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REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD MEETING
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2001

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Strategic Planning Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Lesly Smith at 9:30 a.m. in the Flamingo Room at the Palm Beach Hotel. On roll call the following Board Members were found to be present: Chair Lesly Smith, Vice-Chair Bruce McAllister, Board Members William Cooley, William E. Hutton III, and William Watchman, Jr. Board Member Alec Flamm was present via telephone. Also present for all or a portion of the meeting were: Town Council President Pro-Tem Samuel McLendon, Town Attorney John Randolph, Town Manager Peter Elwell, Fire-Rescue Chief Kent Koelz, Finance Director Jane Skittone, Town Clerk Mary Pollitt, and Deputy Town Clerk Susan Eichhorn.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved through motion of Vice-Chair McAllister, seconded by Board Member Hutton. On roll call the motion carried unanimously.

After further discussion, Vice-Chair McAllister retroactively amended the Agenda, to move the addition of Item III.A - Discussion of the Zoning Commission Meeting held on Monday, September 25, 2001). The motion was seconded by Board Member Cooley. On roll call the motion carried unanimously.

A. DISCUSSION OF ZONING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2001

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2001

Town Manager Elwell reported that discussion had taken place at the Zoning Commission meeting held on Monday, September 24, 2001, to clarify the roles of those involved in the strategic planning process. There had been particular concern as to whether the Strategic Planning Board would be addressing zoning matters, such as the R-B Zoning question regarding re-development in the north end of the Town. He clarified that the roles of the Zoning Commission and Strategic Planning Board were meant to be complementary – nothing in the mission of the Strategic Planning Board was meant to supercede the consideration that the Zoning Commission had already given to matters, or may give to such matters in the future. He explained that the Zoning Commission would continue with its work dealing with the zoning study items for the season, which included many items that could also be of interest to the Strategic Planning Board for longer term planning purposes. He further explained that the Strategic Planning Board would be making recommendations to the Town Council for steps that would need be taken to achieve the vision for the future of the Town of Palm Beach. The actions to be taken to achieve the vision would be taken by the various bodies responsible for implementing these actions, and integrating their actions in future years with the recommendations of the long range plan. He noted that it was apparent that there would need to be communication between the parties involved with issues of concern to the Town.

James Bertles, Chairman of the Zoning Commission, addressed the Strategic Planning Board, and stated that a clear statement would be provided from the Zoning Commission, as had been discussed at the meeting of the Zoning Commission on September 24, 2001.

Chair Smith stated that the Zoning Commission would be making recommendations as to what should be done, or not done, and the Strategic Planning Board would then act on those recommendations.

Vice-Chair McAllister commented that discussion at the Zoning Commission meeting had indicated that there was a shift in emphasis in the considerations of the Zoning Commission – there was now the intention to be more proactive in long range planning/consideration. Both the zoning and planning aspects would be included as the function of the Zoning Commission.

Zoning Chairman Bertles replied that was correct, and further discussion would take place in this regard at the November Zoning Commission meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD MEETING ON AUGUST 8, 2001

Board Member Hutton moved approval of the Report of the Strategic Planning Board Meeting of August 8, 2001. The motion was seconded by Board Member Cooley. On roll call the motion carried unanimously.

V. DISCUSSION OF TOWN PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS WITH TOWN STAFF MANAGEMENT TEAM (Town Clerk Mary Pollitt, Fire-Rescue Chief Kent Koelz, and Finance Director Jane Skittone)

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Town Clerk Mary Pollitt provided a description of the Office of the Town Clerk:

The primary functions of the Office of the Town Clerk included attendance at Town meetings, transcribing minutes, and serving the needs of the Town Council and the Town Manager. The office was an information source for the public, handled Charitable Solicitation Permit Applications, Special Event Permit Applications, Door-to-Door Solicitation Permits, Business Closing Out Sales Applications, Motion Picture Permits, and Temporary Animal Permits. She noted that the ordinances and many public records were in the process of being included on the internet in order to be available for research by the public. Updates to the Town Code of Ordinances were done on a yearly basis, with supplements distributed to all those holding a Code Book.

Mrs. Wendy Victor urged that the Comprehensive Plan be included on the Town website.

Town Manager Elwell commented that information on the website would be increased in the coming months.

Board Member Cooley complimented the Clerk's office as one of the finest that he had ever worked with; the general attitude and responsiveness to requests was excellent.

In response to Vice-Chair McAllister regarding a "plain English" version of the codes and regulations of the Town in order to make it easier for people to understand, Town Attorney Randolph advised that consideration had not been given to a "plain English" version of the codes and regulations of the Town. He considered that it may be quite risky on the part of the Town to interpret ordinances for anyone because of the misunderstanding and reliance that someone may put on that interpretation.

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Fire-Rescue Chief Kent Koelz provided a description of the Fire-Rescue Department:

The Fire-Rescue Department consisted of 73 employees, 70 of which were uniformed employees; there were three shifts, consisting of 63 people, answering calls, 43 of which were paramedics with the remainder being Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) personnel. Three Fire-Rescue stations were used for fire-rescue operations, and Chief Koelz identified the various types of equipment in use, and the manner in which they were used. He reviewed the staff positions and their duties, as well as the training provided to personnel. All paramedics and fire fighter EMT personnel were re-certified every other year, with an extensive number of hours required. There was also participation in the Palm Beach County Community College Partnership Council; the Council lets the college know the type of training needed. The administration division of the Fire-Rescue department implemented the daily operations of the department, developing goals and objectives, as well as administering the budget of $5,959,000 in FY 2002.

Chief Koelz identified long range goals that included the storm emergency response plan, a regional hazardous material response plan, a mutual aid plan with Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach, and Lake Worth, as well as State-wide, hose replacement schedules, self-contained breathing apparatus replacement schedules, and vehicle replacement schedules.

Chief Koelz responded to questions from the Board regarding mutual aid with other municipalities, measurement of the effectiveness of the department, and training of personnel.

Town Council President Pro-Tem Samuel McLendon asked the ladder height capability, and how often an emergency call came in when a unit was already out?

Chief Koelz responded that the two aerial apparatus trucks reached 100' in the air, which allowed it to reach approximately 7-8 floors of a building; there were often second and third emergency calls when there was a thunderstorm – during the season there were frequent simultaneous calls, however two reserve units were also available for emergency calls.

Chair Smith commented that the hospitals had determined that the Palm Beach Fire-Rescue Department had saved lives in 90 cases last year.

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Finance Director Jane Skittone provided a description of the Finance Department:

An overview booklet relating to the duties and function of the Finance Department was provided, containing an organizational chart, the department functions, and the reports available (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Comprehensive Annual Budget, and the Budget-in-Brief. The department budget for 2002 was $1,042, 021 ($686,000 representing the Finance Department; $355,000 representing the Purchasing Division) - The planning functions of the Finance Department included budget preparation, implementation and development of financial policies, and financial planning. Future objectives included additional policy development, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34 (a new governmental financial reporting model), improved goals and objectives, an annual report, and continual evaluation of financial software options. Biographies were provided for each staff member.

Board Member Watchman commented that the absence of a long range financial plan was troubling, as that was the framework within which the Strategic Planning Board would work.

Vice-Chair McAllister urged that long range financial planning be engaged as part of the current function of the Finance Department, that it not wait for anything from the Strategic Planning Board specifically.

Town Manager Elwell commented that staff had been working on developing longer horizons for financial planning; the long range financial plan referred to by Ms. Skittone was actually a document that would address the long range plans in a more formal way. He explained that over the past several years there had been increased effort from the Town staff to look ahead with better forecasting and long term financial projections. A long range financial plan, as a formal document, would probably await the outcome of the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Board.

Board Member Cooley thanked Ms. Skittone for her courtesy in helping him research financial issues regarding the Town. He requested information identifying land/properties owned by the Town.

Finance Director Skittone replied that currently the Finance Department itself had not created a specific list, however, she believed that the Town Clerk had such a list available of all Town-owned properties.

Town Clerk Pollitt explained that a system was being currently being implemented whereby all Town property could be accessed via computer. The list of properties was available in printed form currently.

Board Member Cooley commented that some of the properties seemed to have value other than their sale value, such as leasing them out for parking, etc., and could be used to bring revenue to the Town.

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VI. COMMUNITY FORUMS (VISIONING)

A. Confirmation of Dates, Times, and Locations (tentatively November 15, 16 and 17).

B. Discussion of Format, Facilitation, etc., with John Fernsler of Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

(Both of the above items were included under one discussion item, as follows).

Mr. John Fernsler of Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, reported that the time had arrived to decide the dates and times of the community forum meetings, as well as planning the logistics of the meetings, and identifying responsibilities for the management of the forums. He reminded all that the community forums were to identify broad areas of consensus, and to provide the raw material for the vision statement. He explained that the typical community forum would be held for a period of approximately two hours, conducted as SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) sessions. The two hours would be segmented by a ten minute period for the public to get settled, a ten minute overview of the purpose of the strategic planning process, then break up the group into smaller discussion groups of 8-10 people; each table would then have a facilitator and a scribe. The role of the facilitator would be to keep the discussion moving, listing the issues that came forth: there would be two sections of discussion; first, perception of Palm Beach today - strengths: 15-20 minutes, weaknesses: 15-20 minutes. Review the list and connect similar ideas in order to have some means of identifying the most important items on the list. The same procedure would be conducted to consider how the future of Palm Beach would be influenced by identified opportunities and threats (20 minutes each). The remainder of the time would be devoted to having individuals from each table report on the outcome.

Discussion took place regarding the time period of the community forums, and where they would be held in order to have relatively equal participation in each forum. Mr. Fernsler explained that having people talk in small groups with people that they would not ordinarily talk to would lead to evolution of issues affecting the community. The community forums could be used by the 27 identified civic organizations to hear the community, and allow civic organizations to establish positions after the community forums.

Chair Smith noted that at the Zoning Commission meeting she had requested that everyone attend only one forum, as individuals, not the entire executive committee of an organization at one table, since people may then be afraid to speak. She suggested that it was important to hear from residents, as individuals; it was important that position papers from the different organizations come at a later time. She suggested that perhaps more community forums could be held in February or March, when more people were in Town.

Board Member Flamm commented that, at this point in time, the main reason for communicating with the civic organizations was to encourage people to attend the forums as individuals.

Mr. Fernsler noted that the civic organizations could react to the community forums, and then express their positions in response to the community forums.

Vice-Chair McAllister suggested that there be some communication to the community before the community forums were held, explaining the procedure, and setting up a hotline or some way of receiving feedback regarding how many people were interested in attending, then making a final decision as to how many forums would be held.

Town Manager Elwell commented that staff would implement the directions of the Strategic Planning Board concerning the community forum outreach program; he gave assurance that staff would also be making strong efforts through the 27 civic organizations, a well as to the community at large, to get the word out about the community forums. He urged the Board to agree on the times and locations for the three community forums.

Board Member Watchman suggested the services, on a gratis basis, of an advertising agency to draft a full page advertisement setting out the information, perhaps with a follow up reminder.

Mr. Fernsler agreed that he would provide the content to such an advertisement to present at the next Board meeting, which could then be fine tuned by the Board.

Board Member Hutton suggested that the Town Manager handle the specifics of setting up the community forums, with three separate locations, two of the meetings held in the late afternoon, and the Saturday meeting held in the late morning.

Vice-Chair McAllister suggested that two or three full-page advertisements be placed in the

Palm Beach Daily News, all after October 15, 2001, as well as a mailing to every resident, sometime in late October, which would include the SWOT results of the exercise in which the Strategic Planning Board participated (as an example of the kind of exercise that the residents can expect to go through), and space on the mailing to fill in any ideas that residents may have, with a mail-back, pre-paid envelope.

Board Member Cooley agreed with the three separate locations, use of "break-out" rooms, full page ads, a mailing to the residents, and a response item that could be filled out. He disagreed with the suggestion that the results of the SWOT exercise of the Strategic Planning Board be included, as it may influence the thinking of people.

Town Manager Elwell commented that the ideas were very good, however, the outreach effort, as discussed, would entail substantial costs, and there was not a budget for that purpose at this point.

Chair Smith suggested that a mailing may be premature at this time.

Mr. Dick Kleid, President of the Beach Pointe Condominium Association suggested that letters could be addressed to the various condominium associations, so that the community forums could be discussed at their internal meetings.

Mr. Ned Barnes, Palm Beach Civic Association, suggested that the community forums be conducted earlier in the day, and suggested that the meetings be spaced further apart, in the hopes of catching people that may be out of town for the one weekend. He offered the services of the Palm Beach Civic Association to contact residents to make them aware of the importance of attending the community forums.

Board Member Flamm commented that he believed there should be four forums, one in the north, one in the south, and two in the center of Town; he was supportive of an advertisement, as well as an editorial, if possible; he was opposed to sending out a questionnaire to residents before the forums took place. He suggested a contingency plan in the case of more people attending the forums than was planned.

Chair Smith suggested that people could call a designated phone number and register their preference for the meetings.

Mr. Fernsler commented that having people register their preference for a particular day would be fine; the design size of the audience would be approximately 75 people.

Board Member Flamm suggested that a response to having an overflow crowd be addressed before the next Strategic Planning Board meeting.

Vice-Chair McAllister suggested that it would have to be made clear that there would be a capacity, and that if the location was full, there would be later meetings that could be attended.

Board Member Hutton commented that undue pressure was being created on people through a registration process; he suggested that the meetings be open, for anyone who wanted to attend.

Chair Smith suggested that another set of community forums could be conducted again in the winter months, in order to reach more residents.

Town Manager Elwell suggested a contingency plan for over-capacity crowds – the department heads, and/or Town Council members could be involved in order to be facilitators/scribes.

Chair Smith commented that she agreed with the suggestion that a letter be sent to the 27 civic organizations and all condominium associations, encouraging attendance at one of the three forums; she also agreed that people should not have to register for the forums.

Town Manager Elwell commented that a mailing to all of the addresses in Town would require funding; it would need to be determined if full-page ads would be necessary if there was a mailing done.

After further discussion, Board Member Cooley moved approval of the following:

For the community forums: The dates of Thursday, November 15th , 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*, Friday, November 16th, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*, Saturday November 17th - 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

Please see * below - 7:00 p.m. change to 6:00 p.m.

Three locations to be determined by Town staff.

Funding to be requested from the Town Council, in the amount of $10,000 for two full page advertisements to be run on the two Sundays prior to the forums (November 4th and November 11th) and one Town-wide mailing to be sent to all residents. The contents of the mailing would be submitted by Mr. Fernsler at the next meeting for review.

The motion was seconded by Board Member Watchman.

Board Member Hutton suggested that the times for the Thursday, November 15th and Friday, November 16th forums be amended to be conducted from *** 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Board Member Cooley accepted the amendment to the motion. On roll call the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fernsler commented that the Strategic Planning Board could determine if sufficient public input had been received after the community forums were conducted. If it was determined that there was not sufficient input, further efforts could be made to gain input. He noted that he would provide content of the advertisement and mailing at the October 10, 2001, Strategic Planning Board meeting for review.

Mr. Fernsler explained that the facilitators and scribes would normally arrive approximately one hour before the first session for instruction. Written instructions would also be provided to them in advance. Typically there would be a member of the Strategic Planning Board as well as a staff person to act as scribe, paired up in advance so that they would know how to work together. He noted that it was important that the members of each group know that a member of the Strategic Planning Board has heard them; having some groups with and some without a member of the Board could produce some dissatisfaction. Therefore, ideally, the number of groups should be limited to the number of Strategic Planning Board facilitators.

In response to Vice-Chair McAllister, Mr. Fernsler agreed that members of the Town Council acting as facilitators would also be appropriate, provided they were trained as facilitators.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN - UPDATE BY TOWN MANAGER PETER ELWELL AND JOHN FERNSLER OF WALLACE ROBERTS & TODD, LLC

Town Manager Elwell reported that the substance of the environmental scan would be addressed in more detail in subsequent meetings. Mr. Fernsler would explain how the scan was parallel to, but separate from, the visioning exercise.

Mr. Fernsler explained that the data available concerning conditions within the Town and the region was voluminous. The purpose of the environmental scan was not to identify issues; the purpose was to inform and lead toward how particular issues would be addressed. The first step was to categorize the issues so that the range of information could be narrowed:

1) Those issues which have already been identified as important, but were being addressed through some other form. The Board could then express its opinion as to whether they were being addressed in a proper and thorough fashion.

2) Those issues which were not being adequately addressed or are unresolved.

3) Those issues which may exert long-range influence on the Town (beyond the 5-10 year horizon of the Strategic Plan), or issues beyond the means of the Town to directly influence.

Vice-Chair McAllister gave a hypothetical example of an application for a trolley bus to be used in Palm Beach. It may be that examination of the current ordinances and the current decision-making structure of the Town would result in that application being dealt with at a level somewhere below the

Town Council level or a board/commission level. He asked if that type of issue would be included in the issues considered by the Strategic Planning Board?

Town Manager Elwell replied that the legal framework question underlies everything in the middle category (issues that were unresolved or not being adequately addressed). As the issues were further explored, and as the Board determined its recommendations regarding what actions would need to be taken, it would become clear as to whether the legal framework under an issue would need to be addressed.

Mr. Fernsler indicated that what was expected today was the reaction of the Board to the categorization of issues; the next step would be the gathering of information by department heads to inform the Board on issues.

Town Manager Elwell noted that staff had already started the process of gathering the necessary documentation, and requested that the Board advise if there were any further documents that would be needed.

VIII. ANY OTHER MATTERS

There were none.

IX. NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2001, AT 1:00 P.M. IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Town Manager Elwell indicated that the following matters would be considered at the October 10th meeting:

- A status report on the data gathered.
- Some form of overview of the status of the ongoing initiatives.
- Final decisions about the outreach effort would be considered.
- Draft advertisement, and draft letter to the public submitted by Mr. Fernsler for consideration of the Board.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Strategic Planning Board of September 26, 2001, was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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Chair Lesly Smith

Next Scheduled Meeting:
October 10, 2001 @ 1:00 p.m. - Town Council Chambers

Report Prepared By:
Susan Eichhorn
Deputy Town Clerk
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