

MINUTES

DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Annual Retreat
January 25, 2018; 9:00am – 5:00pm
January 26, 2018; 9:00am – 3:00pm
Brasstown Valley

Mayor Garrett called the Annual Retreat of the Decatur City Commission to order at 9:00am on Thursday, January 25, 2018.

Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Drake, Smith and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Merriss; Deputy City Manager Saxon; Assistant City Managers Arnold, Junger and Menne; City Attorney Bryan Downs; Chief – Civic Engagement, Education & Communication Harris; and, Planning Director Threadgill.

The meeting was recessed at 5:00pm.

Mayor Garrett called the meeting to order at 9:00am on Friday, January 26, 2018.

Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Drake, Smith and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Merriss; Deputy City Manager Saxon; Assistant City Managers Arnold, Junger and Menne; City Attorney Bryan Downs; Chief – Civic Engagement, Education & Communication Harris; and, Planning Director Threadgill.

At 12:30pm, on a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers, second by Commissioner Drake and Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers and Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye¹”, the City Commission entered into an Executive Session for personnel matters.

At 1:05pm, on a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Mayor pro tem Powers and Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers and Commissioners Drake, Smith and Walsh voting “aye”, the City Commission closed the Executive Session and reconvened the regular meeting².

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

A copy of the report of the proceedings follows and is incorporated into these minutes.

Peggy Merriss
Acting City Clerk

¹ Commissioner Walsh joined the Executive Session in progress.

² Minutes of the Executive Session are provided in a separate document.

City of Decatur Commission Retreat
Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa
January 25-26, 2018

In Attendance

Patricia Garrett
Kelly Walsh
Scott Drake
Tony Powers
Brian Smith

Peggy Merriss
Andrea Arnold
Hugh Saxon
David Junger
Linda Harris

Lyn Menne
Bryan Downs
Angela Threadgill

The key objectives of this retreat were to:

- Orient new members by continuing to get to know each other by understanding each person's Strengths using Strengthfinders 2.0 and Workplace Big Five Assessment.
- Review progress towards the vision and goals established at the 2016 retreat
- Review progress towards established 2017 Priorities
- Conduct a SWOT analysis of the COD as a planning tool for 2018.
- Identify current City of Decatur opportunities that the commission will address in 2018

1. Team Building with Strengthfinders 2.0® and Workplace Big Five Assessments

The retreat began with all members getting to know each other better through the Strengthfinders 2.0. and the Workplace Big Five Assessments.

2. 2020 Vision for City of Decatur

The team reviewed their 2020 Vision, created in 2016, to assess progress to date.

- More affordable housing
- A new city park
- System of bike lanes
- Connected network of pedestrians
- Balance construction mix
- More public art
- Reputation of tackling hard issues, of coming together
- More downtown grocery options
- City of Decatur and City Schools of Decatur working well together – improved relationship
- Taxes (86%/14%)
- Thriving East Decatur mixed use community
- A strong Dekalb County – good relationships with elected delegates
- More engagement from wider cross section of the community
- Achievement of annexation goals

3. 2017 Priorities Review

The team reviewed and updated progress towards 2017 Priorities.

4. City of Decatur SWOT Analysis

The team created a SWOT analysis as a planning tool for 2018 priorities (attached)

5. 2018 Priorities/Workplan

The commission identified priorities and areas of interest to pursue in 2018 (attached)

City of Decatur – SWOT Analysis

Strengths	
<p>Strong staff leadership</p> <p>Strong commission leadership</p> <p>Engaged Community</p> <p>Financially secure</p> <p>Plans that we use that guide us in decision making</p> <p>We have a mission, vision and goals</p> <p>We are ethical and transparent</p> <p>Desirable place to live, work and play</p> <p>Well educated community/strong school system that values learning and education</p> <p>Our location – access to transit, can drive anywhere easily, walkable and bike-able</p> <p>PAYT program</p> <p>Sustainability focus</p> <p>Open to new ideas</p> <p>Vibrant neighborhood and downtown districts</p>	<p>Attractive public art – streets, trees, trash/recycle cans look cool</p> <p>Infrastructure is also public art</p> <p>Community is seen as role model community</p> <p>Strong public safety</p> <p>DHA</p> <p>High level of trust</p> <p>High Retention of employee</p> <p>Attractive place to work</p> <p>Strong leadership by Women on staff and commission</p> <p>Opportunities for advancement</p> <p>Creative and innovative</p> <p>Using partnerships</p> <p>Good balance/ mix city commission</p> <p>Commitment to inclusion</p>
Weaknesses	
<p>Tax base ratio</p> <p>Loss of income diversity</p> <p>Mix of different retail</p> <p>Loss of institutional memory</p>	<p>Unknown unknowns</p> <p>Financial resources to achieve goals – technology relative to community expectations</p> <p>Recognition of past context (s)</p> <p>Fragility of external relationships</p>
Opportunities	
<p>United Methodist Children Home – WOW!</p> <p>Economic Development – East Decatur Station, East Lake LCI, Office Recruitment (use for quality of life)</p> <p>Affordable Housing – workforce, senior, affordable</p> <p>GDOT Relationship</p> <p>CDS/School Board Relationship</p> <p>MARTA Relationship</p>	<p>Relationship with PATH and connect to Belt Line</p> <p>Relationship with County Annexation</p> <p>Shared parking deck</p> <p>Task Force for Global Health expansion</p> <p>2020 Strategic Planning Process</p>

Threats	
Lack of diverse housing (“affordable”) – mismatch between demand and supply Transportation – congestion, connectivity, ped/bike/car sharing Parking – what is the experience? Free? Paid? locals/visitors School impact increasing Development – where, what type, how much?	Municipalization, annexation by others Community engagement Federal/State Policy Economic correction Rent increases – external corporate owners Loss of institutional knowledge

2018 City of Decatur Priorities

2018 Priorities/Workplan - Next Steps/Actions	Timing
Social Equity Staff and community Advisory Boards to research and report back recommendations on social equity issues.	Q3 2018
Greenspace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to look for opportunities to expand via sharing or acquiring greenspace. Develop evaluation criteria for accepting open space. Present to commission for approval. <p>Note: Revisit timing of potential greenspace and facilities master planning.</p>	Ongoing Q2 2019
Tree Canopy Ordinance Present amendments (Article 9) recommended in work session for consideration.	Q2
Downtown Development Work session with DDA Board	Q3
Impact Fees Phase II Provide recommendation to City Commission	Q4
United Methodist Children’s Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a robust community engagement process Mid-point check-ins Adoption of plan 	Q1-Q2 Q2 Q3

2018 Priorities/Workplan - Next Steps/Actions	Timing
City of Decatur School - Conduct joint work session with CSD	Q2 or Q4
Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct 5-6 Open Office Hour programs • Create RFP for website update 	2018 Q3/Q4
Community Advisory Boards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work session with 4 advisory boards • Fill any vacancies • Create social opportunity to connect with advisory board members 	Q1-Q4
Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a housing summit program plan (to include RS17 and cottages courts) • Hold housing summit 	Q1 Q3
Technology – Smart Cities Work session	Q3
Mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Transportation Plan • Workplan and process to outline prioritizing requests • Atlanta Avenue improvements plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financing plan ○ Design plan • Commerce Drive cycle track • DeKalb County Interconnectivity Transit Plan 	Q3 Q4 Q1 Q4 Q3 2018
Hotel/Motel Tax Pursue increasing the hotel/motel tax from 7% to 8%	Q1
Succession Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue offering opportunities for staff development • Management team /city commission lunch 	Ongoing Q2