

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Meredith Bushey, Katherine Lowe, Courtney Blasius, Yam Basnet, Aurora Hurd

City Staff Present: Ray Coffey, Yasamin Gordon

Guests Present: Kate Nugent

Call to Order by: Mary Hussman

Meeting Start Time: 6:38 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Meredith Bushey

II. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Feb 8 minutes approved, April 12 minutes missing

III. Public Comment

None

IV. City Council Update

- Equity Audit Final Draft being reviewed
- Information is still being gathered regarding ARPA funds
- Commission for Including and Belonging has been improved – there will be ambassadors from other commissions on that commission

Upcoming Events:

- Farmers Market
- Juneteenth
- Winooski Wednesdays
- Declaration of Inclusion approved by City Council
- 3/4 pool director positions filled ; 9/15 lifeguard positions filled; interviews ongoing
- New Recreation Parks Manager hired – Robin Merritt

V. City and Department Updates

None

VI. Review of Draft Policy Priorities and Strategies Recommendations for Council Retreat on 5/21

Priorities and Strategies Meeting: 9:30 AM-1:30 PM at Senior Center on May 21, 2022

Purpose: Ensuring city staff and council are on same page for work plan for the upcoming year.

4th year in process

Drafts being compiled and will be brought to commissions for feedback, draft will be brought to City Council next week for their meeting and then meeting to occur on 5/21/2022 to workshop the draft.

Goals are broken down into 4 buckets of Master Plan: Must-Do; Recommended; and Can do if resources become available

Last year, a column was added to tie projects to Master Plan Goals. Projects targeted a variety of goals.

Column added to delineate if there is Commission work required.

Refer to Excel spreadsheet for a list of projects for this fiscal year. To name a few:

- Update Employment Policies (Human Resources) – ongoing
- All-Resident Voting – shift to base operations
- City Manager on-boarding
- Initiate ARPA funding allocation discussions and next steps
- Planning for TIF expiration (including public process)
- It Services Bid – Winter, 2022
- Expand systems capacity and assess necessary resources for expanded Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work Citywide – Audit recommendations
- Assess Administrative Structure and Systems Efficiency (including Public Safety in preparation for Regional Dispatch) – separate: loos at admin systems; prep for implementation of Regionals Dispatch – shift to SHCP
- Phone, System, Door Access System upgrades
- Improve structure and access for Commission system (Equity Audit findings; Additional resources needed; Commission supports/trainings? Better representation
- Orient new Treasurer
- Update Financial Procedures – ongoing
- Procedures Manual to address Fraud Risk Assessment Items – ongoing
- Conduct staffing audit to assess current capacity
- Regional Dispatch
- Fire/EMS Delivery Model (including potential building improvements)
- School Resource Officer – post-school construction project – defining SRO role
- Adopt Statewide Policing Policies – DONE/Ongoing
- Impending turnover of police force secondary to upcoming retirements – the desire is to have a police force that looks like the community it is policing
- Develop plan for tenancy at O'Brien Community Center – potential to sell O'Brien without having a City owns the building, but maintaining the space as a community center
- Continue to bring increased child care options to Winooski residents
- Continue Public Health "Huddle" with statewide and regional partners
- Improve Service Delivery Through Technology - digital onboarding via HR
- Tower/Ladder Replacement Research and Financial Planning – Bid docs June, financial planning ongoing
- Intent to establish K-9 program
- Develop a management plan for Memorial Park in response to Parks and Open Space

Mater Plan

- Plan and develop additional volunteer opportunities for youth (Recreation, Library, etc.)

Commissioner Feedback

- Mary suggested that Equity audit conveys that governance needs to be way more inclusive than it is.
- Mary commented high turnover of city staff, councilors and commissions and suggested the possibility of mini orientation for new and old commissioners. Ray reported that city staff informally discussed the need to formalize the onboarding structure. Yas shared that she is developing an orientation for the Inclusion and Belonging Commission.
- Mary enjoyed co-meetings with Finance and Housing Commissions – she feels the more the commissions can collaborate, the better we all will be.
- Meredith suggested introducing each commissioner at the beginning of the meeting
- Kate inquired regarding work to educate broader community on restorative justice as it connects to substance use prevention and may help to move away from punitive measures on individuals.
- Ray reports that we have partnered with Spectrum in the past
- Yas shared that the school has a Behavior Interventionist that work to identify students who may be at high risk.
- Community Justice Center has moved from Police Department to Burlington

Providing more avenues for BIPOC and new Americans to engage in voting and commissions in order to increase voting opportunities.

- Yas shares the goal is for equity to be part of the baseline and to be embedded into day-to-day operations
- Identify policies and operations to change systems to make more inclusive. Determine the root cause of inequity and inherently everything is going to become more inclusive

VII. Preliminary Review/Discussion of Equity Audit Report

Preliminary discussion:

- 3rd party document
- Information gathered over a 6-month long period of time
- Information came from people in community
- Identifies what marginalized communities are experiencing regarding voting, housing and working life in the city
- Evaluates the commonalities between the disparities?
- Partnership could be enhanced with the school district
- School District and City of Winooski has endured a lot of change in the past one year.
- Yas asked about reaction to the identification of racial segregation within the city of Winooski
- One caveat to data is there was no access to Winooski Housing Authority data
- How do we desegregate Winooski? Should be a goal within the Housing Action Plan in order to truly be an inclusive city.

To Do:

- Identify ideas for Housing Summit

- Ray encourages all SHCP to read document

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by: Meredith

Second: Katherine Lowe

Meeting End Time: 8:02 PM