

CITY OF HENDERSON – RECORD BOOK

Record of Minutes of Called Work Session/Inner City Improvement Plan Mid-Year Report Meeting on June 22, 2023

A Called Work Session/Inner City Improvement Plan Mid-Year Report of the Board of Commissioners of the City of Henderson, Kentucky, was held on Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., prevailing time, at the Henderson Municipal Services Center (MSC) located at 1449 Corporate Court, Henderson, Kentucky.

There were present Mayor Brad Staton presiding:

PRESENT:

Commissioner Robert N. Pruitt
Commissioner Austin P. Vowels
Commissioner Nicholas Whitt

ABSENT:

Commissioner Rodney Thomas

CITY STAFF MEMBERS included: Dawn Kelsey, City Attorney; Maree Collins, City Clerk; Holli Blanford, Public Information Officer; Trace Stevens, Parks, Recreation & Cemeteries Director; Sean McKinney, Police Chief; Josh Dixon, Fire Chief; Jordan Webb, Emergency Communications Director; Steve Davis, Code Administrator; Dylan Ward, Project Manager; Sam Lingerfelt, Safety & Training Coordinator; Travis Owens, Assistant I.T. Director; David Steele, Sanitation Superintendent; Mary Ann Whitledge, Account Representative; and Nancy Stone, Occupational Tax Technician

ALSO PRESENT: Charles Johnson; Michelle Chappell; Becky Stone; Nivea Carter; Matthew Reynolds; Amber Wood; Kevin Gibson; Tammy Sutton; Courtney Woolfork; Stacey Gilbert; Herbert McKee, Jr.; Steve Gold; Ernest Green; Bobbie Jo Marx; Ruth Allen; Chad Thompson; Mi'Oshi Holloway; Abby Dixon; Ryan Monroe; Ben Groves; Dwight Williams; Karen Tapp; and Lillie Pruitt

THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS WERE DISCUSSED:

Inner City Improvement Plan Committee Mid-Year Reports

- ✓ Mayor Staton gave brief opening remarks and thanked everyone for coming and being a part of this process. This is an informal meeting to hear what each Committee has been working on. He then asked the City Clerk to call the Roll Call for attendance of the Board of Commissioners.
- ✓ Public Safety Commission
 - Courtney Woolfork, Public Safety Committee Co-Chair reported that they have a few ideas that includes:
 - A smoke detector program in conjunction with the Henderson Fire Department and Red Cross
 - Increase the number of flock cameras in the City
 - Home ownership incentive for law enforcement for recruitment/retention purposes
 - Security camera at the boat ramp areas
 - Doorbell camera project
 - Herb McKee gave a brief overview of the security camera project which includes:
 - Ring (or other type) doorbell cameras for homeowners in high crime areas
 - A user agreement would allow police/fire investigators use of the camera security footage.
 - Sean McKinney reported that the City currently has seven flock cameras (license plate readers)
 - The system can search by vehicle description but does not individualize the driver – only the vehicle and its license plate.
 - Steve Gold reported on the law enforcement housing incentive for better recruitment/retention of police officers

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- There is a trend of officers not living in the community that they police – this incentive of free/low-cost housing could entice officers to once again live and build trust within the community.
 - There are many communities around the country that are offering some type of program that could include a forgivable loan, free rent, a stipend toward rent, purchase of foreclosures, etc.
 - Josh Dixon reported on the Red Cross Sound Alarm program
 - Volunteers install free smoke alarms with homeowner written consent
- ✓ Blight/Affordable Housing Committee
 - Matthew Reynolds reported that their overall theme is promoting homeownership. He reported that 70% of the inner city is rental property
 - Grant Programs that could include down payment assistance
 - Rent to Own assistance
 - Increased Code Enforcement and grants to landlords for improvements
 - Increase budget to remove dilapidated condemned houses
 - Target areas in phases – 1st Phase from Sam’s Grill to T&T Drugs on Clay Street
- ✓ Beautification/Special Projects Committee
 - Ben Grove gave an overview of the projects that would help address some of the core needs of the area
 - Three areas were identified as possible locations for some, or all the projects and each project is modular and can be used as a whole or various locations.
 - The old softball field on Atkinson Street – the JFK Center – Anthony Brooks Park
 - Multi-sport court with multi use surface
 - Community garden to foster a sense of community and assist with food insecurity
 - Park exercise equipment – AKZ has a donation of equipment that could be included in a new facility or an existing park to enhance physical activities
 - Flowerpots in a range of sizes and designs and/or flagpole banners to foster neighborhood pride.
- ✓ Infrastructure Committee
 - Mi’Oshi Holloway indicated that she envisions infrastructure as the roots of a tree that need to be strong and healthy in order to grow.
 - Sidewalks are needed for connectivity – cost is approximately \$100,000.00 per block
 - Alleyway improvements are needed behind South Heights
 - Some lighting issues can be addressed by trimming and maintaining trees and bushes that are overgrown
 - Some alleyways need regrading to smooth out potholes
 - Expanding affordable internet service
 - Publicizing the Affordable Connectivity Program that provides a \$30.00 credit for internet service to homes with a student
 - Henderson Municipal Power and Light’s new fiber project will have two levels of service and they are looking into the possibility of providing service to an outdoor shelter for community access
 - Henderson Water Utility has several projects in design for heatmapping/GIS to find weak areas in the system
 - Recommend hiring a grant writer to assist with funding projects
 - The Sanitation division has created an app to assist in identifying problem alleyways
 - Recommend placing 10 to 15 centrally located trash containers to assist with trash cleanup

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- ✓ Economic Development Committee
 - Kevin Gibson indicated the need to generate new business – grow current businesses – create jobs – create opportunity zones
 - Some area strengths are that this is a busy part of town – particularly the Clay/Atkinson Street area – but people don’t stay to visit more than one business
 - Focus on bringing businesses back into the Letcher Street corridor
 - Exciting news coming soon announcing a new business that will provide missing services
 - Threats to the area include empty buildings and vacant lots
 - Market the inner city – some of the oldest businesses in town are in this area

- ✓ Mayor Staton gave brief closing remarks indicating that he looks forward to hearing the final reports in September and presenting them to the public for their thoughts. He further indicated that this is a long-term strategy, and the Committees will continue working on identifying projects next year.

NO FORMAL ACTION WAS TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.

MEETING ADJOURN:

MOTION by Commissioner Pruitt, seconded by Commissioner Vowels to adjourn.

The vote was called. On roll call, the vote stood:

Commissioner Thomas --- Absent: Commissioner Whitt ----- Aye:
 Commissioner Pruitt ----- Aye: Commissioner Vowels --- Aye:
 Mayor Staton ----- Aye:

WITHOUT OBJECTION, Mayor Staton declared the work session adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

 Maree Collins, CKMC
 City Clerk

 Bradley S. Staton, Mayor
 July 11, 2023