

## **City of Storm Lake 2023 Strategic Planning Retreat**

The City of Storm Lake Strategic Planning Retreat was held on December 6, 2023 at the King's Pointe Resort from 8 AM – 12:00 PM. The retreat's primary goal was to update the existing strategic plan for Storm Lake and to identify specific community goals and objectives for 2024. In attendance at the session was Mayor Mike Porsch, City Council Members: Maggie Martinez, Tyson Rice, Kevin McKinney, Maria Ramos, Matt Ricklefs and Council Member Elect Meg McKeon. Also in attendance was City Manager Navratil, Assistant City Manager Derragon, City Clerk Martinez. City Department Heads attended a separate goal setting workshop the previous afternoon in which they offered their feedback on important community goals, objectives and priorities. In advance of the retreat, each City Council member compiled a list of important issues facing the community which was sent to the facilitator by the City Clerk. The retreat was facilitated by Mark Collins with KRW Associates.

The agenda for City Council's Strategic Planning Retreat included the following:

- 1.) Welcome/Introductions
- 2.) Overview of Retreat Agenda Topics: (Potential Additions/Deletions)
- 3.) Importance of Strategic Planning for Small Communities
- 4.) Visioning Exercise:
  - What Type of Community will Storm Lake be in the Coming Years?
  - What Makes Storm Lake Special?
  - What does your Community Value?
- 5.) Review Strategic Goals from 2022 Storm Lake Planning Session
- 6.) Identification of 2024 Strategic Focus Areas for Storm Lake
- 7.) Goals/Objectives/Action Items for 2024
- 8.) Prioritization Exercise
- 9.) Discussion of Other Important Topics and Issues
- 10.) Wrap Up: Additional Ideas, Comments and Suggestions (Next Steps)

At the outset of the planning session, the Mayor and Council reviewed a power point presentation on the important foundations of strategic planning for communities. Examples from other communities helped to frame important issues facing Storm Lake.

In a brief visioning exercise, the City Council was asked to identify their “wish list” for the community of Storm Lake by the year 2029. The following items were listed:

- More Retail Businesses
- A Day Care Facility
- A Community Recreation Center
- Improved Public Transit
- Buena Vista County Sheriff’s Office Communications Division Multi-Lingual Phone Translation Option
- A “Non-City Hall” Meeting Venue or Facility to Improve Community Outreach
- Expanded Utilization of the Lake
- Develop the Dredge Spoils Site
- Progress/Results from the Downtown Master Plan
- More Quality Housing
- Storm Lake Community Foundation
- A Viable Economic Development Group to Facilitate Land Acquisitions

Utilizing the strategic focus areas from 2022/23 as a general outline, the following items and initiatives were identified as the most important “strategic goals and objectives” for 2024. After listing their priorities, the Mayor and Council provided details on the steps that would be necessary to implement the goals and objectives.

### **Day Care**

- Build Confidence with Community Members by Providing Notice (Transparency) regarding the Ongoing Work by the Current Child Care Task Force
- Analysis of the Knights of Columbus Site
- Establish a 501-C3 Community Foundation to Oversee the Fundraising, Financial Management and Organizational Elements of the Child Care Facility
- Tyson Rice Volunteered to take the Organizational Lead on the Community Foundation Initiative and Provide a Progress Report to City Council in January 2024.
- City Council will Solicit Community Volunteers to Serve on the Community Foundation

### **Housing**

- Housing Task Force (e.g., 9 Members) Needs to be Established
- Council Will Solicit Members for the Task Force, Mayor will Make Personal Contacts
- Storm Lake Has Obstacles Due to its Landlocked Status
- Focus on the Spoils Site
- City May Not Be in the Best Position to Negotiate with Landowners, this is a Potential Role for the Future Economic Development Committee
- Successful Initiative May Need a Consortium of the Local Banks
- Continue to Work with the Regional Housing Authority
- Small Group for Specific Land Parcel Discussion

**Recreation Center**

- Consider a Feasibility Study (Cost Projection- \$75,000)
- Requires Partnerships (School District, Hospital, University)
- Hospital Has Land
- Potential Partnership with Private Athletic Facility
- Newly Established Community Foundation Can Play an Important Role
- Community Survey is Not Considered Necessary
- Capital Investment and Operational Costs Will be Big Obstacles

**Storm Lake United**

- Director will not be a City Employee
- City Will Continue to Handle Tourism Duties
- Require a Business Plan from Storm Lake United

**Other Important Issues**

- Move Forward on Plans for the Dredge Fill Spoil Site
- Take 1<sup>st</sup> Steps for Site with Field Tours
- Finish Council Meetings with Topics and Suggestions for Study Sessions
- Consider Mobile Study Sessions (Not at City Hall)