

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, February 16, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

via Zoom

Present: Members: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Gonzalez, Alderman Witte, and Alderman Robinson. Others: Alderman Panus; Alderman Anastasia; Mayor William Aiello; Fred Saradin, City Auditor; Keri Kerper, Community Development Program Coordinator; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Tim Richardson, Fire Chief; Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary; Jerry Volz, Information Technology, and Becky White, CivicPlus.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Crawford called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, February 2, 2021)

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2021 committee meeting was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. Presentation / Discussion – New City Website, Becky White, CivicPlus

Alderman Crawford introduced Becky White from CivicPlus and explained that this is going to be the first in many discussions and conversations on a topic that came out of the Diversity Committee. He explained that this is also on par with the movement to breed an identity for the City and to move forward with; marketing. He explained that CivicPlus is a website design company that is specifically for municipalities.

Ms. White explained that she had a conversation with Alderman Crawford and explained that she found out that Olean is a revitalized City with a hometown touch. She explained that they discussed transforming the City's online image to show that we are in a healthy, growing area with a modern, inclusive, divertive community. She explained that the City should also have a highly ADA compliant digital doorstep that is accessible to 100% of the community.

Ms. White explained that one hundred percent of CivicPlus' business is with local governments. She explained that the goal is to align department services and business processes to better help citizens with digital services, as well as to enhance communication. She explained that this

sounds easy but that it depends on the infrastructure. She explained that the website should paint a picture for potential new businesses and residents.

Ms. White explained that it sounds like the City has invested a lot into its infrastructure and has invested in its growth. She explained that the website should promote benefits such as the full service Fire Department, Police Department and Airport, as well as educate residents and visitors with the historical significance of Olean. She explained that COVID gave us a lot to think about in terms of how it affected local government. We had to go to a model where we were able to serve our residents without face to face contact and communicate through multiple channels while still being transparent. She explained that COVID has forced people to be able to work from anywhere, anytime. She noted that many believe that COVID-19 expedited the digital transformation of their workplace.

Ms. White explained that CivicPlus serves over 400 local governments and over 100,000 users, and that more than 250 million people are impacted by their services. She explained that they want to help the City do the things that we need to do and give us the tools to do so. She explained that they work a lot with the City's neighbors and operate in the fifty states plus Canada and Australia.

Ms. White explained that the City should consider CivicPlus because they are a one stop shop that offers a multitude of software with one single sign on. She explained that there is software for mass communication through email, social media and text, as well as consulting, training and ADA compliance. Their service provides for a site redesign every four years. She explained that about 18% of the community is struggling with accessibility, and they are building websites that are highly accessible as well as training content providers and civic leaders.

Ms. White explained that they also aid in cyber security. She explained that last year when Ferguson experienced a large DDOS attack, they helped them through that situation. She explained that she understands that in the past the City was attacked. They have written in their contract a 99.9% uptime guarantee, and they invest over \$3 million annually in cyber security.

Ms. White explained that CivicPlus is available 24/7, which separates them from a lot of competitors. They do not outsource any of their tech or customer support. There is always someone on their side of the desk to help, whatever the situation may be.

Ms. White asked what one word the City's website would do in a perfect world, and Alderman Crawford responded "unify". He explained that the local government provides a lot of services and has a lot of great programs and great things going on. He explained that a solution would bring the community closer together with that information.

Alderman Gonzalez asked about mass communication and explained that during a boil water advisory in his ward, it was 10 a.m. before everyone was notified. He asked if there is a solution that could provide a mass text or some other sort of mass rapid communication for situations like these. Ms. White explained that there is a program called "Notify Me." She explained that CivicEngage is software for website design, which is what is being discussed tonight, but there is other software that they provide. She noted that CivicEngage contains lite versions of each piece.

Ms. White asked how easy it is to find things currently and get information on the City's website. She showed samples of different websites that they have created for communities in the area and explained that they are trying to see what the City's vibe is and get a feel for our community. She explained that each drop down menu is a "mega menu" that makes things easier for users. She explained that the search box is intuitive and also only searches within the website.

Ms. White explained that it is really important that the City's website is mobile responsive, and it is not currently. She explained that a lot of people use phones and tablets. Mobile responsiveness would auto compress photos so that they load quickly on mobile devices and require an alt tag in order to publish, which helps keep the City ADA complaint.

Ms. White explained that "Notify Me" allows a user to put their information into the website, and with one click, the City can send notifications to users. The public can also sign up for the alert center to be notified via text or email when there are things occurring that the community member may be interested in. They could also receive notifications when new alerts are placed on the calendar on the website.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he thinks that this is fantastic. He explained that a lot of people have lamented that they wish that they knew something was going on, and he thinks that this could be a really interesting, helpful tool to solve that issue. Ms. White noted that this is not necessarily for emergencies like weather alerts because this is an opt in service. She explained that there is a program called CivicReady that would aid with emergency alerts.

Alderman Crawford asked if what is being presented is the lite version, and Ms. White responded that it is. Ms. White explained that people can sign up for agendas, and PDF packets can be put on the website as well as recorded audio or video. She explained that this helps a lot with transparency and also helps people within the organization find information because it helps them search by a time period, date or phrase, and then filter down to specific committees. She explained that these are something that the City would want to be word searchable, and if the agenda center is being used then it is already searchable.

Ms. White asked if the City is currently using any online forms. Ms. Kerper explained that there are forms under Fire Department – Code Enforcement that can be emailed to Codes. Ms. White explained that in CivicPlus' Forms Center, they have some forms built for the City right out of the gate and the City can include an unlimited amount of forms. She explained that the City can include drop tasks and sections that can be mandated to be filled out before proceeding. She explained that this program keeps track of forms received, puts the forms into archives, and gives the capability of acknowledging them instead of having someone walking the forms in or mailing them out. She noted that every department on the site has the capability of using the Forms Center.

Alderman Witte asked if the software that Code Enforcement has can interact with CivicPlus software. Ms. White responded that they can, and that the company handles this all the time. She explained that a lot of stuff comes with the website that may be functionality that the City does not have right now, and the City will not have to go out and get it because they provide it.

Mayor Aiello explained that there are forms on different pages of the City's current website. Ms. White explained that the City may be using different types of forms or PDF's. At the end of the day if we choose to, all departments could use fillable forms. She explained that the submitted forms can be sent to multiple people and a workflow can be set up behind them.

Ms. White asked what happens when someone notifies the Aldermen that there is a pothole. Mayor Aiello explained that DPW gets the call. Ms. White explained that there is a citizen request tracker on the website. She explained that when someone wants to submit a code violation or something else that they can go to the website and login, and on the back end the website allows the City some empirical data and a map of where complaints are. She explained that this comes with the content management system.

Ms. White explained that Brookhaven has a large Parks and Recreation Department so they purchased a separate department header for this section of their website that contains the name, and logo. She explained that all of the drop downs on this section of the site are tied to parks and recreation. She explained that if you have multiple websites or some departments with a lot of content, or want an independent look, this is available as well.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that he wonders how much feedback and general information we missed with our current situation versus if the public could just go on the website and fill out forms and submit it to the City. He explained that he feels that we are missing a lot of very valuable feedback from our constituents. Ms. White explained that when the call is completed, she can send everyone a document entitled "The Digital Impact of COVID-19" which shows how much digital traffic to municipalities went up because of the pandemic. She explained that this is really important if you want the capability of putting out information quickly and efficiently

and to have the ability to go in and make changes to the website. She explained that the webmaster has control over the whole thing, and they give permission to different departments to update their page or calendar. She explained that if they feel comfortable with them making content then they can allow for that, but that it is still submitted for review before it goes live. She explained that there are a lot of various permission levels. Staff is trained before the website goes live so it is very easy for everyone to use.

Alderman Panus asked if the City would have the ability to integrate the website to broadcast live like the City currently does on YouTube with Zoom meetings. Ms. White explained that this is something that the CivicClerk software does. She explained that the software hosts meetings, live streams them, and provides closed captioning, all for an extra cost. Alderman Panus explained that he asks because YouTube is great, but he feels that we are at the mercy of someone else and he prefers to be self-sufficient.

Ms. White explained that the CivicClerk software allows the municipality to host in a secured way. She explained that this would give the City the capability to have more control. The City could post YouTube videos on the base site, but the livestreaming is at an added cost. Alderman Panus explained that his thought process is that if we use this website and there is some kind of emergency and the Mayor or someone needs to make a statement, the website can be used and we don't have to rely on YouTube if it is down. He explained that this would allow for a more direct way to address the public. Ms. White explained that notification ability is critical there. She explained that adoption of the "Notify Me" has been very popular and has climbed a lot recently.

Ms. White explained that a part of the education is letting people know that they have the capability to sign up, as well as to unsubscribe. She explained that both of these are done without any requirements of staff to do so.

Alderman Crawford explained that the best government is the most transparent government. He explained that we are now virtual and streaming meetings. He asked if someone could get pinged that the Council is now live, and Ms. White responded that it wouldn't really ping them as much as allow them the capability of notifications through the calendar piece.

Alderman Witte asked what could be done on the website to show that there is more diversity in the community, and what can be done to help attract people of different cultures. Ms. White explained that a lot of it really boils down to the City's photos and things that are captured in the photos of the community. She explained that a better website allows the City to communicate better, and can get notifications and events out to people better. She explained that photos can present a lot of different looks and feels, and what the City has on their site will depend on what the goals are for the community. She explained that photos can be made

seasonal, and one of her favorite features is that when you are uploading content you can select dates of when you want it to be put up and taken down.

Alderman Anastasia asked what the cost for this is. Ms. White explained that this is something where they would have to look at the scope to find out how much is being migrated. She explained that every time a website is created, it is a custom project, so this would require further conversation. Alderman Crawford asked if this is all kept on CivicPlus' servers or if this is something that the City will have to house and pay to upkeep. Ms. White explained that this is a hosted solution and a closed source, so people can't go on Google to figure out how to hack the site. She explained that they have been in business for 20 years and have never been breached. They are watching for intrusion detection and defense at all times, so the City would not have to worry about that.

Alderman Panus explained that he is glad that Alderman Crawford brought this up, as he has been using the City's website a bit, and it is outdated and would be nice to be upgraded. Alderman Crawford explained that he knows that we have an abundance of great information and if we move forward, it is our job to rebrand the City and push our identity. We need to look at the City's website as a marketing tool for the local community. He explained that when you think of someone who is possibly going to come take a job at the hospital and they search "Olean NY", probably one of the first things they will pull up is the City's website. He explained that the IT Department was tracking stats and in the first week to ten days of February there were 1,000 to 1,500 unique hits. He explained that we will see how the numbers pull together at the end of the month. Mr. Volz noted that this also includes bots that could be hitting the website to look for email addresses or other valuable information that they can pull from the website.

- b. PL #07-21: (Crawford) To form a Recruitment, Retention, and Rebranding Taskforce for the City of Olean.

Alderman Crawford explained that this is something that he has been looking to do and would like the Council, as well as the Mayor, to share their views. He explained that he thinks that it is mission critical to help the City move forward. He explained that he does have some recommendations in terms of what he would like the taskforce to look like, but ultimately the mission is to bring together organizations to create a unified approach and strategic vision for the City. He explained that the goal is not to have the Mayor and Aldermen leading the charge, as this belongs just as much to the local business leaders and local universities. He would like the committee to help reinvent the City's identity, to retain and grow businesses and retain and grow the population base.

Alderman Crawford explained that when someone from the CEO alliance comes forward and says that a local company is going to hire 100 jobs in the next year, our job should be to see what we can do to support that and what we can do to get it to 125 jobs. He explained that maybe that's nothing and maybe certain things are out of our hands, but this is his stance. What he is presenting is a working document and potential members can change. He noted that like before, the Council creates the taskforce and the Mayor makes the appointments, but collectively with the Council's recommendations. Alderman Panus explained that one thing that hits him right off the bat is that maybe we should go a little higher and try to get a buy in from the State, even if a State representative to the committee only appears occasionally.

Ms. Kerper explained that she actually already does this twice a month with a good majority of the representatives suggested. He explained that a committee headed by Crystal Abers from Cattaraugus County meets twice a month. Alderman Crawford explained that this is part of what he is trying to do, and asked what the group's mission is. Ms. Kerper explained that it is the Cattaraugus County Economic Development Team. Alderman Crawford asked how well this team is working out, and Ms. Kerper explained that it is working pretty well. She explained that they are pretty involved with each other and even on the off meeting weeks they are reaching out about resources. Ms. Kerper explained that the County's website has all of the resources there for the team. She explained that she thinks that more needs to be done and more communication needs to occur before the new committee is created.

Alderman Crawford explained that something needs to change. He explained that he has lived here for a long time and he has seen businesses and people leave the area, so something is broken. He explained that this is a discussion item for the Council and asked where numbers are to show that the team is working. Alderman Witte explained that this is a long standing committee that Ms. Kerper is a part of. She explained that when she reads about the committee that is proposed she thinks of the Mayor's forum. When she was Mayor, they met quarterly. She explained that the same players are going to be the same players, no matter how you look at it. She explained that during the forum, businesses give updates and new businesses can come in to talk about how progress is doing. Alderman Witte explained that maybe the Council needs to have Ms. Kerper or Mayor Aiello update the Council once a month on economic strategies and progress in Olean. She explained that she feels that this should be an ongoing discussion.

Alderman Witte explained that at one point State representatives came to Olean and had a day long forum with local businesses and leaders. She explained that she thinks that we need to do more, and that she feels that Alderman Crawford is on the right track but that maybe the Council needs more updates about the efforts already taking place. She explained that she

thinks that everyone is trying to help with the situation at Siemens, but this is a private company and the City doesn't have much say in what they do.

Alderman Gonzalez recommended instead of Ms. Kerper updating the Council monthly, that perhaps a Council participant attend the meetings and report back to the Council. Alderman Crawford asked is this is a committee that Ms. Kerper attends the meetings of, and she replied that she does. Alderman Crawford explained that there is a big picture and a little picture. He explained that perhaps what he is proposing is too large of a list of people who are working on big picture projects with the County. He explained that something that has been communicated to him numerous times is the lack of a marketing plan, strategic initiative or identity on the City level. He explained that the best action plan would be not to bring all of these organizations together but go back to on the local level what needs to be done to create an identity for Olean.

Ms. Kerper explained that the City has the Comprehensive Development Plan. She explained that we surpassed the goals in the plan, which was written for 2005-2025. She explained that she feels that the Council should update the plan. Alderman Crawford agreed and asked how this can be done in a collaborative effort. He explained that he does not agree that it is just the City Council's responsibility to establish what the long-term plan is, and Ms. Kerper responded that it is the Council's responsibility to update the plan. Alderman Crawford asked if this task includes any individuals besides the Council, and Ms. Kerper explained that it involved a 20 to 25 person committee who is listed in the acknowledgements of the document. She explained that it is a good tool to aid in getting funding because it can be referenced. SH explained that it is getting outdated because we are successful in getting funds and have surpassed the goals.

Alderman Witte explained that she was on the Council and sat on the Planning Committee. She explained that a consulting company aided in the effort, and that it was a long process. Ms. Kerper explained that it happened over a year through intense meetings, and the process really made the committee look at the City as a whole and the whole region. She explained that the committee met with department heads to see where they were at versus the previous plan. SH explained that the consultant provides tools and guidelines to help write the plan. A facilitator helps bring the conversations back to agenda items, and a collective group of people meet with the long term vision of marketing and branding. She explained that the Comprehensive Plan needs to be used as a tool and not be put on a shelf to never be used again.

Alderman Panus asked how we take the Plan to the communications going out to businesses looking to expand or put an operation in Olean. He asked how we turn it into marketing to people who are looking for a place to live and a workforce to join.

Mayor Aiello explained that there was a meeting this morning with Congressman Reed with companies from the area as well as IDA Coordinators from surrounding counties to discuss how many job openings there would be in the next year to 18 months. He explained that through conversations, the group came up with 400 to 450 jobs that will be needed by firms in the region. He explained that Cutco will be filling 100 to 150 positions, and Eaton and Case each project 20. He explained that it was very productive and showed that there is some teamwork going on. He explained that there were discussions about the workforce and that people leaving Siemens may need additional training because they have been working there for a long time and may not have the necessary skills to walk off the street into a job interview. He explained that the hospital projects 80 jobs in the next 12 to 18 months with retirees and turnover. He explained that we are on the right track and know what we have to do. The meeting really opened his eyes to what is going on in the area.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that this is encouraging. Alderman Crawford explained that what is disappointing is that we are looking to break even, and that these jobs should have been a swing in a positive direction. Alderman Gonzalez explained that we can say we are breaking even, or we can say we are getting up off the mat.

Mayor Aiello explained that the group discussed who is marketing the facility and that Siemens still has contracts that need to be filled, so they have anywhere from 6 months to 18 months left. He explained that we are all looking at this as what we can do. He explained that we need to do some more communication here and work together. He feels that Alderman Crawford is on the right track here, and we need to work together to pull this all together.

Alderman Crawford explained that he is in no way trying to reinvent the wheel. Maybe the way to go about it is to reach out and look to update the previous Comprehensive Plan to strategize for the next 20 years. He explained that the number one thing he hears from constituents are questions about what the Council is doing to bring people and businesses to the City. He explained that all he is trying to do is pull this together. If not a taskforce, a committee, that can turn 400 jobs into 500. He explained that he keeps reading different articles and he would hope to be able to retain the industrial base but small town America has a better chance now of growing its telecommuting workforce, and this should be part of our strategy moving forward.

Mayor Aiello explained that the Mayor's Forum has been very useful, but that he hasn't been able to host it for a while because of COVID. He explained that it is good to meet with businesses and industries, as well as leaders in the community to discuss things in a casual setting. Alderman Witte explained that companies would be able to talk and find out how they could work together and help each other. She explained that they wouldn't have had that atmosphere if not for the forum. She explained that the bottom line is that we need more communication.

Alderman Crawford explained that information is power, and he agrees that asking Ms. Kerper for a quarterly update would be great. He explained that it's about setting an identity and he is more inclined to look at setting funding aside for a new Comprehensive Plan. He explained that Olean needs a new direction, and we need to know from a marketing perspective who we are and where we are going. We need to determine our focus. He would not imagine that this is a discussion that is had at the County level.

Alderman Robinson explained that he is all for rebranding Olean. He explained that we have a lot more to offer than just squirrels and trees. He explained that this is a great area and a great place to raise kids. He thinks that there is a way that we need to market this. We need to get out there not only that we have resources here, but that we have space for business. AS far as the Cattaraugus County Economic Team, this is the first that he has heard of it.

Alderman Panus explained that Ms. Kerper's name gets thrown into so many things, and he wonders if it would be beneficial to expand the department. Ms. Kerper explained that there are currently two people in the department, and she can't say if it should be expanded or not. She doesn't know if she has met with every Alderman, but there is a lot that the department does. They are spread thin. She doesn't think that they will ever be done, and that shouldn't be the point. They are involved in a little bit of everything. She explained that it would be nice to have some help but that isn't her decision. Alderman Panus explained that he had this impression that her workload is heavy and her department is small. He explained that we have taken a fresh look at a number of things since he has been here, and maybe that is something that should be looked at as well.

Alderman Crawford explained that it does seem that there is an opportunity to improve the connection between what our long term plan is for the City and the marketing of that long term plan. He explained that there is a disconnect there and as a citizen he doesn't necessarily see it. He asked what the Common Council can do to support this, such as adding a marketing position to the City's workforce. Alderman Panus explained that he is sure that there are people out there in the world that are looking for a place, and at the same time there must be people that know that they have an opportunity to meet that person's desires. There has to be some kind of an active effort.

Ms. Kerper explained that a lot of what she is doing is confidential because we do not want to lose someone to another community. She can't necessarily come out and tell the Council what is discussed with potential developers and businesses.

Mayor Aiello explained that he thinks that everyone is on track and that we are all looking to advance Olean. He thinks that the word communication has been used a lot, and he feels that we need to communicate more and work together.

A motion to postpone PL #07-21 was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Gonzalez. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

Alderman Crawford explained that he will have some conversations with Ms. Kerper and Mayor Aiello. He explained that he still believes that the mission is still important and still needs to be done, perhaps just in a different format.

c. Discussion – Change Orders, Washington Street Project

Mayor Aiello explained that as the Council knows, we established a Change Order Policy back last year. He explained that the change orders for Washington Street require a sign off from the Council. He explained that the Council has approved the project and bonding has been approved. These change orders would continue the water line replacement to 15th Street. He explained that the Council must acknowledge that they are aware of the change order and approve it.

Mr. Ring explained that the first change order reflects actual work project cost to include Phase II, and the second is a grant requirement that shows no cost increase to Northrup since they have agreed to the entire scope since the beginning of the process. He explained that the total project cost is slightly higher than the bond resolution because it includes all of the administrator costs for the project as well.

Alderman Robinson asked how much over the costs are. Mr. Ring explained that the resolution was passed for \$1,950,000 and that the consultant fee and administrative fees include for Municipal Solutions, who was on the bond call. He explained that we need their help with granting requirements and submitting to EFC. They also help us develop change orders as well as a plan. He explained that we have not closed on the grant but that once all of the information is collected and completed, he will submit it to EFC and they will start to pass this through their committees for approval. He explained that this can take a few months. Once this is done and returned to the City, we can sign a financial agreement with EFC and start being reimbursed by the grantor.

The Council gave a verbal consensus that they approve the change orders and authorized Alderman Crawford to sign the change orders.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Crawford, seconded by Alderman Robinson. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.