

**CITY OF KALAMA  
CITY COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2015**

**CITY COUNCIL – PLANNING COMMISSION – VISIONING WORKSHOP**

Mayor Pete Poulsen opened the workshop of the Kalama City Council at 6:30 pm. Councilmembers present were Dominic Ciancibelli, Mike Langham, and Mary Putka. Planning Commissioners present were Phillip Fortuna, Dan Ohall, Kevin Wade, Jim Hendrickson, Kim Sullivan, and Patrick Harbison. City staff present were City Administrator Adam Smee, Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster and City Planner Matt Buchanan. There were no members in the audience.

The first part of the workshop was a discussion regarding the work the Planning Commission did on the Urban Growth Boundary and how this issue needs to proceed in the future. Mayor Poulsen and the Council members let the Commission know how pleased they were with the work that was done on the recommendations. The concerns raised by the County and the Port of Kalama, as well as NW Innovations, were reviewed briefly and it was agreed that the Commission's decision to hold off on the boundary changes was appropriate and the timeline set for reviewing the Urban Growth areas with the County was realistic and should be adhered to. There was also a consensus that more communication with the Port is needed so that it is all about the community as we look at proposals for economic growth for the future. More information for the public on the NW Innovations project would also be desirable.

The visioning work is being conducted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Planner Matt Buchanan explained that the current plan is very broad in the scope of the policies. The City may want to set clearer policies for growth in the future and this is the document that will do that. The visioning survey has received over 300 responses and Matt hopes the upcoming public workshop will provide additional input for the Commission to use as they continue the update. He has an exercise for the Commission and Council to complete tonight, which he will have the public participate in at the workshop. It begins with looking at what the aspirations are for Kalama, what the challenges are to reach those aspirations and what will be needed to reach them.

Planner Buchanan reviewed the vision statement and the guiding principles that were a part of the Community Action Plan completed in 2004. He asked if these are still desirable for the community. There was much discussion on what a "small town atmosphere" means and that it can be interpreted many ways. What the downtown area should look like was also a topic of discussion and that the current design guidelines are just guidelines and not required, which doesn't allow for any enforcement by the City. Is the City willing to adopt codes that have some restrictions for developing downtown? Do we want something like the "Leavenworth" restrictions, or something less restrictive? This is where we need to hear from the public and property owners. The City has been frustrated by the lack of interest or response from the property and business owners downtown. If we want to draw in new business then the property owners need to be able to provide what the lease holders may want. If the areas north and south of town develop, it could make downtown less desirable without improvements. The issue of allowing new business that competes with existing business was also discussed. What incentives are available that would help property owners would be an element to include. The median family income range for Kalama often exceeds the qualifying amount for certain grant funding opportunities such as Community Development Block grants.

Local demographics need to be addressed and ways to draw in more of the younger generations especially those under 30. What influences people to locate and stay here was discussed. Providing housing that meets the needs of different demographic groups and also the need for things to do within the community are elements to be addressed. Should the City be working with developers including using City resources or taking on debt to construct infrastructure that will help to make future development happen where needed and less cost prohibitive for the developers? The City has not decided how to market its downtown and that makes seeking economic investors more difficult. It was agreed that the sense of community with its family values is a one of the draws for the City, along with the natural beauty of the area.

Due to the lateness of the meeting, Planner Buchanan stated he would take the information gleaned at this meeting and what he receives at the public meeting back to the Planning Commission to work on prioritizing the final lists. The public meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2015 at 6:30 pm at the Community Building.

Mayor Poulsen thanked the Planning Commission for all their hard work which they do as volunteers noting they do a "fantastic" job. Their work is impressive as recognized by the governor's award they received for the work on the mixed used zoning code.

Mayor Poulsen adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm. These minutes are not verbatim. A copy of the recording can be made available on request.

  
Pete Poulsen - Mayor

  
Coni McMaster - Clerk/Treasurer