



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT
FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021 – 9:30 A.M.
THE COTTAGE AT FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY
215 THE COTTAGE ROAD
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Teresa Myers Ervin, Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily (arrived at 1:22 p.m.), Councilwoman Pat Gibson-Hye Moore, Councilwoman Lethonia Barnes, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall (arrived at 9:50 a.m.), Councilman Bryan A. Braddock and Councilman C. William Schofield.

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Randall S. Osterman, City Manager; Mr. James W. Peterson, Jr., City Attorney; Mrs. Amanda P. Pope, Municipal Clerk; Mrs. Casey Moore, Assistant City Clerk; Mr. Scotty Davis, Deputy City Manager; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Mr. Kevin Yokim, Assistant City Manager of Administration/Finance; Chief Allen Heidler, Florence Police Department; Chief Shannon Tanner, Florence Fire Department; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utilities; Mr. Chuck Pope, Director of Public Works; Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Human Resources Manager; John Gregory Vincent, Meeting Facilitator and Principal Advisor of the Submarine Way; and Deke Copenhaver, Alliance Partner of the Submarine Way and former Mayor of Augusta

MEDIA PRESENT

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location and time of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ervin called the April 23, 2021 Planning Retreat Session of Florence City Council to order at 9:35 a.m. and gave an invocation for the meeting.

Mr. Randy Osterman, City Manager, welcomed everyone to the Council work session and introduced Mr. John Gregory Vincent, the facilitator of the meeting. Following the session with Mr. Vincent will be a short overview of the budget.

DISCUSSION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mr. Vincent said today's session is about determining some key priorities and objectives for Council to focus and agree on. The session will consist of small break-out groups and collaboration between Council and members of staff. At the end of the session, Council will have determined key areas of focus they have all agreed on.

Mr. Vincent introduced Deke Copenhaver, an Alliance Partner of the Submarine Way and former Mayor of Augusta. Mr. Copenhaver spoke briefly on leadership in local government and teambuilding within the governing body. He said Florence is in a great position from an economic development standpoint,



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but it is important to present a unified front publicly because businesses pay attention to what's going on in local government.

(Councilman McCall arrived at 9:50 a.m.)

Mr. Vincent said he is a co-founder of the Submarine Way, a training program that highlights the importance of equity and inclusion. The value statement of the company is “all of us are better than one of us” and the expertise and knowledge of staff and the expertise and passion from Council will create an effective team. To build an effective team, mindset comes first; once mindset is changed, behavioral change will follow.

Mr. Vincent went over the Retreat agenda and summarized each item:

- **Helping and Hindering Framework**
 - Council will be utilizing the helping and hindering framework behavior list when engaging in the small group conversations: Rapport building (attending; listening to feelings, concerns, and problems; accepting), exploring (investigating; identifying the problem and diagnosing; due diligence), and action planning (searching; decision making; and supporting).
- **Survey says...**
 - Prior to the Retreat, Council received a 20-question survey to complete. The purpose of the survey is to gain some insight on each Council member's priorities and to gauge their perceptions.
- **Exploring the top priorities we can agree on**
 - Council will be exploring the top priorities they can all agree on in small group discussions and will continue to collect and refine these priorities throughout the day.
- **Learn about all the expertise in the room**
 - Staff will be introducing themselves and explaining their capabilities to Council so there is an overall understanding of what they do, which will in effect create a better team.
- **Effectively working through change**
 - This will be a review session.

Mr. Vincent referenced the City of Florence Mission Statement and Core Values:

We will utilize proactive means to provide timely, effective and fiscally responsible municipal services to elevate the quality of life in our city and region. We will accomplish this endeavor by adhering to the core values:

Collaboration – Pursuing the best solution or outcome – thinking “we, not me.”

Professionalism – Demonstrating competence, proficiency, and skill, as well as honesty, integrity, and respect.

Ownership – Taking personal responsibility to be engaged, innovated, accountable and receptive in the completion of tasks and assignments.

Mr. Vincent said the mission and values of the city are a great tool and will be helpful in molding the top priorities for the city.



HELPING AND HINDERING FRAMEWORK

- Rapport building:
 - Attending
 - Listening to feelings, concerns, and problems
 - Accepting
- Exploring:
 - Investigating
 - Identifying the problem and diagnosing
 - Due diligence
- Action Planning:
 - Searching
 - Decision making
 - Supporting

Mr. Vincent said rapport building should never end, it is important to build strong relationships and consider differing opinions. Take time to explore - the better you explore, the more effective you will be at action planning. Mr. Vincent spoke of Council being a team and directed Council to stop calling themselves “new”. He said they each have views, opinions, and passions and each have varying levels of talent to bring to the table, but together they are a powerful and diverse group.

Mr. Vincent opened a group discussion and asked what the supporting category under Action Planning means. Mr. Kevin Yokim, Assistant City Manager of Finance/Administration answered it means to buy-in to the commitment; even if the decision didn’t go as you wanted it to, since you’re part of the team you’re willing to commit to the decision. Other answers included commitment, collaboration and interdependency, and acceptance. Mr. Dudley said action, by definition, takes effort: effort and implementation must take place after a decision has been made. Mr. Vincent said ownership (a core value) could be interjected, because to buy-in means you are heard, you are valued, your opinion matters and a collective decision can then made.

SURVEY SAYS...

Mr. Vincent went over some of Council’s responses from the survey:

What are the long-term priorities of your community?

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Better roads	0
Refresh downtown area	0
Economic Development	0
Housing	0
All of the Above	100%

Are there budget dollars allocated to your priorities?

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	25%
No	25%
Not Sure	50%



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Water and sewer are prepared for rapid growth.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	50%
No	50%
<u>Not sure</u>	<u>0</u>

Our law enforcement is fully and professionally developed and operating at a high-level.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Strongly Agree	0
Agree	100%
Neither Agree nor disagree	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Law enforcement needs modernizing, from equipment to community relationships.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	100%
<u>No</u>	<u>0</u>

My community and city leadership communicate well and establish the right priorities.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	0
<u>No</u>	<u>100%</u>

Our city has areas of blight.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	100%
<u>No</u>	<u>0</u>

Crime is a growing concern in our community.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	100%
<u>No</u>	<u>0</u>

The tax base is stable in my community.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	50%
No	25%
<u>Not sure</u>	<u>25%</u>



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There are plenty of good-paying jobs in my community.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Yes	0
No	<u>100%</u>

Our City Government has the following relationship with small businesses.

<u>Answer Choices</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Great	0
Good	0
Average	75%
Could be better	0
<u>Poor</u>	<u>25%</u>

Rank the following areas from 1 being the most important to 7 being least important:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing
3. Roads and other infrastructure
4. Leadership and development
5. Law enforcement/Community Relations
6. & 7. (tie) Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Initiatives and Workforce Development

EXPLORING THE TOP PRIORITIES WE CAN AGREE ON

Council and staff broke-out into a small groups to discuss priorities, why they are priorities, and what the obstacles to achieving these things might be.

[Break: 11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.]

Following the break, Council and staff reported on their top priorities:

- **Communications**
- **Safety**
- **Economic Development**
- **Annexation**
- **Community Development**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Finances**
- **Staff Development**

Mr. Vincent asked staff and Council to further develop each of the top priorities. They will come up with ideas under each category and some ideas may fall under more than one top priority category. After this exercise, Council will be able to refine their priorities into something they can actually accomplish.

Below is the result of the exercise.



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Communications:

- Mindset change/investment
- Customer service
- Marketing
- Appearance

Safety:

- Lighting
- Customer Service
- Marketing
- Appearance

Economic Development:

- Business Investment
- Minority business investment and growth
- Lighting
- Customer Service
- Marketing
- Aesthetics

Annexation:

- Business Development
- Communication
- Customer Service
- Marketing
- Appearance

Community Development:

- How it looks
- Community Revitalization
- Housing
- Development/stabilization
- Lighting
- Communication
- Customer Service
- Marketing

Infrastructure:

- Lighting
- Communication
- Marketing
- Aesthetics

Finances:

- Lighting
- Communication
- Customer Service



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- Marketing
- Transparency

Staff Development:

- Communication
- Training/Cross-training
- Customer Service
- Hiring/Development
- Marketing
- Aesthetics

Mr. Vincent said step one is to determine what is in your control and can easily be implemented utilizing existing resources. The lists that have just been developed will be the focal point moving forward.

LEARN ABOUT ALL THE EXPERTISE IN THE ROOM

Mr. Vincent asked that staff take a couple minutes to introduce themselves and speak on their background, scope of responsibilities and expertise. The following staff members were present:

- **Randy Osterman, City Manager** – Mr. Osterman has a background in Emergency Services (Fire, Police, EMS). He said he has an expertise in coordinating, facilitating, and conducting so staff can effectively and efficiently run their departments.
- **Chuck Pope, Director of Public Works** – Mr. Pope was hired with the city as Recreation Manager. Public Works includes: Beautification and Facilities (including the Jayne Boswell animal shelter), Athletics and Sports Tourism, Sanitation (garbage, yard waste, and recycling collection), and Equipment Maintenance (city shop).
- **Scotty Davis, Deputy City Manager** – Mr. Davis was hired with the city as Infrastructure Department Manager and has worked under several departments. His current role includes assisting the City Manager, working with the community, and informing and advising Council.
- **Jennifer Krawiec, Human Resources Manager** – Mrs. Krawiec was hired with the city in Human Resources. She said working in Human Resources and serving employees is the most rewarding job with the city. Human Resources staff assists employees the entire life span of their employment, from recruitment to retirement.
- **Shannon Tanner, Fire Chief** – Chief Tanner began his employment with the city as a Firefighter. The Fire Department is responsible responding to various emergency calls (fire, medical, rescue, etc.), conducting inspections for businesses, risk management (employee accidents and citizen claims), and emergency management (plans, processes, and procedures for emergency situations). The Fire Department is also over the Building Department (permitting, plans review and inspections for commercial and residential).
- **Allen Heidler, Police Chief** – Chief Heidler was hired with the city as a Police Officer. Police officers work to build relationships and trust with the community in a collaborative effort.
- **Jerry Dudley, Planning Director** – Mr. Dudley was hired with the city as Compliance Superintendent. His scope of responsibilities include the Planning Department (administers the zoning code; oversees Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and the Board of Zoning Appeals; and handles annexations), Community Services (includes Neighborhood Revitalization Program), and Recreation (includes programming in Community Centers).
- **Kevin Yokim, Assistant City Manager of Finance/Administration** – Mr. Yokim has served local government in Florence for 25 years (Florence County prior to the city). Housed within the



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Finance Department is Utility Finance, IT, Business license and permitting, procurement and city court.

- **Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development** – Mr. Moore was hired with the city as a Project Manager. His role is over Downtown Development, Engineering (review plans), GIS and the Local Foods Initiative (including the Farmers Market).
- **Amanda Pope, Municipal Clerk** – Mrs. Pope was hired with the city in Public Works and is now part of the City Manager's Office. The City Manager's office provides support to Council and the City Manager (building agendas, completing minutes, record maintenance, etc.); Communications (website, social media, newsletter, and the public access channel); and Special Projects (Flo-town 5K, etc.).
- **Michael Hemingway, Utilities Director** – Mr. Hemingway was hired with the City as Wastewater Manager within the Utilities Department. The Utilities Department is over Wastewater Operations (the city operates 2 wastewater management facilities), Water Production (1 surface water facility, 31 groundwater plants, and 14 elevated water tanks), Stormwater Collection, Sanitary Sewer Collection, Distribution, Compliance, and Maintenance.
- **Jim Peterson, City Attorney** – Mr. Peterson has been the City Attorney since 1994. His role is to assist the City of Florence and Council in drafting ordinances and various documents and keeping the city lawful. He works with staff on a regular basis to answer questions and work through issues.

[Break: 12:32 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.]

EFFECTIVELY WORKING THROUGH CHANGE

Following the break, Mr. Vincent discussed the change cycle and going through change under stress. Collectively, you want everyone to, at least, get to the acceptance stage when forming decisions.

Four stages of going through change:

1. Denial
2. Resistance
3. Acceptance
4. Embrace

Mr. Vincent briefly spoke on marketing, he said you cannot over-market or over-communicate. The more you market and communicate why and how you will accomplish something, the more it allows people to move out of the resistance stage into acceptance.

Mr. Vincent said Council and staff will be breaking out into a small group discussion again, this time to focus on 2 or 3 priorities from the ones already identified, within their control, that the city can focus on first. Group discussion commenced.

(Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily arrived at 1:22 p.m.)

Following the group session, Mr. Vincent spoke of Paired Comparisons. Paired Comparisons are good for decision making and can be used as a tool to help work out the importance of a number of options. He said Council and staff will be going through a couple rounds of Paired Comparisons to narrow down their top priority lists. Group discussion commenced.

Mr. Vincent asked each break-out group to discuss their top priorities from the session:



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- Group 1: Lighting and Marketing by humanizing city staff.
Group 2: Lighting, Economic Development with business investment, and Marketing with a social media presence.
Group 3: Communication by mindset change, Marketing to the people/Customer Service, and Community Development.
Group 4: Business Development and Annexation, Economic Development with internal and external Marketing/Minority business and investment/growth, Community Revitalization.

The following priorities were captured from the previous list:

- Community Revitalization
- Communication
- Business Development
- Business Investment
- Customer Service
- Minority Business Investment/Growth
- Lighting
- Mindset Change
- Marketing (including all four subtleties from above)

Mr. Vincent said Council and staff will break-out into groups again and will be completing Round 2 of Paired Comparisons from the list immediately above. Group discussion commenced.

Mr. Vincent asked each break-out group to discuss their top priorities from Round 2:

- Group 1: Lighting, Business Development, Marketing (Have a plan).
Group 2: Mindset and Community Revitalization (if citizens see things happen, their mindset will change; clean-up, board-up, and maintain properties).
Group 3: Lighting, Business Development, Marketing.
Group 4: Marketing (city staff and their roles, highlighting diversity), Lighting (to benefit Business Development and Community Revitalization).

Results from Round 2:

- Lighting
- Business Development
- Marketing
- Mindset
- Community Revitalization

Mr. Vincent said Council needs to get their top priority list to no more than 3. After a short discussion, Council agreed that Lighting would benefit both Business Development and Community Revitalization and could be a subsection to both of those, and Mindset could be a subsection of Marketing.

The top 3 priorities Council agreed on are:

- Business Development (lighting) - inclusive to small and minority businesses
- Community Revitalization (lighting)
- Marketing (mindset)



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Mr. Vincent elaborated on mindset and said mindset comes before everything, even the plan. You have to have a mindset in order to build rapport, explore and execute a plan. Mr. Vincent said Council needs to take these 3 broad areas of agreement and turn them into solid action items, they can even be a press release. A press release will allow Council to get in front of the narrative, control the narrative, and hold them accountable.

Mr. Vincent asked if there were any questions for him or Mr. Copenhaver.

Councilwoman Barnes asked what the next step is. Mr. Vincent said they have to plan and focus on some of the subsections and nuisances within their priority list.

Councilman Braddock asked Mr. Copenhaver what his first win was as Mayor of Augusta. Mr. Copenhaver said he became actively involved in economic development once elected. His first year in office they were able to recruit ADP, creating 1,000 jobs initially which has grown to approximately 1,700. When he first met with ADP, he was told of the company's commitment to diversity and Augusta having a diverse labor force helped in recruiting the company.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Copenhaver to elaborate on the "win over Florence." Mr. Copenhaver said he was Mayor when Augusta recruited Starbucks. Florence was a finalist for a Starbucks development, but the strength of Augusta's Arts and Cultural District at the time caused Starbucks to choose Augusta. Mr. Copenhaver said Florence learned a lesson from that and has developed an Arts and Cultural District that may have won over Starbucks today. People usually don't associate Diversity and Arts and Culture as part of economic development, but it is important to companies when they are looking for locations.

Mr. Vincent thanked everyone for their participation and he and Mr. Copenhaver left the meeting.

[Break: 2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.]

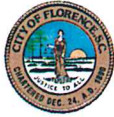
BUDGET INTRODUCTION

Mr. Osterman said Council typically receives a copy of the proposed budget at their first work session meeting, but they will be receiving a copy of the proposed budget today.

Mr. Yokim provided a brief overview of the city's major revenue sources and how the funds may be used.

The following funds are the four main funds for the city: General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund, Stormwater Utility Fund, and Hospitality Fund.

The General Fund is the most important fund for local government, the line items listed below comprise 86% of the total General Fund budget. The Water and Sewer Fund is the second largest fund and is a restricted fund. The Stormwater Utility Fund is the third largest fund and is also a restricted fund. The Hospitality Fund is the 2% tax on all prepared food and beverages sold in the city.



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**FY 2021/22 Budget
Major Revenue Sources**

General Fund:

		% of budget
Property Taxes	\$ 5,592,000	13.61
Business License	5,515,000	13.42
*Local Option Sales Tax – Property Tax Credit Fund	4,700,000	11.44
*Local Option Sales Tax – Revenue Fund	3,619,000	8.81
Insurance License	4,300,000	10.46
Franchise Fees	4,230,000	10.29
Transfer from Water and Sewer Fund	4,080,000	9.93
Landfill Fees	1,850,000	4.50
Transfer from Hospitality Tax Fund	1,521,7000	3.70
Total General Fund Budget	\$ 41,091,000	

* In accordance with state law, the property credit fund must be used as a credit against property taxes. The revenue fund can be used as General Fund revenue.

Water and Sewer Fund:

In accordance with City ordinances and various bond ordinances, water and sewer revenue must be used for the operation of the water and sewer system and for debt service on the various bonds issued for the water and sewer system.

		% of budget
Outside Water Charges	\$ 11,482,000	30.57
Inside Sewer Charges	10,600,000	28.22
Outside Sewer Charges	9,200,000	24.49
Inside Water Charges	6,820,000	18.16
Total Water and Sewer Fund Budget	\$ 37,561,000	

Stormwater Utility Fund:

In accordance with City ordinances and the stormwater bond ordinance, stormwater revenue must be used for maintenance of the stormwater system and for debt service on the bond issued for the stormwater system.

		% of budget
Stormwater Service Fees	\$ 1,377,000	94.28
Total Stormwater Utility Fund Budget	\$ 1,460,500	

Hospitality Fund:

In accordance with state law, hospitality taxes must be used for tourism related purposes.

Hospitality Fund	<u>\$ 1,377,000</u>
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Pro tem Jebaily asked Mr. Yokim to explain the property tax credit fund with the local options sales tax line item in the general fund. Pro tem Jebaily further inquired on annexations: the property tax credit fund is a credit against property taxes for city residents and does not apply to those properties outside the city. Pro tem Jebaily requested that staff prepare a document that shows the financial benefit for annexing into the city. Mr. Yokim said it makes sense for an owner-occupied residence to annex into the city and further explained that the current general fund millage rate is 59.1, but the credit offsets the millage to a net of 20-25 mills. Also, water and sewer rates are lower for city residents and the ISO ratings with the Fire Department keep fire insurance premiums down.

Councilman Braddock asked if the city's millage rate is 20 mills lower than the county's before or after the credit. Mr. Yokim replied before the credit. Councilman Braddock further asked if that means a business in the county pays more taxes than they would in the city. Mr. Yokim replied everyone pays county taxes, if you annex in the city you still pay the 79 mills for the county in addition to the 59 mills for the city for a residential homeowner; however with a commercial property paying the 6% tax, the local options sales tax is calculated on the appraised value, not the assessed value. As more properties are annexed in, the local option sales tax becomes more diluted as it is divided among the residences. At one point, 100% of the proceeds from the local option sales tax went towards property tax relief to city citizens; however, City Council passed an ordinance to adjust the portion in order to fund various projects, including neighborhood redevelopment and development for Francis Marion University.

Mr. Yokim introduced the budget book to Council and briefly described its contents and layout.

Pro tem Jebaily asked what the total budget is, and Mr. Yokim said it is approximately \$80-90 million.

Mayor Ervin thanked everyone for their participation.

ADJOURN

Without objection, the April 23, 2021 Planning Retreat of City Council was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Dated this 14th day of June 2021.

Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk

Teresa Myers Ervin, Mayor