



Mayor – Sandy Sanders

City Administrator – Ray Gosack

City Clerk – Sherri Gard

Board of Directors

Ward 1 – Keith D. Lau

Ward 2 – Andre' Good

Ward 3 – Mike Lorenz

Ward 4 – George Catsavis

At Large Position 5 – Pam Weber

At Large Position 6 – Kevin Settle

At Large Position 7 – Philip H. Merry Jr.

AGENDA

Fort Smith Board of Directors Brainstorming Meeting

October 27, 2014 ~ 6:00 p.m.

Fire Station No. 11

8900 Massard Road

~ Dinner served at 5:30 p.m. ~

CALL TO ORDER

1. Brainstorm

ADJOURN

RESOLUTION NO. R-171-13

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING GROUND RULES
FOR BRAIN STORMING MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors will conduct quarterly brain storming meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors desires to have ground rules for the conduct of said brain storming meetings;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the City of Fort Smith, Arkansas that:

The ground rules for brain storming meetings of the Board of Directors attached hereto as Exhibit A are hereby adopted.

This Resolution passed this 3rd day of December, 2013.


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


No Publication Required

GROUND RULES FOR BOARD BRAIN STORMING MEETINGS

1. Overall objectives of brain storming meetings are to:
 - Allow the mayor and board members to engage in free-flowing discussion on matters of importance to the elected officials.
 - Identify new, creative, innovative, breakthrough ways to view and solve problems, issues and concerns.
2. Discussion should be focused on long-term issues and policy matters; and be forward thinking. The discussion should be about the “what” and “why” questions.
3. Discussion should avoid micro management. The discussion should avoid the “how” questions.
4. Everyone is treated as an equal and has equal opportunity during discussion. A round-robin technique for input may be used. Listen respectfully to each person’s input.
5. When input is offered, it should not be questioned initially. Suspend judgment. Research and analysis (e.g., testing the idea) can be provided later.
6. All ideas should be recorded.
7. Discussions should be honest and candid.
8. Keep an open mind; shut down personal bias. Encourage new and creative ideas. Build on other people’s ideas. Pursue seemingly conflicting thoughts and ideas.
9. Ask anything. Question things you don’t understand. But, questions should clarify ideas, not evaluate, criticize or compliment the ideas.
10. No side conversations.
11. Have an agreed-upon method for reaching consensus, but there is no formal action or voting.
12. Treat these as guidelines, not as hard and fast rules.

Memo



To: Ray Gosack, City Administrator

From: Jeff Dingman, Deputy City Administrator

Date: 10/24/2014

Re: Notes (*and updates*) from Board of Directors Brainstorming Meeting, Aug. 25, 2014

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1. Rate of return on idle funds. As the interest rate of return on idle funds is very low, consider a quick-pay policy for capital purchases, and perhaps for service or construction contracts as well. Explore altering the bid process for capital items with a proposal to realize a 2% - 3% discount for paying invoices upon award of bid, instead of paying on receipt of the item as is current practice. Could perhaps ask bidders to bid a price for regular delivery/pay schedule, and an alternate price for quick pay so that all have the same opportunity to submit. Book any savings realized from this process as an investment income. Explore how such a program might work with service or construction contracts, where we typically pay after the service is rendered or as progress is made. *(The Purchasing Manager has inquired with seven fleet dealers, who have indicated that it makes no difference to them if we were to pay early. Their profit margin is already low on municipal fleet purchases, so whether they get the money early or on the back end of the purchase makes little difference. An early pay discount would be giving up a significant percentage of their minimal profit. Inquiries of other cities' purchasing managers also indicated that they do not get early pay discounts on fleet or equipment purchases. It is the prevailing practice in the industry to pay for such purchases after delivery, to ensure that the delivered products meet all required specifications before they are paid for. As for construction contracts, when they are financed by bonds there may be arbitrage considerations regarding the amount of money the city can make on funds acquired through tax exempt financing. Also, the city attorney referenced the practical problem that up-front payment would create leverage on the behalf of the city's contractor, whereas the city typically has the leverage in such disputes as it holds the funds in contention until satisfied.)*
 2. Explore public investment in infrastructure projects in the vicinity of the industries along Hwy 45. Specifically, now that Gerdau is reconfiguring traffic patterns around its facility with the new entrance, explore the possibility of extending Planters Road to the east to intersect with Massard Road. Gerdau has not been in favor of extending Planters Road in the past, does its reconfiguration change that? The Frontier MPO has already included improvement of Hwy 45 from Zero Street south to US71 in the Transportation Improvement Plan, which is a prerequisite for spending state/federal money on such an improvement. *(Addressing this portion of Hwy 45 is included on the 5-year CIP to start design work in 2019. Some informal dialogue regarding Planters Road extension with Gerdau/Maverick Transportation has been started, and they're generally not supportive. It would also require work to annex property into the city, which may not be seen favorably.)*
 3. Truck traffic downtown. Will extending Kelley Highway to Riverfront Drive help to eliminate truck traffic downtown? Not necessarily, as specific industries will still access the bridge at Garrison Avenue as their shortest route to I-40 westbound. The industries that use Riverfront Drive are amenable to working around downtown events as best they can, they already do to some extent. Very hard to eliminate truck traffic downtown entirely. *(The Kelley Highway extension to Riverfront Drive is included on the 5-year CIP and is slated to begin design in 2015. While this may provide an additional outlet for downtown truck traffic, it will not in and of itself eliminate such traffic. Industries*

will still likely seek to use the Garrison Ave bridge to access I-40W. A comprehensive analysis of all forms of transportation and access to the downtown and riverfront amenities by pedestrians, bicycles, vehicles and heavy trucks is needed in order to identify needs and options for the downtown area. This work will be initiated by the Engineering Department in 2015 and may work in conjunction with the Planning Department's effort to address the Board's interests in redevelopment criteria to the immediate north of the downtown area.)

4. Compass Park/North A Street project. The water feature for Compass Park is nearly ready for a contract approval and construction to begin this fall. The North A Street component, where North A Street would be closed and turned into green space while traffic is re-routed to make North B Street two-way, is on hold while we evaluate a comprehensive accessibility study for the Riverpark Area, Riverfront Drive, and the area immediately north of downtown and east of Riverfront Drive. Connectivity for pedestrians, recreational & road bicycles, vehicles, and heavy trucks all needs to be improved and maintained in a way that coordinates with all improvement and re-development of the area. *(The Compass Park water feature is being held up due to updated cost estimates surpassing the available budget for this project. Negotiations and redesign are ongoing, and when we're able to get design demands and cost estimates to meet, we will proceed with construction. The North A Street closure component, as well as the project to improve North B Street and realign the truck route, are all components of the comprehensive accessibility analysis noted above in Item 3. Funds for the North B St project are included in the 5 year CIP, but more definition and agreement of the future use and configuration of North B Street is needed.)*
5. Bike Lanes and the Street Sales Tax question. The presumption is that bike lanes are not currently an allowable use for the sales tax that is intended for "streets, bridges and associated drainage". We will conduct public input meetings to evaluate if and how bike lanes or trails need to be incorporated into future transportation planning. As the street sales tax gets re-evaluated (Oct. 28 study session), we will have some of that feedback. The study session discussion will focus on how the Board wishes to approach the election for renewal of the street sales tax next spring, and if bike lanes/paths, trails and greenways get presented as potential allowable uses for the sales tax. *(The Engineering Department conducted two public input meetings in the last month specifically to gather feedback regarding the types of bikeways/bike lanes the public would like to see. In addition, the Trails & Greenways sub-committee of the Parks and Recreation Commission has also been deliberating the needs of bicyclists as part of their overall consideration of existing and future trails throughout the city. The information and recommendations from these efforts will be part of the Board's discussion of potential future uses for the Street Sales Tax at the October 28 study session.)*
6. West River Trail and connectivity to the National Historic Site trail. The West River Trail begins near the parking area for the Riverfront Park and goes north. From that beginning point south, the sidewalk will be improved/expanded/modified for pedestrians to move around the west end of the River Park Events Building to the plaza area near the Women's restroom. From there, pedestrians can traverse the park to access the National Historic Site trail, directed by signage (the signage is not part of the trail project). Bicyclists will be directed through the parking lot by pavement markings leading them to either the wide sidewalk or Riverfront Drive on the east end of the River Park Events building, where they would then be led through the small parking lot alongside the amphitheater to the NHS trail. *(Attached map shows examples of possible connections. It is not uncommon to use signage and/or pavement markings to indicate how trails can cross parking lots.)*
7. Live streaming of Board meetings on the internet. Information Services has an idea of how to accomplish this in the next few weeks. They will do some testing at the upcoming Board meetings to see how smoothly it might work. Working with the school district's IT staff and the vendor that provides the television feed for the government access channel and trying to get that same feed into

the live stream. *(Live test successful for Oct. 7 & Oct. 21 meetings, will be available going forward. PR push so the public knows it's out there.)*

8. Support for expansion and improvements at the Farmers Market. Letter of interest in grant program has been sent, and WAPDD is checking on availability of EDA grant funding. Wifi access is provided at the Farmers Market in order to accommodate payment features & use of the SNAP program. Enhancement of the location with pavilions, power, misters, etc. would be a great improvement. Does the Farmers Market need more space? More parking? *(We've inquired - via WAPDD - about the EDA grant, the earliest availability of grant funds through this program will be late 2015 or early 2016. The functionality & administration of using the SNAP program at the market is still being evaluated.)*
9. Parking facility bonds are authorized for early redemption, which will be finished October 1. Parking Enforcement downtown? There are lots of things to consider, but there is no windfall of revenue, as revenues from space rentals and fines does not cover the current cost of enforcement and administration. The Parking Authority will meet again after the bonds are paid off to start having some of those discussions, including the evaluation of different parking enforcement programs/philosophies. *(Scheduling a meeting of Parking Authority in November)*
10. Street signs & school zones. Place reminder signs that state law prohibits the use of cell phones in school zones while the zones are active. The Street Department is investigating the appropriate signage for this application. *(The state won't allow such signs on school zone indicators located on state routes, so we would not be allowed to put the reminder signs up in all relevant locations. The offense itself is a secondary offense, which will make proactive enforcement difficult or unlikely unless the driver is stopped for another violation in the school zone.)*
11. Food vendor permit. Why do we require the seasonal food vendor to change locations every few weeks? Historically, this has been in consideration of competitive interest from brick/mortar businesses nearby. This will be part of the re-evaluation of city codes & zoning restrictions regarding outside food vending, in the downtown and all parts of the city. *(In process. As the ultimate solution needs to be something the local vendors would want to use, staff has discussed starting with an invitation to vendors to a discussion to see what type of system they would want and use. Then we would draft a comprehensive ordinance for outside vending, organized much like the example from Fayetteville shared earlier, and work with the vendors, the Planning Commission, the CBID, and other interested parties to devise a suitable ordinance to present to the Board. The timeframe for starting has been after the FY2015 budget process winds down.)*
12. Where are we with the sewer rate modelling? The Consent Decree with the Department of Justice/EPA needs to be finalized before the components can be fed into the rate model, and settlement terms of the Consent Decree are still up in the air pending ongoing negotiation or the possibility of litigation. The rate model itself is nearly complete and ready, but needs the correct input of information before it can be finalized and presented. The basic parameters of all of these components should be known in advance of the Board's review of the FY2015 budget. There is interest from the Board to have representatives from EPA and DOJ present at the Board's briefing on the matter. *(Due to the Arkansas AG's efforts, it looks as though we will resume settlement negotiation with the DOJ/EPA the first week of November. After that, we should have a better indication of the likelihood of a settlement versus the potential for litigation.)*
13. Fluoridation inquiries. Board members reported that they've had very few contacts regarding fluoridation since the approval of the grant agreement with Dental Dental on August 19. *(Signed the grant agreement, engineering work is underway.)*

14. Whirlpool Cleanup? Supplemental testing is needed to the east of the site, near the Boys & Girls Club and in city right-of-way. Whirlpool and ADEQ are amending the remediation documents to incorporate the testing of additional areas. *(Briefed on Oct. 14)*
15. Did Spartan purchase or lease part of the Whirlpool facility? They purchased the warehouse portion of the property, and there will be more publicity on this soon and a ribbon cutting announced. It should happen in September. *(Briefed on Oct. 14)*
16. Railroad crossings. Staff is inventorying and rating all crossings in the city. In addition to condition, they will note traffic volume in order to help prioritize needed repairs. The repair program will be built into the 5-year CIP, which will be presented to the Board in September. There will be the persistent question of how involved the city wants to be in maintaining the crossings on state routes. *(Funds included in 5-yr CIP, which was approved on Oct. 7. The funds are intended to address crossings on local roads that are not otherwise scheduled for road rehabilitation or reconstruction. When roads are scheduled for reconstruction, the concrete panels to improve the railroad crossing have typically been included as part of the costs of the project. These funds will be spent according to priority based on condition and traffic volume of crossings.)*
17. Speed Tables? Speed tables are being evaluated per the request of a particular neighborhood. The subject will be presented to the Board for discussion at an October study session. *(Study session on Oct. 28)*
18. LOPFI projections indicate the program will be in the red in 2019 (the projection of 2019 has remained consistent over the last several years). The program is currently spending \$1.6M more than its annual revenues. We have to be mindful of our local situation, and supportive of the AML's attempt to have the state legislature address the issue with a comprehensive state-wide solution. This state-wide solution is likely to be in the form of a constitutional amendment of some kind to fix it. A Board study session on the topic is scheduled for October, and the executive director of the LOPFI program is expected to attend. Fort Smith's local legislators have also been invited to attend. *(Will have options to consider for the budget review meeting)*



Google earth

feet
meters



— Possible walking connection to NHS trail, w/ pavement markings & signage

— Possible bicycling connection to NHS trail, w/pavement markings & signage