

City of Worthington
Community Visioning Committee
Monday, April 27, 2020 - 6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members Present: Cindy Findlay, Beth Sommer, Kathryn Burris, Don Mottley, Matt Lees, Catey Corl, Graham Wood, Austin Mitchell, Laura Abu-Absi, Jon Melchi, Paul Cynkar, Linda Mercadante, and Joe Sherman

Committee Members Absent:

Others Present: Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Management Assistant Ethan Barnhardt, Public Information Officer Anne Brown, Lauren Falcone Poggemeyer Design Group, and 2 visitors were in attendance

Mr. Sherman convened the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

MOTION *Mr. Melchi moved, seconded by Ms. Mercadante to approve the meeting minutes from the Community Visioning Committee meeting of April 14, 2020.*

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sherman explained how he sends an email to the City Council before he gives his monthly updates to them to see if they have any questions. He received questions from them about how this crisis would affect the visioning process and whether it has impacted the Committee's plans. They want to know where the Committee is, and if we are going to be delayed. In his update he discussed how their approach is going to change. Over this past week, he had a couple conversations with Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Falcone and it is his perception that we are getting bogged down with a lot of different things. We need to be thinking about the goal of how to get outreach completed by the end of July and that will be done by a five-pillar approach including the website, signage, webinars, mailers, and social media. Ms. Falcone has said that she would step up on the tactical end of things.

Mr. Mitchell expressed how these are difficult times and he appreciates everyone staying engaged and being open minded to a new pathway forward. There have been a lot of individual efforts to get this over the finish line. He shared how his boss described this as a time for grace and compromise, recognizing how things are a little imperfect. However, this is a time to get to the core of why people love Worthington.

Mr. Lees proceeded to give an update on the communications working team. He has sent out a draft script of the website tutorial for everyone to look at and provide feedback on. He wants to do a show your screen tutorial overview of the main sections of the website and demonstrate some of the capabilities of the engagement tools. This website will be one of the main ways to engage people. We need people to register for the website so when we get ready to create vision statements, people be able to see what is being developed and share their thoughts.

He brought up the idea to partner with a local non-profit such as the Worthington Resource Pantry and to donate a dollar for each new registration to the website. We can try to demonstrate giving back to the community in this time of need. People could be motivated to help raise money for a non-profit. He did question whether or not we can use budget dollars for that. We can try to market that through social media. Multiple members of the committee said they would be willing to donate for the promotion. Ms.

Abu-Absi said she did not know if we could use City dollars to make a charitable donation. Ms. Stewart said she was not aware of an issue if the funds are within the contract amount. The City has a grant program, including grants to the Worthington Resource Pantry and other non-profits. She is not aware of a legal prohibition. The question is if the Committee wants to allocate funds from the budget or fund the donations themselves. Ms. Mercadante expressed she likes the idea of the Committee donating. Ms. Sommer said it is a way of keeping money in Worthington. The Committee discussed ways of collecting money from Committee members

Mr. Lees brought up a recent post on the Worthington Alert Facebook page where a person posted a story from Forbes highlighting Dublin and the redevelopment done at Bridge Park. It discussed the concept of bridging old and new. One person asked why Worthington couldn't do something like this. The post garnered 179 comments over the weekend. Some said Worthington needs to do more development. Some said development should be done in a cautious way. There were a lot of good comments. A few Committee members tried to push conversation over to the Vision Worthington website. We got some registrations out of those efforts and conversations started in the Shape Our Future section of the website. What seems to work online is to put a specific idea out to get reactions. Most people are hesitant to give a brand new idea, but they are willing to react to ideas. We created a new HeardOnTheStreet handle to put content we have heard through our conversations on the website. We could perhaps reach out to some of the people on Facebook who are "social influencers" and encourage them to engage in the conversation. Ms. Findlay asked if anyone has an issue if she messages people who are speaking up to ask them to register. She wondered if the committee needed to be scraping Facebook for feedback. No matter how many people we get to go to the website, there is nothing like the real time back and forth conversations on Facebook. Ms. Abu-Absi wondered if we could create a separate discussion because when she goes to our website, it is hard to find the right place to go. Ms. Falcone encouraged committee members to get on the Facebook group pages and move people over to the website. We need to train people to come over.

Ms. Findlay explained how the committee has emailed some names of social influencers, but she thought that the idea was for individual committee members to reach out to people with a social media presence and encourage them to register for the website and participate. Ms. Mercadante brought up how the pandemic has shifted things and it takes time to adjust. Ms. Findlay said that we would want social media influencers to mention the Committee when they make their own social media posts. Ms. Falcone said that Poggemeyer would work on writing up a consistent message.

Mr. Sherman brought up how the Speakers Bureau spoke with Building Worthington's Future (BWF) before this call. Mr. Cynkar said that he will type up notes and get those to the group. Speaking with BWF, they were a very friendly audience and appreciated the Committee's work so far and invited us back again. The Chamber of Commerce would like to do a Bureau as well as they are meeting virtually. There have also been discussions about speaking to Rotary. He thinks it is the best thing we have going for ourselves right now. He wondered if this eventually translates somehow into a video link that could be sent to people so they could click and see the presentation done in a video format. It could be distributed to a lot of people. Ms. Falcone asked for a list of the groups scheduled by the Speaker's Bureau. Mr. Cynkar discussed how to engage schools because the intent was to reach out to every school in the city to get on their school and PTA agenda. Ms. Findlay said regarding the schools and PTAs, there is an association of all the Worthington PTAs. Mr. Cynkar said it is called the PTA Council with a representative of every school in the district. It is a good group and they look for political advocacy. It would be a good group to go to and get on their agenda. However, half the schools are not in the City of Worthington and he questioned whether

they would they be interested in a discussion about just the city of Worthington. Ms. Findlay suggested that we should ask them to schedule something.

Mr. Oliver, the City's Information Technology Director, asked if he could assist with the technology for the Speaker's Bureau. Mr. Cynkar said they could use help getting this in a webinar format. Mr. Oliver said it could be effective to meet separately in order to figure out best way to do this. There are several ways to do it from a technology perspective. Mr. Cynkar suggested sharing what they have with Mr. Oliver to brainstorm how to do it as a webinar. Ms. Corl brought up using the Teams webinar feature with a formal Q&A.

Ms. Falcone provided an update on the surveys. 17 people have responded to the Visioning Committee applicant survey and 2 have responded to the Council candidate survey. There were definitely bumps in participation after an email was sent out. Ms. Findlay asked when it would be polite to send a reminder to the Council candidates. Ms. Falcone responded that it was time to remind them now. Ms. Findlay asked if responses from the Committee on the draft public survey were sent out. Ms. Falcone explained they might schedule a team meeting for the survey because some questions may change. Ms. Findlay said once we have public survey sent out there was some discussion about when to put it up on the website. Should we save that for the website talk on Wednesday morning? Ms. Falcone suggested doing the SOAR event first before doing the public survey. Ms. Findlay said we want to wait on the public survey to see where we need to push it. We can target the public survey a little better as we get more feedback from the community.

Ms. Stewart explained how she was asked to give an update on the Ohio Health and the Tru hotel developments. Since we are running short on time, she asked if she could provide an email update to the committee. Mr. Sherman recommended sending out an email to help save time.

Ms. Falcone asked if it was City's preference to use Microsoft Teams. Ms. Stewart detailed how we prefer to use teams over Zoom for security reasons. Teams has the option for breakout rooms which is a capability we could use for the SOAR. Ms. Falcone expressed how it is a good idea when doing public input to breakout into groups. Ms. Corl described how Miro is an online whiteboarding tool and she can share more information about using that. Ms. Falcone said we may end up using Teams and then using Miro as a whiteboard. Ms. Corl described how there are ways to manage a conversation because managing a conversation in a video chat can become unwieldy

Ms. Falcone explained how we need to set a date for the SOAR meeting. The committee discussed when to hold the meeting. Ms. Corl asked if there is a reason why we should hold only one SOAR workshop, or if we could run multiple smaller groups that would be easier to manage. Ms. Abu-Absi said she likes that idea given we are all virtual. Having options and smaller groups would be a good thing. Ms. Falcone stated that the SOAR is typically a larger meeting where you will break down into smaller groups. Everyone then comes back at the end and reviews everything. Though things may work differently doing this online. Ms. Findlay asked if Poggemeyer facilitators would be with VC members. Ms. Falcone said that is correct. Ms. Sommer asked how we will know how many people sign up. Ms. Falcone responded we can do an evite to have people register.

Ms. Falcone brought up the discussion about signage, expressing how that it is a great idea. She showed a mockup of the signs. We have discussed doing about 10-20 signs and putting them in Committee member's yard, along the trail, and in front of City buildings. Ms. Findlay said her local quote was \$10 per

sign with no minimum order. Ms. Falcone said that her vendor that Poggemeyer has used quoted 20-yard signs at \$5 per sign. Ms. Findlay wondered if instead of "Share Your Vision" printed on the signs, we asked a provocative question. Mr. Cynkar said in two weeks businesses could be reopening and asked why not make some poster-sized signs to have businesses put in their front doors/windows. Ms. Falcone said we have a quote for that too. It will be cheaper the more we order. We just need to decide who to order from and how many to have printed. Mr. Sherman said to order 25. Ms. Stewart said she did not know what regulations are in place for yard signs that are not related to an election and she would need to look into the sign code before saying they could be placed in yards.

Ms. Sommer asserted that we need to order these signs from a Worthington business. It should not be ordered from a California business. The Committee discussed different vendors in Worthington that could be used. Ms. Sommer said we need to look at using Worthington businesses even if it costs more. Ms. Burris wondered if we work with a local business, whether they would cut their price in exchange for advertising on our website.

Ms. Falcone brought up the idea of doing social media ads. She thinks we could get more traction from posting in the local Facebook pages. Mr. Sherman agreed. Ms. Falcone brought up the need to do another push with multiple blasts, including email, social media, and to personal contacts. We will give you the wording, but you need to reach out to your grassroots group. There was also the idea of doing a postcard mailer with the goals to drive traffic to the website, advertise the public survey, and advertise the public meetings. She said that the cost would be \$2,400 for a mailer to all the households in the city.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.