ms. Duvall agreed and used the recent example of the Stay On utility assistance program that will be starting soon. Ms. Bodary said that an organization has to have enough flexible capacity within its staff to be able to change direction, or have the ability to free-up resources for new programs. Mayor Lehner said that an innovative culture is being open to ideas from anyone, not just Council or leadership. Mr. Scott gave an example of the Kettering City Schools Alumni Association; the City should use this example to get more ideas through community engagement. Ms. Duvall gave an example of a project where City staff would take 10 minutes to talk to a resident and ask for ideas, then periodically gather them for staff and Council to discuss. Mr. Klepacz suggested an award for innovation like the City's Special Way awards for employees. Mr. Duke said he thinks of innovation as being proactive instead of reactive, and suggested an Innovation Team that looks out 10 years from now. Mayor Lehner said it is important to differentiate between long-term innovation and short-term innovation. Ms. Bodary explained that many organizations use a strategic plan process to come up with innovative ideas and initiatives. Innovation can be hard to fit into daily work. A strategic plan can set the framework for new ideas.

Ms. Bodary then explained that Council would be engaging in small group activities to develop design briefs for key issues that will allow Council to position the issue and likely next steps based on their conversations and the information available prior to and during the retreat meeting. Ms. Bodary explained that the design briefs are a starting point and are tools to help Council refine thinking, add knowledge from professional staff, seek input through community engagement and use as guides for future action. The design briefs also provide a window for expressing what will be important to include in a future strategic plan. Each design brief will include a short problem statement, priority category, boundaries, margins, level of resident engagement, potential leaders on Council and potential leaders in the community.

Council then broke into several rounds of small group work for the next couple hours to develop the various design briefs.

When the small group work was complete, Council reconvened as a whole to discuss the results of the design brief development. Design briefs were presented and briefly discussed for the topics of mental health, environmental sustainability, economic development, zoning, property maintenance, charter review, economic mobility, housing and diversity and inclusion.

At the end of the design brief presentations, Council reprioritized the various topics into the categories of Strategic Plan, Immediate Action and Learn/Discuss/Deliberate. There was clear Council consensus on the five items requiring Immediate Action: Prepare RFP for Strategic Planning; Establish a Charter Review Committee; Establish an Environmental Sustainability Committee; Support Economic Development (engage, learn, support); and hire new City Manager. The following issues were positioned to Learn/Discuss/Deliberate: Diversity and Inclusion; Transportation; Data on available high-quality childcare. Other items were considered important to include in the Strategic Plan: Property Maintenance; Economic Development; Removing Barriers to Economic Mobility; More Housing; Transportation; Strategic Partnerships; Diversity and Inclusion; Public Safety; Public Service; and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts

After the reprioritization discussion was completed, Ms. Bodary wrapped up the retreat by thanking the Council members for their participation. Council thanked Ms. Bodary for her work in facilitating the retreat.

Being no further business to come before Council, the City Council Retreat was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

PEGGY LEHNER
MAYOR

LASHAUNAH D. KACYNSKI
Clerk of Council