

OWOSSO CITY COUNCIL

JULY 30, 2012

7:30 P.M.

PRESIDING OFFICER: MAYOR BENJAMIN R. FREDERICK

PRESENT: Mayor Benjamin R. Frederick, Mayor Pro-Tem Cindy S. Popovitch, Councilpersons Loreen F. Bailey, Thomas B. Cook, Michael J. Erfourth, Christopher T. Eveleth and Burton D. Fox.

ABSENT: None.

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION – PROPOSED MASTER PLAN

Assistant City Manager Adam Zettel indicated he was not looking for any action on the proposed Master Plan this evening but simply a presentation. Council will consider a resolution authorizing distribution of the Plan at the next meeting, following approval of the resolution a 63 day comment period will ensue, followed by a public hearing held by the Planning Commission, and finally the Plan will be return to Council for their stamp of approval as the official planning document for the City.

He started his presentation saying the purpose of the plan was to establish a common vision, set of values and organizational culture for the city to function as a road map for the future. The City has not had a master plan per se in the past though significant planning work had been undertaken over the years. The document was based in large part on the 2008 Blue Ribbon Committee Report as well as citizen surveys. Significant public outreach was performed in an effort to develop the most comprehensive plan possible.

He said the Plan was not an effort to reinvent the City but simply an attempt at coalescing a community identity that could be shared by all residents. He went on to detail some of the challenges facing the city and the implementation steps laid out by the Plan to move the City forward.

His hope was that while the Plan would always be a work in progress it would become the guiding document for the future.

The Council took a brief recess at 8:32 p.m. and returned at 8:42 p.m.

Mayor Frederick thanked Mr. Zettel for all of his work as well as the Council members and other members of the community for their work on the Plan.

There was discussion regarding how to integrate the Plan into policy discussions and budget discussions, how to ensure the Plan is consistently consulted in the decision making process at all levels in the organization, using the Plan as a springboard for the development of a larger regional plan, making the Plan the measure for policy and goal setting in the future, developing a checklist to make sure future goals are in line with the Plan, and targeting areas for improvement.

Overall Council seemed pleased with the proposed Plan.

It was noted that few wholesale changes to the final Plan are anticipated at this stage in the process, though changes could be made.

CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Thomas Manke, business owner at 118 South Washington Street, thanked all those that worked on the plan saying it was great to have a document with a stated vision for the City. He went on to say that he was concerned that the plan would foster socialism, more government, and Council intrusion on private property. He said felt that only upper middle class folks were included in the planning process and asked Council to consider those that are needy.

Gary Ballenger, Stewart Street, suggested the City ask the State for more money instead of raising water rates for residents. He wished more citizens would attend City meetings and thanked staff for installing signs near his home to help curb traffic problems.

Mayor Frederick said it was hard to hear comments about Council not understanding the perspective of those with less, saying it completely ignored his background and that of his family. He said he had not forgotten those experiences and had tried hard to work on issues that would help such families using the rental inspection program as an example. He went on to say that he felt the entire Council had done what they could in their official capacities to help those in need.

Councilperson Fox said the car show Sunday was great. He also suggested folks pitch in to take care of issues they see, using his cleaning clogged catch basins as an example.

Mayor Pro-Tem Popovitch said the proposed Master Plan was not just the voice of one sector. Surveys were mailed to all property owners in the City, several hearings were held seeking input from any interested parties, all meetings regarding the Plan were open to the public, and no efforts were made to exclude anyone from the process. She said it would take everyone's involvement to move the community forward.

Councilperson Cook said Council was involved in the perennial struggle to balance good services while keeping costs down and to make sure that all types of comments are heard on issues. He expressed the idea that many times the decisions facing Council are difficult. He thanked those that give input to the Council on the issues facing the City.

Councilperson Erfourth said he has seen and experienced his share during his lifetime and that Council has a responsibility to ensure a certain quality of life for residents, but the community at large has a responsibility to care about fellow citizens and not let them fall through the cracks. He said the community needs to be shorter on talk and longer on action, saying the community needs to look at what we can do instead of waiting for someone else to take care of the problem.

Councilperson Fox said the Farmers Market was great this past weekend with the chair auction being a highlight. He said the auction group reached their \$3,000 target and would be able to purchase one full truck load of food for the local food banks. He said good things are happening.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilperson Eveleth for adjournment at 9:26 p.m.

Motion supported by Councilperson Cook and concurred in by unanimous vote.

Benjamin R. Frederick, Mayor

Amy K. Kirkland, City Clerk