

LAKELAND CITY COMMISSION

Strategic Planning Retreat February 8, 2023

The Lakeland City Commission met for the second day of the Strategic Planning Retreat at the RPFC. Mayor Bill Mutz and Commissioners Chad McLeod, Bill Read, Stephanie Madden, Sara McCarley, Mike Musick, and Sam Simmons were present. City Manager Shawn Sherrouse, Finance Director Mike Brossart, City Attorney Palmer Davis, and City Clerk Kelly Koos were present along with consultant Dr. Craig Collins of Sterling Creative Consultants.

Dr. Collins called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Innovation Show and Tell - Emily Colon, Deputy City Manager; Scott Bishop, Interim Assistant General Manager Lakeland Electric

Emily Colon reviewed different innovations throughout the City and Smart City Initiatives.

Emerging Technology Where are we now? - Scott Bishop

Update on solar. 50 solar customers. It is really a variable resource. There is opportunity cost with solar.

Prosumer - consumer who is also a producer of energy.

Education and engagement of customers will be everything going forward.

Carbon Sequestration - LE was working to solve the climate concern without creating an economic concern.

Commission Discussion:

- Infrastructure to prepare for EVs. LE installs infrastructure as roads are built. They will do the same for EV infrastructure. They may have to shift loads around or build additional transmission lines to accommodate EV charging stations.
- Block Energy Innovation: TECO has some now and LE is trying to learn from them.
- Protection from overbuilding: When LE gets the request, they first engineer the plans. We also require some upfront payment to help cover costs. The new development must have a specific return, or the developer has to help with construction or commit to a specific number of years as a customer.
- Solar (25%): LE gets credit in the public power pool for 25% of the documented solar. That is because of the variability of solar power.
- Solar ROI: Fifty customers a month are adding solar. Customers need to ensure they have new roofs before adding solar. The ROI is 15 years. If a roof needs to be replaced in 5-years, the solar investment is lost.
- LE knows a customer is producing power with solar through the meter.

- Small Module Reactor: The design has been approved and ready for construction.
- Green Hydrogen: Surplus solar can produce hydrogen, with electrolyzed water, which burns with an exhaust of steam.

Grants - Emily Colon, Deputy City Manager

- Departments have been handling their grants in silos.
- FY22 all grant money received (Federal, State, and Nonprofit) \$153,705,865.
- Lakeland now has a dedicated staff member working in the Office of Innovation and Strategy, Kelly Kautz.
- Lakeland now has eCivis which does grant research, application tracking, and project/grant financial tracking.
- Bipartisan infrastructure law - federal funding will distribute over the next 5 years to local and state agencies. They will offer discretionary and formula grants.

Commission Discussion:

The grant employee (Kelly Kautz) will coordinate with departments and help coordinate grants with departments. She will also help coordinate interdepartmental grants.

Ms. Kautz will rely on the subject matter expert (SME) when applying for grants. She will need to work with the departments for those grants.

Grant tracking will fall to individual departments.

Grant funds make projects possible that otherwise may go undone for lack of funding. Eventually the City might want a second grants person but not yet.

Target Area 5: Parks and Recreation

Munn Park Revitalization - Shawn Sherrouse, City Manager

- Shawn Sherrouse reviewed string lights, drip lights, Nighttime Buena Markets, and then canned tuna concerts, LDDA provided 6 more events.
- Other efforts: sidewalk expansion has brought a positive response and parklets have been popular too.
- Munn Park itself is still underutilized by the public. It is a 100% passive public park. That brings issues. During July he went on a public speaking jaunt. The City used a consultant to host 2 public meetings to see what the public wanted to see in Munn Park.
- Pennoni (consultant) asked what would attract folks to the park? Shawn Sherrouse showed photos from parks in Carmel, Indiana.
- Other ideas: Open lawn concept, shade sail structure with nearby concessions, portable stage could go under shade sail structure for outdoor concerts, a small dog park in northwest corner of the park, Parkour park in northeast corner (these are very popular through urban cities), social swings in southeast corner.
- Shawn Sherrouse reviewed the most requested elements and the most requested recreational elements.
- Funding for the Munn Park improvements could begin with the sale of other property identified for a future park.

- If the Commission wanted to close streets and create pedestrian plazas around the park, that would change the design of the park.

Commission Discussion:

- Pressing into the activities and expanding the sidewalks.
- Considering the pedestrian plazas did not mean starting over but rather furthering the effort with Pennoni.
- Staff could look at closing the streets around Munn Park and how they would move people through downtown.
- Keeping the farmer's market
- Food trucks and competition for the downtown restaurants.
- Construction on the dog park near Fire Station #1 was set to begin in 6-months.
- Concessions would attract more people downtown. That would be contracted out rather than add more City staff or responsibility.
- Food trucks vs containers vs permanent building – ask the consultant to help decide which was best.
- MTSU funding was a County function.
- Open event space with natural grass.
- Munn Park has been a central feature of downtown since the 1800s. It is our responsibility to bring it into the next century so it can be utilized and enjoyed by the current citizens and visitors.
- The existing bricks in Munn Park would be used and the fundraising campaign would be reopened.

The consensus of the Commission was to have staff bring back Phase 2 for Munn Park with pedestrian plazas.

Break: 2:54 p.m. - 3:07 p.m.

Dr. Collins introduced Chief Taylor and acknowledged his handling of recent the shooting incident.

Target Area 7: Public Safety

Police Chief Sammy Taylor gave an update on technology dash cams, tasers, virtual reality training goggles, cell phones, interview room solution provides audio/video of interviews, additional body worn cameras (BWC) and tasers with unlimited cloud storage.

Staffing Update: Police recruiting is more like recruiting for a sports team. Load bearing vests, beard policy, and tattoo policy are common questions or concerns from potential new recruits. LPD had 9 current vacancies he was having trouble filling. He did not think, in good conscience, that he should ask for the next 6 officers since he cannot fill the 9 yet.

911 Dispatchers - 39 positions and 6 current vacancies, 3 because folks took other opportunities. He thought they would fill those soon.

They have 10 public safety aids (PSA), and all are full. He expected to lose 2 positions soon.

Update on Cold Case Homicides: There were 5 cold cases over 10 years old. Seven cases open.

Commission Discussion:

- A cold case could be 1-year old or 10-years old.
- Drones: LPD had drones, but a new law took effect January 1 and they are now unusable because they were made in China. LPD will have to go and buy new drones.
- Coverage with drones was limited in Florida.
- Hiring deterrents: Chief Taylor hoped the beard or tattoo policy was not keeping folks from hiring on. He had not heard specifically that it has deterred applicants.
- LPD was still hiring from NYC. Three officers have returned to NYC because of family issues. It was Assistant Chief Lehman's idea to recruit in New York.
- School Resource Officers (SROs). Do SROs have everything they need? Chief Taylor was comfortable with the high schools. The one that keeps him up at night are the elementary schools. He did not think we would have a Uvalde incident here in Lakeland. He would prefer to have SROs at every elementary school. We do not have that.
- Cold Cases: Is there anything else you need to work to resolve the 7 cold cases? LPD solves 84% of all homicides. Lakeland has 6-8 homicides a year.

Mayor Bill Mutz acknowledged Chief Taylor's calm leadership.

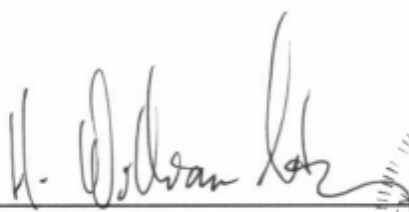
Commissioner Chad McLeod left the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Dr. Collins asked the Commission for any comments before the session adjourned. There were no comments. He encouraged the Commission to have a mid-year report back on this final year.

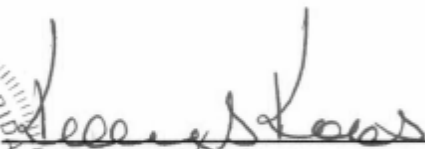
Review of Anticipated Outcomes/Next Steps

Shawn Sherrouse thanked OIS and other staff here. They will go back with Commission direction and bring back responses to the Commission.

The Commission adjourned 3:51 p.m.


H. William Mutz, Mayor




Kelly Koos, City Clerk