

**City of Oelwein, Iowa
Goal Setting Report
December 18, 2015**

Mayor:

Peggy Sheretts

City Council:

Kevin Stickle

Ben Weber

Lou Ann Milks

Renee Cantrell

Matt Weber

Paul Ryan (out-going)

Darin Christiansen (in-coming)

City Staff:

Jamie Letzring, City Administrator

Ron Van Veldhuizen, City Attorney



Facilitated by:

Jeff Schott

Institute of Public Affairs

University of Iowa

**CITY OF OELWEIN, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
2015**

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CITY OF OELWEIN, IOWA

GOAL SETTING SESSION

2015

Introduction

The City of Oelwein requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the city with goal setting. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns, potential new initiatives/programs/policies and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness.
2. Conduct a goal-setting session with the elected officials.
3. Conduct a preliminary session with department heads.
4. Preparation of this final report.

Goal Setting Work Session

City Council Members and the Mayor held a work session conducted by the IPA on December 18, 2015. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Peggy Sheretts, Council Members Kevin Stickle, Lou Ann Milks, Renee Cantrell, Matt Weber and Council Member-elect Darin Christiansen. Also in attendance and participating were City Administrator Jamie Letzring and City Attorney Ron Van Veldhuizen.

A preliminary session with department heads was held earlier on December 18th. In attendance and participating in that meeting were City Administrator Jamie Letzring, Deputy Clerk Barb Rigdon, Wellness facilitator Jessica Burkhart, Utility Superintendent (and Aquatics) Vic Kane, Library Director Susan Macken, Fire Chief Wally Rundle, Parks Superintendent Durango Steggall, and Street Superintendent Tom Stewart.

Major Accomplishments

The following were identified as major city accomplishments during the past two years:

Infrastructure

- Street repairs
- New electrical service for campgrounds
- Sand Jacking of Well
- Clean up and new lighting in viaduct
- Plans to update viaduct
- Implementation of Water Infrastructure Fee
- Replacement of 1st Ave Lift Station and Subsequent I & I reduction at WPCP Facility

Economic Development

- East Penn Expansion
- Transco Expansion
- RAMS Center growth and city support

Parks & Rec

- Wellness Center equipment upgrade/24 hour access
- Kayak Rental
- Tree Plantings
- Plaza Park

City Operations/Facilities

- New Police Station
- Working together as a council
- Engaging the community
- Smooth running day-to-day operation (employees)
- Partnering with different groups
- Continued nuisance abatement & demolition of nuisance properties
- Oak Park Trailer park removal/junk house removal
- Curbside Recycling
- Analyzing water rates
- Improved monthly department reports
- New City Software
- Library accredited by state
- Updated city vehicles & equipment
- Reduction in employee safety incidents
- New City Logo & Colors
- Airport Improvements
- Library reading garden

Other

- Old Tyme Christmas Celebration Growth
- Party in the Park Growth
- Day of Caring Coordination

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances or operations:

Infrastructure

- Condition of infrastructure in general
- Street conditions
- Sidewalks, or lack of
- Water and sewer line issues

City Operations/Facilities

- Future of City Hall
- Replacement of key city employees as they near retirement
- Public Perception
- Lack of city equipment replacement schedule
- Keeping on top of water and sewer rates
- Consolidating Dept Supervisors to one overall Utility Manager
- Filling Holes (City Owned Property)
- Credit/Debit Card Payment Capability
- Technology - Hire Expert for City Web/Facebook/GIS if it is cheaper than full-time employee can do all
- Continued enforcement of dilapidated properties

Economic Development

- Need to bring new hotel to town (w/pool)
- Major new economic development successes
- Bring new businesses to town
- Hospital Expansion/Issue
- Continue Funding for Downtown Store Fronts/Business Loans
- Empty Stores
- Need more Restaurants/Another Grocery Store

Housing

- Lack of Middle Class homes (100-150,000 range)
- Lack of condos
- Housing - Population growth
- New Housing at Golf Course

Parks & Rec

- Opportunity for indoor pool
- Finish Aquatics Amenities for Young Adults

Public Safety

- Fire Hydrant Testing and Painting
- Lack of House Numbers
- Repair and/or Reinstallation of Intersection Street Blade Signs

Other

- Sustainability - renewable energy - wind/solar power
- Aging Population
- Water Shed
- Potential Environmental Impact from East Penn
- Negative Attitude of some Oelwein Citizens

On-Going Commitments/Obligations

The following were identified as on-going commitments/obligations for the upcoming 24 month period:

- Update viaduct
- Continue economic development programs
 - East Penn project
 - 20% match on RISE 14th St SE
 - Continue small business revolving loan fund
 - Re-use of Tech Spec with School District
 - Support continued growth of NICC in Oelwein
- Continue abatement and demolition of nuisance properties
- Submit grant to replace 2nd Street SE from Rock Island Rd to Hospital (E)
- Aquatic Center enhancements
- Housing market study
- Provide credit/debit card payment capability
- Continue sewer and water infrastructure updates
- Continue to review water and sewer rates

New Priority Projects, Programs, Policies and Initiatives

The participants reviewed potential projects, programs, policies and initiatives for consideration and selected the following as priorities for the upcoming 24 month period (listed in priority order):

- 1 (Tie) Road improvements - aggressive plan for replacement - increase funding for street repair
- 1 (Tie) Set aside funds for new well (well #4)
- 1 (Tie) Overhaul Wings Park Ball Diamonds with new concession stand between Diamonds 2/3

- 4 (Tie) Develop landlord rental policy- adopt program/fees/fines for noncompliance - use revenues to fund low interest loans/provide incentives to repair
- 4 (Tie) City participation in residential development - infrastructure development, provide tax abatement program, waiving hook-up fees, waiving building permit fees
- 4 (Tie) Fund facelifts for Owner-Occupied Homes (similar to downtown program) – select areas in need

A complete list of all programs and initiatives considered by the Mayor and City Council members is attached as **Exhibit A**.

Organizational Effectiveness

The Mayor and City Council reviewed a variety of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the selected goals and priorities. After review and discussion, the Mayor and City Council selected the following steps to improve organizational effectiveness:

- Develop web sessions for public to view council sessions
- Continue Council discussion of issues/brainstorming at work sessions
- Hold periodic community informational meetings based on at theme
- Share what's going on with staff, keep staff informed and up to date.
- Develop Equipment Replacement Schedule for all city departments
- Update Job Descriptions
- Review and update Personnel Policies
- Update Safety Manual
- Make sure all departments submit monthly reports

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Oelwein with this goal setting process.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur.

It is recommended that city staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the Mayor and City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the Mayor and City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa
December 21, 2015

Exhibit A

City of Oelwein
Goal Setting Session – 2015

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

- Develop landlord rental policy- adopt program/fees/fines for noncompliance - use revenues to fund low interest loans/provide incentives to repair
- Rental Inspection Program
- Replace 2nd Street SE from Rock Island Rd to Hospital
- City participation in residential development - infrastructure development, provide tax abatement program, waiving hook-up fees, waiving building permit fees
- Create detailed plan on replacement of aging water and sewer system
- Road improvements - aggressive plan for replacement - increase funding for street repair
- Conduct Citizen Survey
- Increase Rec programming and staffing
- Fulltime Park, Rec & Cemetery. If it is efficient they will promote growth of the area, increase family/elderly programs, etc.
- Build a Skate Park
- Coordinate with County to connect to Readlyn/Waverly Bike Trail w/Safe Bridge over Hwy 150
- Fund Facelifts for Owner-Occupied Homes (similar to downtown program) - select areas in need
- Set Funds aside for New Well (Well #4)
- Conduct Annexation Study
- Wellness Policy
- Apply for grant to improve Appearance of Downtown Storefronts
- City Hall building
- Asphalt 12th Avenue SW from W Charles to 3rd St SW (for Arlington Place)
- Overhaul Wings Park Ball Diamonds with new concession stand between Diamonds 2/3
- Aggressively market vacant infill lots
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