

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session and for a work session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 26, 2021, in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, and in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

PRESENT: Mayor, Beverly Ficek; Councilor Ken Wells; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Andrea Ceniga, John Gambee, and Karen Leach; Excused Absence: Councilor Sidney Washburne; City Administrator, Jason Knope; Police Chief, Bob Morris; Public Works Director, Gary Kaping; Finance Director, Mike Crocker; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

REGULAR SESSION**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Ficek opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

2. Homeless Discussion – Laura Seiders

Mayor Ficek stated that Ms. Seiders was not able to be at the meeting.

3. Adjournment of Regular Session

Regular session was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

WORK SESSION**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Ficek called the Work Session to order at 6:31 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and took roll call.

2. Council Goals Session and 5, 10, 20 Year Plans

Mayor Ficek noted that she had asked Director Crocker to provide the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Five Year Forecaster, Fund Structure, Personnel Organization Chart, and Budget Summaries, which were documents in the current budget.

Mayor Ficek asked the Council to share their goals. Discussion included:

- Focus more on 5-year or shorter-term goals over 10 to 20 years, as things changed so fast. (Councilor Thomas).
- Traffic Master Plan. Traffic was increasing and would continue. (Councilor Ceniga).
- See if there were additional Council duties in the Charter that could be included in the Council rules. (Councilor Gambee).
- Streets, Water, and Police. These were goals citizens had expressed in the last election. (Councilor Gambee).
 - Councilor Wells noted that streets included streetlights, alleys, and sidewalks.
- Establish a metric or measuring system to show how much the City was accomplishing from year to year. (Councilor Gambee).
 - Examples: Metrics for Streets, Police activity, Water Quality Projects, etc.
- Streets, Water, and Police. Citizens had expressed that these were most important. She added that sewer was also a top priority. (Councilor Leach).
- Communication to public and letting them know what was going on was very important. (Councilor Leach).
- See what goals they could accomplish before the next election cycle. (Councilor Wells).
- Get Police Department fully staffed. (Councilor Wells).
- Develop a Facilities Plan. (Councilor Wells).
- Use Revolving Loan Funds towards the future Sewer Plant upgrade. (Councilor Thomas).
 - Administrator Knope responded that the Revolving Loan Fund uses would be discussed by the Finance and Judiciary Committee. He added that the Sewer Plant upgrade would be 10 to 20 million dollars.

- How do they get the word out about the Revolving Loan Fund. (Mayor Ficek).

(Ms. Laura Seiders apologized as she had been unexpectedly detained. She asked if she could come back in 2 weeks to talk about unhoused people. Mayor Ficek responded yes).

- Look at organizational structure and if the Council wanted a full-time planner, etc. (Mayor Ficek).
 - Administrator Knope noted that the organizational structure of the City was under the scope of the City Administrator's duties per the Charter. Instead of the Council talking about adding specific positions, it would be helpful to him for the Council to provide the bigger picture policy guide on the services they would like to provide, and then he would come up with the options to provide those services.
- Develop an Emergency Plan and coordinate with School and Fire Districts. (Mayor Ficek).
- In setting goals, make them achievable and not unrealistic so they could be productive. (Councilor Ceniga).
- More viable Downtown and Hotel/Nice Restaurant. How to attract more businesses and draw people to town. Could tie into area tourism. (Councilor Wells).
- In addition to Downtown, look at Business Corridor on Highway 99, as that was where the majority of businesses were at and there were 10,000 cars a day on the highway. (Councilor Gambee).
- Soliciting more donations to City. Could lower cost of government and increase services without raising taxes. (Councilor Gambee).

Mayor Ficek asked for staff input on goals.

Chief Morris:

- Staffing:
 - The budget included 9 officers and currently had 7. Having a hard time finding qualified people. Administrator Knope noted that having a hard time finding qualified people to fill positions was not just in the Police Department but was a citywide issue and gave examples of Sanitation Worker, Senior Center Aide, and Accountant. It was noted that hiring issues were a nationwide problem.
 - As population and traffic increased in the future, would need additional officers.
 - Councilor Ceniga noted that it was important to hire good employees, so the City did not end up with bigger problems. She would prefer running a little behind and paying a little more in overtime than hiring the wrong people. Chief Morris and Director Kaping responded that was what they were doing.
 - Mayor Ficek added that the message from the Council should be that current staff were appreciated and the Council was 100% behind staff.
- Reserve Program: Were actively recruiting for the Reserve Program.
- SCOP Program: Had people express interest in being a part of a SCOP (Senior Citizens on Patrol) program.

Director Kaping:

- Sewer Plant Upgrade: Had started pre-design work and were possibly within next five years of seeing this come to fruition, depending on DEQ.
- Staffing: Had two positions on the books - Treatment position, which would be filled with Sewer Plant upgrade and Utility.
- Sanitation: With future growth, would have to look at how to continue providing those services.
- His top projects:
 - Water and Sewer
 - Water Quality upgrades and replacing older pipes in town.
- Well/Small Water Treatment Plant: Looking to add a well on the west side of town and maybe a smaller treatment plant for redundancy and more capacity.
- Septic Tanks/Connecting to City Services: In response to questions, Director Kaping explained the process for how to address properties on septic tanks that were within City

boundaries but technically in the county. He noted that at some point, they would need people to get off of their septic tanks. Administrator Knope added that until the Sewer Treatment Plant update was done, they had to be careful on how many they connected to City sewer, as DEQ had allowed a specified amount until that project was completed. Director Kaping reviewed the Vista Dale Subdivision process, where the City put in the sewer main line and people paid a certain fee to hook up. Administrator Knope added that every 10 to 15 years the state provided grants to extend sewer systems.

- County Roads: At some point, the county would want the City to take over Oaklea Drive and 18th Avenue, but Director Kaping hoped the county would first make improvements to those roads.

Administrator Knope:

- Develop metric for increasing staff citywide. Instead of simply saying we have “x” amount of homes and would need “x” amount of officers or Public Works staff, use industry standards for both and come up with a metric that the Council would like to use.
- Do a Rate Study. The City was 3 years into the current 5-year rate study.
- Review all Master Plans: Transportation System Plan, Sewer Master Plan, Water Master Plan, Streets Master Plan, and Parks Master Plan.
- Plan on Communication. To more effectively and rapidly get good information to public.
 - Example, Public Works flyer that was sent out on projects.
 - Maximize City’s digital footprint, including updating the City’s website and using social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.
 - Council members expressed the importance of good communication to the public to help counter bad information and give people resources if they had concerns. They also expressed the importance of allowing citizens to communicate and be listened to.

Next Steps: Administrator Knope would work with Recorder Vodrup to get the list of goals discussed tonight. Then staff would review, possibly categorizing into short, medium, or long-term goals, bring that back to Council along with any follow-up questions. Council would review, make any changes and once they were happy with the list, they could talk about the next steps. With the holidays approaching and the November and December agendas already full, staff would bring the list back to Council in early 2022.

Council members expressed appreciation to one another and staff for the good work tonight.

3. Adjournment of Work Session

The Work Session was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Beverly A. Ficek, Mayor