

## Roll Call

A regular work session of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, March 27, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo, Youth Development, and the Foundation for Excellence.

## COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor Bobby Hopewell  
Vice Mayor Don Cooney  
David Anderson  
Erin Knott  
Matt Milcarek  
Shannon Sykes  
Jack Urban

## COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

## Communications

An opportunity was offered for general communications, but none were offered.

## Discussion Items

Discussion items were considered next.

Discussion of Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo, Youth Development, and the Foundation for Excellence

City Manager Ritsema reviewed the agenda for the meeting and provided introductory remarks for a PowerPoint presentation entitled *City Commission Work Session: Shared Prosperity, Youth Development, and the Foundation for Excellence*. A copy of this presentation was filed with the papers for this meeting.

Dr. Tim Ready presented an overview of Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo (SPK) data.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sykes, Dr. Ready discussed the sources of his statistics on poverty. Dr. Ready stated institutional racism needed to be addressed as the country's history of racial discrimination was being perpetuated through its social systems.

In response to a question from Commissioner Urban, Dr. Ready agreed that poverty was concentrated in the City, and he noted some counties had consolidated governments to address this issue.

Assistant City Manager Laura Lam presented the SPK framework, goals, strategic process, and future direction.

Mayor Hopewell reported on the work of the City and the SPK team to facilitate partnerships between agencies and employers.

Vice Mayor Cooney provided information on the SPK's current work with the Kalamazoo Prisoner Reentry Coalition.

Assistant City Manager Lam presented preliminary SPK goals and themes that were emerging from the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 process.

Vice Mayor Cooney discussed the urgent need for an SPK strategy that adapted national best practices to the City's reality and that identified clear goals and metrics to measure progress. Vice Mayor Cooney stated the creation of living-wage jobs and addressing institutional racism needed to be important elements of the strategy.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sykes, Mayor Hopewell indicated the state Department of Corrections was slow to understand the need for them to help prisoners get identification cards prior to release. Mayor Hopewell and Assistant City Manager Lam indicated the work on employment also included efforts to support entrepreneurs.

In response to a question from Commissioner Urban, Mayor Hopewell reported Momentum was working to expand the types of employment opportunities beyond manufacturing jobs. Assistant City Manager Lam noted Momentum was working on adding culinary arts and hospitality services.

In response to questions and concerns from Commissioners Knott and Urban, Deputy City Manager Lam clarified the SPK consultant would use data, including community feedback from the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 (IK2025) process, to develop the strategic plan, while the SPK Coordinator would work to implement the plan.

Commissioner Knott urged staff to move forward with the community engagement responses from IK2025 and not solicit additional public input.

Discussion took place about the need to clarify the roles of the SPK consultant and the SPK Coordinator and the need to move forward with action.

In response to a question from Commissioner Milcarek, Assistant City Manager Lam stated there was a great sense of urgency with the SPK core team to start addressing the problem, and the magnitude of the work to design a plan required a consultant.

In response to questions from Commissioners Sykes and Urban, Assistant City Manager Lam indicated staff and the SPK core team would need to inform the consultant about the community's needs and realities. If the City was not able to find the right person or team for this work the options would be to start over or decide what "Plan B" should be. Assistant City Manager Lam stated the funding available for this work would be determined by the City Commission through the Foundation for Excellence (FFE) allocation process.

Commissioner Sykes indicated the needs in the community were both real and urgent, and she stated women's issues and institutional racism must be addressed in order to adequately address the problem of poverty. Commissioner Sykes identified the YWCA and E-Race as two of the partners the consultants would need to work with.

Commissioner Milcarek suggested it would be beneficial to understand how the SPK plan would be attached to the organizational structure of the

Discussion of Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo, Youth Development, and the Foundation for Excellence (cont'd)

Discussion of Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo, Youth Development, and the Foundation for Excellence (cont'd)

City - which departments would be involved and which elements of the plan the City would expect community partners to address.

The meeting recessed at 7:34 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 7:40 p.m.

Parks and Recreation Director Sean Fletcher and Recreation Program Manager Peter Aerts discussed the Supervised Playground Program.

In response to questions from Commissioners Sykes and Milcarek, Mr. Aerts indicated the new playground sites would have space for 40 children each, and if the need was greater the City could add more staff to each site.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sykes, Director Fletcher expressed a desire for the City to improve in the area of data collection but noted it was difficult to get hard data on the community impact of programs.

Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Patrick McVery discussed the results from the 2016 All Things Possible program and plans for implementing the program again in 2017.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sykes, Mr. McVery stated the All Things Possible would run for eight weeks, but he was looking at ways to extend the program into the school year. Mr. McVery indicated KidNet would continue to be a partner but would take more of a back seat role with the program.

Director Fletcher and Karen Carlisle from Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) reviewed the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Ms. Carlisle announced the 2017 SYEP would include vocational/technical programs leading to credentials through a partnership with the Van Buren Career and Technical Center. Ms. Carlisle indicated there would be a career fair at the end of the summer, and an opportunity for some young people to continue their employment into the school year.

Mayor Hopewell noted YOU had been a strategic partner with the City for years, and he remarked on the community impact of the SYEP. Mayor Hopewell strongly urged Ms. Carlisle to make the vocational/technical program happen.

In response to a question from Commissioner Anderson, Director Fletcher stated the proposed program would cost an additional \$750,000. Director Fletcher also indicated staff was working to include drivers training in the SYEP and to create connections with All Things Possible and The Kalamazoo Promise.

Discussion of Next Steps

City Manager Ritsema reviewed the proposed next steps.

Commissioner Sykes expressed support for funding the youth programs presented by staff, but she expressed concern about allocating FFE dollars without having the FFE governing structure in place.

City Manager Ritsema indicated the FFE Memorandum of Understanding committed \$10 million for aspirational projects in 2017, and he explained funding for 2018 would be based more on FFE governing structure.

Mayor Hopewell noted the City Attorney would provide a status update on the FFE structure at the April 10<sup>th</sup> work session. Mayor Hopewell also noted the April 10<sup>th</sup> work session would include a presentation of online tools that could be used to track and report program metrics. Mayor Hopewell stated the City's grants coordinator was working hard to leverage the FFE dollars with funds from other sources.

Commissioner Urban remarked on the need for online tools to be intuitive and accessible to people with little inside knowledge of the City's programs and operations. Commissioner Urban enquired about the plans for raising the larger FFE amount and the City's role in that fundraising effort.

Deputy City Manager Jeff Chamberlain led a discussion of potential topics for future work sessions, and Commissioners suggested the following topics:

- Strategies for Addressing Potential Future Reductions in Federal Funding (Sykes)
- Medical Marihuana (Milcarek)
- Complete Streets (Milcarek)
- Single Hauler Trash (Milcarek)
- Code Enforcement (Milcarek, Knott)
- Affordable Housing (Milcarek, Knott, Urban)
- The Built Environment (urban design, federal funds, affordable housing – Knott)
- The Michikal/Stadium Drive/Michigan Avenue/West Main Street intersection – joint meeting with MDOT and Kalamazoo Township (Urban)
- The City's Organizational Culture (Anderson)
- Making Amtrak schedule more commuter friendly (Urban)

Mayor Hopewell remarked on the need to prioritize these topics and reminded Commissioners to keep staff capacity in mind.

Commissioner Sykes noted that some Commissioners had requested a work session on code enforcement almost a year ago and suggested the next work session be in on this topic.

Discussion took place about the April 24<sup>th</sup> work session. By consensus the City Commission decided not to meet on April 24<sup>th</sup> due to scheduling conflicts.

Deputy City Manager Chamberlain indicated staff would use this discussion to develop a schedule of work sessions.

Discussion of Next Steps (cont'd)

Discussion of Work Session Topics

## Citizen Comments

When an opportunity was given for general citizen comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

Zach Lassiter, City resident, suggested the Commission host its work sessions in a larger room with an audio system.

## Commissioner Comments

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments and concerns from City Commissioners.

Commissioner Sykes thanked staff and Commissioners for a good meeting and thanked citizens for attending.

## Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling  
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on June 5, 2017

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor  
Dated: June 5, 2017

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