

**TOWN OF SILER CITY**

The Siler City Town Board of Commissioners met in special session on **Saturday, November 22, 2014** at 9:00 a.m. in the Police Department Conference Room.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Michael Constantino, Larry Cheek, John Grimes, Lewis Fadely, Bill Haiges, and Tony Siler

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Cindy Bray and Thomas Price

**TOWN STAFF PRESENT:** Town Manager Bryan Thompson and Town Clerk Jenifer Everage

**GUEST PRESENT:** Lydian Altman, UNC School of Government Facilitator and Dianne Reid, President of Chatham County Economic Development

The following notes were prepared by Facilitator Lydian Altman:

**Retreat Objectives:**

- To recognize our successes over the last two years.
- To assess the implications of upcoming changes in our community.
- To outline a vision, mission, and values for the town

**Most Proud Of:**

- Certification of the 18-acre Megasite (June 2014), the first in NC
- Acceptance, embracement of our demographic diversity
- National Night Out (crime presentation event): participation by 10 communities
- Staff is meeting challenges with aggressive zeal
- Perseverance of our community members; they choose to stay here to live despite economic hard times
- Restoration of Braxton field through all private funds and engagement of Hispanic community
- Cooperative relations between Siler City, Pittsboro, and Chatham County

**Anticipated Changes – Summary:**

**Short-term (next 18 months)**

- Adjusting to new management style (after retirement of long-time manager)
- Change in state funding policies (loss of \$100,000 in privilege license fees due to legislative actions)
- Methods of communication by general public impacts the way we get our messages out, how much content, and approach (messages remain fact-based, however)
- Low level of understanding by public about town actions
- New county commissioners. We don't know their priorities.
- Will we get county-wide zoning?
- What will it take to attract a tenant?
- Develop plans to offer incentives, extend/upgrade infrastructure, implement Appearance Commission recommendations

Medium-term (18-36 months)

- Water supply and allocation, esp. for Megasite tenant
- Must be regional application, partnership
- Technical expertise on staff, Board
- Relationships to be developed
- Changing environmental regulations, EPA? technologies, policies, dealing with opposition groups
- Skilled workforce and training for manufacturing skills sets. What are the skills needed?
- Explore with other communities
- Work with community college to offer appropriate curriculum
- Changing views of state policy makers. Big unknown in next legislative session

Long-term (3-5 years)/ Continuous (ongoing)

- Town personnel: pending retirements of key personnel. Need succession plan?
- Growing desire of people to live in walkable communities
- Placement of 421 corridors (DOT)
- Shrinking pool of available funding through taxes, fees, grants
- Aging infrastructure
- Water & sewer
- Lack of broadband as complete coverage
- Plan for Megasite tenant
- Need to adjust views and attitudes. Manufacturing can be a good way to earn a living.
- Demographic shifts. White and black population is aging. Fastest growing segment is young Hispanics.
- How do we reach out and include?
- Involve in civic fabric of Siler City?
- Impact/uncertainty of immigration policy

What aspects of our daily life do we value and want to maintain?

- Small town feel: personal connections, conversations, willingness to help one another
- Safe: Top 50 in NC
- Generosity, self-help and support (Community Resource)
- Welcoming, tolerance and acceptance, forgiveness, inclusiveness in decision-making
- Rooted in shared history
- Industrious; hard-working
- Community involvement

What is our vision of the future?

- Vibrant downtown: work, live, play
- Welcoming, diverse, community of choice
- Economic growth, improved infrastructure
- Manufacturing and supporting businesses

- Spectrum of upgraded housing options
- Redevelopment, in fill
- Destination, tourism
- Hub: transportation network; heart of NC
- Shared vision: town and other local governments
- Content, professional, skilled city employees
- Health care campus-like setting, adequate opportunities

What is city government's role in achieving this vision?

- Provide core services: safety, infrastructure, parks and recreation
- Lead and demonstrate vision: governance, oversight, policies
- Create framework that ensures quality of life that reflects Siler City values and is accessible to all
- Education and communication with resident about services, constraints, vision, roles of public-private

Proposed VISION STATEMENT:

Siler City is a safe, prosperous, and vibrant community where diversity, innovation and education drive economic success in a globally competitive society.

Proposed MISSION STATEMENT:

To advance a framework for our success through balances governance, dynamic partnerships, and an engaged community.

We want to use this VISION and MISSION as a touchstone for our decisions and actions.

NEXT STEPS

December 17, 2014      9:00-11:30 am      Police Training Room

1. Share this work (and the process for developing) with department directors.
  - a. What do they think of this work?
  - b. Can they affirm? Is there something more to add?
  - c. What role might departments and employees play in furthering this vision?

We are open to being influenced by their feedback but the final decision and adoption rests with the Council.

January 10, 2015      8:30 am - 12:30 pm      TBD

2. Jointly (with department directors) develop goals that state our desired future more specifically.
3. Once goal areas are established:
  - a. What do you currently look like in these areas? (NOW)
  - b. How would you describe this town if it were the best it can possibly be [in these areas]? (BEST)

- c. If our Best things were achieved, how would our town be different? (OUTCOME)
- d. What new boundaries or directives exist that guide or limit your work? e.g., existing plans financial constraints, etc.

What actions or decisions must we make now to ensure the future we desire? (ACTION STEPS)

Evaluation of the Day

What worked well?

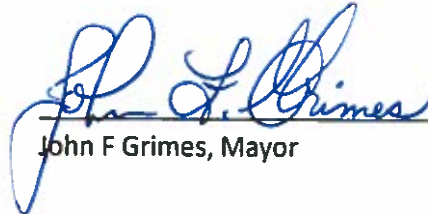
- Discussion guidelines helped me listen more purposefully and carefully
- Achieved our state goals. We got farther than I thought we would.
- Demonstrated respect for one another
- Had candid talk
- Liked the breakout sessions. Easy to talk; avoided group think
- Diane's presence was a tremendous contribution

What we might do differently next time

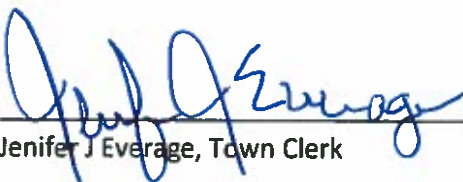
- Continue to include Diane, if she is available.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM

  
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John F Grimes, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Jenifer J Everage, Town Clerk

