

Present: President Taylor; President Pro-Tem Walsh; Members: Burry, Koss, Pfeifer, Rijnovean and Woodrow

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Manager, Spallasso

President Taylor called the special Council meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA/APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Walsh, second by Rijnovean, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed (7 – 0).

COUNCIL AND VILLAGE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Taylor stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to come to a consensus on items that Council would like to accomplish during its tenure or put in motion for the next Council. There are eight regular Council meetings before the next election.

Walsh suggested that Council review the goals and objectives from last year in order to determine whether there has been follow through. One of the goals last year was to review the Village Charter for possible revisions and amendments. She thinks that this should be a continuing topic of discussion.

Walsh proposed two primary goals for this Council. One is to maintain and improve the appearance of the Village. The Planning Board is conducting a Neighborhood and Housing study. In addition, she proposed that Council reconsider a landlord/tenant ordinance and strengthen current ordinances dealing with property maintenance and associated penalties.

The second topic is to examine how Beverly Hills can reduce expenses and control costs while maintaining services that are provided to Villagers. She suggested that Council take another look at the Public Safety Department Operational Review dated August, 2004 and also review health insurance costs.

Rijnovean stated that one of her goals would be to "morph the Village into an efficient, dynamic revenue neutral non-profit business". Because this is a broad vision for the Village, she proposed that Council proceed with reviewing and updating the Village Policies and Procedures Manual.

Burry concurred with focusing on the Policies and Procedure Manual noting that it includes items that could have a financial impact on the Village. Walsh added that a complete review of the Policies and Procedures Manual would bring the thinking of Council and Administration closer together.

Taylor suggested working to implement initiatives identified by the Strategic Planning Committee. He does not object if it is the will of Council to move forward on reviewing the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Koss stated that the previous council conducted study sessions where they discussed a matrix comprised of Council issues, specific goals, responsible person, completion date and status of the topics. Items were prioritized. She suggested proceeding in this manner.

Walsh agreed that Council members should identify the things that are important to accomplish and vote on which items to will be the focus of this Council.

Walsh emphasized the importance of providing the proper tools to new Council members in order to bring them up to speed on what they should know in order to do an adequate job on Council. Council members should receive regular reports on the status and progress of sewer and road work accomplished with the dedicated millage and a plan of action outlining what still needs to be done. An updated Village organizational chart should be available for new Council members. This Council could be working on assuring that documents are available to inform future Councils on current procedures and the direction of the Village.

Spallasso responded that administration will be preparing a status report on Village sewer improvements and related budget information. In terms of roads, the Village will be undergoing an evaluation/survey of the road system this summer with a report forthcoming.

Woodrow commented favorably on how the previous Council regularly discussed its goals and objectives. He mentioned items that have not received follow through from this Council including implementation of the Strategic Plan and Charter revisions.

Pfeifer proposed that Council go through and update the Policies and Procedures Manual. She would also like Council to review and act on proposed changes to the employee benefit package for new hires submitted by the Village Manager.

There was general agreement that Council would seek a consensus on what it wants to accomplish rather than work on a specific task at tonight's meeting.

Koss asked that a report prepared by Pfeifer on proposed Charter revisions be distributed to Council for review and discussion at a study session. Pfeifer remarked that she drafted two pages of corrections and changes to the Charter. She expressed the view, however, that so much of the Charter is outdated or has been superseded by state law that it is at the point where it should be rewritten. Rewriting the Charter would be a three-year process involving the creation of a Charter Commission.

Another facet of the question of whether to rewrite the Charter is the recurring topic of whether Beverly Hills should become a city. Pfeifer would like to wait for the recommendation from the Finance Committee on village versus city status. Council can tweak the Charter, but it is an outdated document that needs redoing. The cost of rewriting the Charter would be a significant factor.

Motion by Koss, second by Rijnovean, to schedule a special Council meeting for the purpose of reviewing the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed (7- 0).

Council agreed to schedule a study session on Wednesday, July 19 at 6:30 p.m. The major focus of the meeting will be discussion of the Policies and Procedures Manual. Other agenda items will be review of Charter revisions and discussion of a memo dated April 14 from the Village Manager regarding proposed changes to benefit package for new hires. Council members have asked to receive a copy of the goals and objectives matrix from the previous Council.

Walsh restated her interest in looking at a rental inspection ordinance and existing property maintenance ordinances to insure that Beverly Hills remains an attractive community and retains its high property values. Taylor indicated that he would support placing a landlord/tenant ordinance on the Council agenda. There was discussion of a previous Council's review of a landlord/tenant ordinance, which was not adopted. Spallasso reported on the ongoing efforts of the Village code enforcement officer to be on the lookout for violations. At Council's inquiry, Taylor will provide information on rental homes in the Village.

Another topic that Walsh would like addressed is how to insure the future financial stability of the Village. She maintained that cutting costs and increasing revenue should be an important goal of the Village. Walsh commented on employee benefits and the need to address the increasing costs of health care.

Pfeifer stated that the Village's Finance Committee is conducting an analysis of how the Village functions from a financial point of view and will offer recommendations to Council.

Don O'Connell of 20900 Smallwood drew on his experience to offer some ideas on labor/management approaches. He suggested developing a strategy to work with employees for the reason that it is in Council's best interest to make this a viable community for long-term employment.

DISCUSS COMBINING ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

Spallasso has provided Council with a job description for a combined Village Clerk/Assistant Manager position as well as an updated organizational chart. It is his intent to combine the positions, which would add Assistant Manager responsibilities to the Village Clerk's duties. An Administrative Assistant position will take the place of the former Assistant to the Manager position and will represent a cost savings to the Village. It was noted that these two positions were combined previously when Pat Sullivan was employed by the Village.

Burry left the Council chamber.

Walsh commented that the Charter gives Council the responsibility for hiring the Clerk and setting his or her salary. There is also indication in the Charter that the Council has the

opportunity as a policy matter to agree or disagree with the combining of administrative offices. Walsh thought that it was appropriate to bring this topic forward as a Council agenda item. She provided historical background on the Clerk and Assistant to the Manager positions.

Walsh concluded that she is not opposed to combining the Village Clerk and Assistant Manager positions. She remarked that the Village has assisted Ms. Marshall through her Master's Degree and will benefit from her knowledge and experience to enhance its operation.

Motion by Walsh, second by Koss, to resolve that the Assistant Manager and Village Clerk positions be combined effective June 1, 2006.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed (6 – 0).

Burphy returned to the table.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Toni Grinnan of 1 Stonehouse Lane commented that she has observed members of Council during the last few meetings deal with long standing employees in a way that is troubling and reflects poorly on Council. Some members of Council have been quick with comments and criticisms at public meetings without showing proper consideration for Village's employees. Grinnan has been a resident for 23 years and was either a member of the ZBA, Planning Board or Council for 11 years. During that time it was her privilege to observe Village employees, who she found to be outstandingly loyal, extremely competent and dedicated to their jobs and to the Village.

Beverly Hills is lucky to have long-term employees with a depth of experience and knowledge of the community. Grinnan stated that she is keenly aware of Council's responsibility to oversee administration, but noted that previous councils have met that responsibility and still maintained a level of civility and respect that makes this a good place for quality employees to work. The face of Beverly Hills is the people who work in the office when a resident comes in with an issue or a problem.

Don O'Connell of 20900 Smallwood commented that he does not believe that the average person in this community feels the way that some Council members feel about how things are going in the Village. The speaker before him expressed it well. He thought that it was time for the citizens in this community to stand up and let this Council know how they feel. O'Connell stated that the Village has a tremendous staff, which he has had the experience of working with for the past three years on the Retirement Board. They are always prepared and professional. O'Connell remarked that if Beverly Hills is not a good place to work; it is not a good place to live.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

In response to public comments, Burry stated that he did not think that Council disrespects Village employees. He thought that the employees do a fine job. Burry commented that Council has an obligation to the Villagers to question salaries and benefits and look at

reasonable compensation for its employees. Burry remarked that the state and municipalities will be facing more financial constraints in the future.

Walsh expressed the view that it is not the intent of anyone sitting on Council to show disrespect or question a person's knowledge or integrity. This Council is trying to be informed and communicative while conducting business in the open. She addressed how the Council is trying to attack some of the Village's expenses including employee costs in terms of wise business practices. Walsh commented on what she thinks is necessary to achieve a well functioning village.

Rijnovean commented that the reality of the workplace has changed and Council is attempting to deal with that. Beverly Hills has a wonderful staff, but she believes that the residents are the backbone of this community.

Taylor remarked that he appreciated the comments from Council and members of the public at tonight's meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Dave Taylor
Council President

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary