



**CITY COUNCIL RETREAT MINUTES
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS**

APRIL 8, 2021

On April 8, 2021, a Retreat of the Odessa City Council was held at 8:16 a.m., at First Baptist Church, 709 N. Lee, Odessa, Texas.

City Council present: Mayor Javier Joven; Council members: Mark Matta, District One; Steven Thompson, District Two; Detra White, District Three; Tom Sprawls, District Four; Mari Willis, District Five; and Denise Swanner, At-Large.

Others present: Michael Marrero, City Manager; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; Natasha Brooks, City Attorney; Cindy Muncy, Assistant City Manager; Phillip Urrutia, Assistant City Manager; Scott Willingham, Strategic Government Resources; and member of the news media.

Mr. Marrero welcomed and thanked the Council for their attendance. He introduced Dr. Scott Willingham from Strategic Government Resources.

Introduction the Strategic Visioning process. Dr. Willingham explained the cycle of strategic visioning. Components of the process included community input, staff input, City Council visions, staff plans, City Council affirmation, staff execution, City Council evaluation and staff adjustments. He stated that there was a cultural code that entailed group skills of building safety in setting aside status, sharing vulnerability and establish purpose. He provided examples of cultural codes.

Effective board governance with Q&A - Dr. Willingham covered the fundamentals of effective board governance. It included hearing the vision, set priorities and staff implementation. The strengths and weaknesses must be known and work as a team. Governance was defined as a group oversight, meeting needs, organization, organize leadership, and vision. Leadership was defined as setting and evaluating goals for the future, and stive personally. Dr. Willingham explained the governance pyramid that had levels of relational, operational, systems, and strategic. He reviewed the Athenian Code as leaving the place better than what it was. He explained about caring about board governance and leadership. He stated that it would eliminate ambiguity and uncertainty for the board and stakeholders. It would also hold each member to higher standards and to disagree without being disagreeable. Dr. Willingham identified major governance challenges. Challenges included the absence of a clear mission and vision, last minute agendas, board members focusing on management instead of governance, and lack of a good process. Mayor Joven understood the challenge of the board members who seek power through a put down and gave an example. It was important to disseminate information and discuss without any put downs. Mayor Joven stated it was very important to have no suppression of opinions or ideas. Council member Willis stated it began with respect. She stated that there would be differences with opinions but be respectful to each other and employees. Two great challenges to overcome was the CAVE men and articulate incompetents. Effective board governance provided a healthy deliberation and provide what, why and how on the philosophy and policy. Dr. Willingham reviewed and the five areas of responsibility for the board. The areas included external communicators, internal communicators, fiduciary overseers, policy developer and information systems overseer. He

reviewed in detail each area. The Council discussed in groups good effective governance and shared the views. Their views included communication, preparedness for meetings, courage in exposing opinions, effective management systems information, council with experience, and reflect views of districts with a balance of overall city. The Council also discussed growing governance. Their views included building relationships with other entities, routine and long-term planning, and trust with unity. Mayor Joven wanted to develop the board's relationships as each were unique personalities but very critical.

There was a short break at 10:16 a.m. – 10:22 a.m.

Pre-interview questions report - Dr. Willingham provided Council with questions to answer prior to the retreat. He reviewed each of the questions and the responses to each of the questions. Responses to progress with recent goals included promoting downtown, building the convention center and address the infrastructure issues. The responses to change about the city were accountable for citizens, become business friendly, more parks, city family friendly and an atmosphere for the youth. Council identified the following on the SWOT analysis:

Strengths: oil and conservative budget

Weaknesses: dependent on oil, customer service, bidding process, lack of forward thinking and communicating and controlling owe narrative.

Opportunity: expand partnerships, good training to promote from within the city, attract retail, diversity revenue

Threats: dependance on oil and gas

Goals for the next ten years included sports complex, proactive with water services and a developed Downtown. The most needs to be added was a sports complex. The most needs improved was the water resource, infrastructure, and the quality of life. The short-term goals identified were recruit for Downtown, sports complex and renovate the Water Treatment Plant. The midterm goals (2-5 years) were the fire station, traffic flow, housing for the underserved area and the Water Treatment Plant renovated. The long-term goals (five years and beyond) were Loop 338 functioning well, improved city offices, strategic planning in place for each area of the city.

Council identified agreements and big gaps in agreement. Things in agreement included the Water Treatment Plant, retail, general infrastructure, building Council relationships, downtown family friendly, and sports complex. Gaps in agreement identified were funding, quality of life with needs versus wants, when and what to take to voter approval and when to take a hit.

Council recessed for lunch at 11:34 a.m. – 12:14 p.m.

Aspirational reputational drivers - The Council identified reputational drivers for the City. Drivers included hub for energy, center for recreational activities, family friendly with affordable housing, enhance medical hub, great quality of life to attract young people, education opportunities, downtown destination and mutual aid with first responders to lead and train surrounding areas.

Mr. Willingham presented Council to answer HARD questions. The Council responded to the HARD questions: What was Council hopeful about? Answers included not be stagnant, work together, constantly move forward, meaningful ways to address needs of community with buy in, and develop safe and attractive community; What was Council afraid? Answers included funding, failing, staff retention, recruiting, and training, identify and address all critical infrastructure needs, accommodate diversity of citizens, not failing, obtaining revenue and diversification; What roadblocks we face? Answers included public perception, economy meeting budget, unfunded mandates from state, lack of vision, communication and lack of pride in community; and What needs to die? Answers included committees, negative perceptions, egos, and competition with Permian Basin.

Discussion of pressing needs. Council identified the pressing needs of the citizens. Needs included clean up the city, funding: Water Treatment Plant, critical infrastructure, retain employees, and working with citizens to meet their needs while focusing on the city as a whole, securing future water sources and accountability.

There was no other business, the retreat adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC
City Secretary

Javier Joven
Mayor