

City of Worthington
Community Visioning Committee
Tuesday, May 12, 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 no visitors in attendance

Mr. Sherman convened the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

MOTION *Mr. Mottley moved, seconded by Ms. Findlay to approve the meeting minutes from the Community Visioning Committee meeting of April 27, 2020.*

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sherman explained how Mr. Mottley received a message from Jack Conrath where he brought up questions about diversity. The Committee will have more opportunities to have conversations about this.

Mr. Lees gave an update on website registrations, detailing how since April 24 when we started pushing people to the site we have had over 60 new registration, 881 visits to the website, and 68 people who engaged and took some action on the website. On May 4 we had 121 visitors, which was the day we started the Facebook ads. Those ads are a good investment and we are seeing some increased traffic from them. There have been 140 visitors to the What We've Heard Page and 40 people have contributed in some way. We now have 30 people that are registered for the SOAR event. He expressed that his overall message is that we are making progress, but we will have to work to keep moving in the right direction. When posting on Facebook, that is when we see an uptick of activity. We need to keep pushing. It will be incremental growth to get people involved.

Ms. Findlay asked about the people who are supposed to be "Listening" on the website. Mr. Lees said he is on website consistently and that anyone on the Committee can do it. He encouraged everyone to go out onto the website once a week and take a look at it. This is the way we are actually getting the feedback. Ms. Brown said she would be sending out another E-newsletter specifically about the SOAR event. Mr. Lees encouraged committee members to keep reaching out to the Worthington neighborhood pages and to keep posting on their personal Facebook pages. Ms. Mercadante said she has tried to post on Colonial Hills page, but the link does not copy well, and she asked for a better link. Ms. Falcone said there are over 3,000 Worthington residents on these Facebook pages. It is a huge group of people we do not want to miss out on. Mr. Mottley brought up idea that some communities may have internal email lists to send information out to. Mr. Melchi brought up how City Council members have Facebook pages and we could encourage them to ask people to participate. Those folks also have large email lists that they should send communications through.

Mr. Barnhardt provided an overview of the VisionWorthington.org website and the various tools that the website utilizes.

Mr. Lees commented on how the What We've Heard page is important and allows people to react to ideas. We are continuing the registration promotion with the donation to Worthington Resource Pantry. In June we may want to move to another contest, we had talked about doing gift cards previously. Anyone who has registered could be entered in a drawing. Mr. Cynkar stated that if we are giving out gift cards, he would much rather the money go to Worthington Resource Pantry. He asked why we do not just keep up what we are doing. Ms. Falcone said that gift cards could generate interest and could be a good idea, maybe it could be tied to the public survey. Mr. Sherman said to keep the ad going for the Worthington Resource Pantry.

Mr. Cynkar explained how there are about 35 organizations on the Speaker's Bureau list. They are currently reaching out one at a time to find out their preferred method of communication. They will be conducting their second interactive session with Building Worthington's Future tomorrow night. Ms. Paugh with the Worthington Chamber has offered to put out any information we want to share in their newsletters. Mr. Butterfield with Rotary said that there were 23 out of 70 who lived or worked in Worthington and questioned the efficiency of presenting to them. He suggested reaching out to individuals with notes and links to the website. Mr. Sherman has direct contact with WARD. They have a session set up with Project Community Park Worthington on Thursday night. The Lions Club would like to get our information and if they have questions, they will ask. Talking with Ms. Gnezda with the schools, she explained it is a chaotic time and suggested waiting until June. There are quite a few more groups on the list and they are happy to reach out to anyone else and ask what format they would like to take on this.

He explained how they have created a PowerPoint to use to create a webinar. There are three versions, a live version, a Zoom PowerPoint with narration, and a voice over with audio that people can watch on their own time. They are very happy with how it has ended up. Mr. Sherman said Council will get a copy of slides being used. Mr. Mitchell asked about the school's request to delay into June. Mr. Cynkar explained there was no negative context, but they are dealing with remote graduation, the end of school, retirements, finance issues, and how to get school started back up. He shared how Ms. Gnezda told him that it is hectic and requested waiting until June which could be a better time. He explained that if people want to be part of Speaker's Bureau or sit in on a session, he can share an invite with them. He would like there to be one or two backups in case there are scheduling conflicts. Ms. Falcone said with Speaker's Bureau interacting with public, it is more informal and can get one on one time to interact.

Ms. Findlay shared how the the public survey draft has been sent out to everyone and she believes is just about ready to go out. If anyone has any comments, please get them back to her by the 15th. There is no reason to wait on the survey, we can repeatedly promote it. The survey is supposed to march hand in hand with the website. They have included a lot of questions on the website as well. The public survey is streamlined without too many questions but includes the critical questions.

Ms. Falcone shared how the stakeholder surveys that were sent out have had responses from five of the Council candidates and thirteen of the Visioning Committee applicants. Those who have responded took their time with lots of open ended responses. She expressed how she wished there were more responses from the pool of committee applicants. She hopes that those people go over to the website and have discussions. The survey might get people to go to the VisionWorthington.org website.

Ms. Findlay described how the signage should be ready to be picked up tomorrow afternoon. She will work with Mr. Mitchell to get them deployed at the Farmer's Market this weekend. We will need to talk to the Parks Department folks before putting signs on the path. Ms. Stewart noted that if we are hanging a banner on fences or putting a sign in front of the Municipal Building we will need to get a permit. For the Village Green signs we will need to schedule that with the Parks Department. Ms. Findlay said she intends to put signs out at the flats near the high school and at the park off Wilson Bridge. For the Village Green sign, she has called around and the quote from Signarama was quite a bit higher than Franklin Imaging. She said that Mr. Mitchell has talked with Nina Parini about placing signage at the Farmer's Market. Mr. Mitchell noted she was really supportive and welcomed the opportunity to include the Vision Worthington signs. She said that she would take whatever signs we gave place them in high traffic location for the Farmer's Market. As far as engaging downtown business, we are taking a wait and see approach to see how reopening goes. We do not want to put anything additional on the plates of business owners.

Ms. Stewart shared how she wanted to mention there have been questions from City Council members and the City Manager trying to understand what the Committee is doing terms of engagement and the original scope of services in the current environment. She is unsure whether that will be raised Monday at the City Council meeting to better understand where things are at with the scope. Mr. Sherman brought up how he received a nice note from Mr. Greeson to talk about that. Ms. Stewart noted that many Councilmembers have been hands off and are unsure where the Committee is taking this in the new virtual environment we are working in. It is not negative, but rather more about not knowing where things are going with all this.

Ms. Brown circled back around to the discussion about the survey and the listing of the neighborhoods in Worthington. There were several that were not used by community members and she recommend trimming down that list to focus on the top dozen that the community more easily recognizes.

Ms. Stewart discussed the potential for changes to the question in the survey pertaining to City services. Ms. Falcone stated on housing we want to make sure to have apartment complexes on there.

Ms. Falcone overviewed the five pillars of the marketing plan that Mr. Lees and Ms. Findlay have taken the lead on. The progress has been Incremental, but we have been thrilled with the response since May 1st. She cannot stress enough the importance of tapping into personal email distribution lists and the community Facebook pages; they are huge. Utilizing these resources falls back on the committee members and is pretty easy to do. You may be asked to put signage into businesses when everything is up and running or encouraged to place signs in front yards. As for the banners, if we can put them up somewhere during this time period to get people to the website, that would be great. Pillar three of the plan outlines online public input and the Speakers Bureau; the more people we get involved, the better off it will be. For the SOAR workshop, Ms. Corl has created Miro online whiteboards where participants will be able to write out their ideas and put what they want in each category, then move them around and rank them. She expressed how the SOAR will be conducted successfully online. The plan is to hold a dry run with the communications working team next Wednesday. Signups for the four SOAR events are going great with over 30 people already signed up. Pillar four is for social media and reaching out to social media influencers.

Mr. Mitchel asked the process for how we track the people we have contacted. Ms. Falcone explained how it is important to get their names and email addresses. We also need to look at age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and how they heard about us. Mr. Cynkar asked if asking these questions makes

people more hesitant to participate. Ms. Falcone emphasized how we need to make sure we talk to a variety of people with different backgrounds and demographics. She is afraid if we do not gather the information now, we would not get it. After seeing resident concerns and hearing from key person interviews, she thinks it is important and we need to talk about the backgrounds of the committee members to show we are diverse population. Mr. Cynkar expressed how we need to be careful, because Worthington is not a diverse community and we will not have information different than that. He does not want to see us be set up for failure when we are limited by the demographics of the residents of Worthington. Mr. Melchi emphasized that data is important to have. Ms. Abu-Absi asked if those questions could be put at the end of public survey. Mr. Sherman suggested doing that and sending out those changes to the Committee.

Ms. Falcone said she does not exactly know how to get people involved over Instagram. Maybe it needs to involve taking pictures while actually physically walking around Worthington. It is just one more way to interact with people, but she is not sure if the population is going to interact on Instagram.

The last pillar is the mailer to be sent out promoting the website, public events, and the Survey Monkey. Mr. Lees is working on the design, but we need the name of a local firm that the Committee wants to use. We need to set the dates for the focus groups and decide how to structure them.

Mr. Cynkar explained how Mr. Conrath asked if we are reaching out to small businesses. We should not forget that the Chamber represents small businesses in the area. If we wanted to have a small business event, the Chamber would join with us with that, so let us use that resource. Mr. Sherman said that would tie back to economic development and small businesses. Ms. Findlay said that a joint effort between the Worthington Partnership and the Chamber would be great. Ms. Falcone noted they would know who is best to participate in that focus group. Ms. Stewart recommended having the City's Economic Development Director David McCorkle in that conversation.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.