

Council Members

District 1: Terry Graham
District 2: Charlene McGriff
District 3: Billy Mosteller, Secretary
District 4: Jose Luis
District 5: Steve Harper, Chair
District 6: Allen Blackmon
District 7: Brian Carnes, Vice-Chair

**County Administrator**

Dennis E. Marstall

County Attorney

Ginny L. Merck-Dupont

Clerk to Council

Sherrie Simpson

March 15, 2023

12:00 PM

**101 North Main Street
Lancaster, SC 29720**

**LANCASTER COUNTY COUNCIL
County Council Chambers, County Administration
Building, 101 North Main Street, Lancaster, SC 29720**

WORKSHOP MINUTES

Council Members present: Allen Blackmon (*who entered the meeting late at approximately 1:57 p.m.*), Brian Carnes, Terry Graham, Jose Luis, Charlene McGriff and Billy Mosteller.

Council Members absent: Steve Harper.

Staff Members/Others present: Dennis Marstall, County Administrator; John Bodner, Assistant County Administrator; Sherrie Simpson, Clerk to Council; Kim Belk, Budget Director; Jason Gray, consultant with Willdan; Amy Lattarulo-Conrad with Willdan; various staff; and the press.

A quorum of Lancaster County Council was present for the meeting. The following press were notified of the meeting by e-mail in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act: *The Lancaster News*, *Kershaw News Era*, *The Rock Hill Herald*, Cable News 2, Channel 9 and the local government channel. The agenda was posted in the lobby of the County Administration Building and also on the County website the required length of time.

Call to Order - Vice-Chair Brian Carnes

Vice-Chair Brian Carnes called the Strategic Plan Workshop to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

Welcome and Recognition - Vice-Chair Brian Carnes

Vice-Chair Brian Carnes welcomed everyone to the Workshop.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - Council Member Jose Luis

Councilmember Jose Luis led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and delivered the Invocation.

Approval of the Agenda

Charlene McGriff moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Billy Mosteller. Motion Passed 5-0.; Absent: Blackmon, Harper

Discussion regarding the 2023 Strategic Plan

Update on Community Engagement Process and Project Status

Jason Gray provided Council with an update on the community engagement process. He explained that Willdan just released a Community Survey and recently hosted a Boards and Commissions focus group. He also explained that approximately 536 citizens had looked at the survey and that approximately 227 had completed the community survey. He noted that the respondents to the survey could be anonymous or they could provide a contact if they wished to do so. He also noted that the surveys could be taken on either a mobile device or on a desktop. He explained that citizens could take the survey more than once. He noted that they were just getting trends and theme information from the surveys and that this was not a secure and scientific survey. He further explained that they had three more focus group meetings scheduled: (1) business and industry; (2) non-profit and faith communities; and (3) intergovernmental agencies. He explained that the Community Survey would run for the next thirty days. Amy Lattarulo-Conrad, the team member from Willdan leading the community engagement process, explained that the survey was live on the County's website. Jason Gray noted that the survey had been sent out via the County's social media channels. Council discussed possible issues with the survey and Jason Gray explained that they should use the survey only as a data point. Jason Gray also noted that they would like to engage between three and five percent of the community, at a minimum, with the surveys, but that they would love to engage between seven and ten percent of the community.

Discussion on County Strategic Plan Components -- Vision, Mission Statement, Organizational Values, and Strategic Themes

For the remainder of the meeting, Jason Gray reviewed an updated power point that is attached as Schedule A to the written minutes in the Clerk to Council's office. He began the Strategic Plan discussion by reviewing the building blocks of the Strategic Plan: (1) vision, where the County wants to be; (2) values, what the County cannot lose sight of because they are the boundaries around which you act; and (3) strategic themes, which are the big buckets of how the County begins to advance towards the vision. He explained what a vision should entail and reviewed the four different components of a vision statement: (1) core ideology, which defines what the County stands for; (2) envisioned future, which describes a clear target; (3) core values, which defines what the County stands for and why it exists; and (4) core purpose, which is a consistent identity that is greater than individual perspectives. He explained that vision statements need to be an affirmative description, should be rooted in desire, need to be for the "long term," should be reflected upon occasionally to see if they need updating, should not be reactionary to a specific issue for the day, should not be obligatory, and thought of in the present tense. He discussed the County's current vision statement in relation to the needed components and he reviewed some examples of vision statements. Council and the consultant discussed whether the County's current vision and mission statement were missing any components, that "great" needed to be more clearly defined, the best length for vision statements, whether the statement should reference listening to the needs and wants of the community and to serving the community, whether the statement should be inclusive, and whether it should be a call to action that differentiates the County in some shape or form.

Next, Council provided feedback to the consultant group by rating the current vision statement. Jason Gray noted that 3.4 percent of the Boards and Commissions focus group ranked Lancaster County as an excellent place to live. Council provided feedback to the consultant group on whether any core values should be removed, combined or added. Council also provided feedback on whether any other values should be considered for inclusion within the Core values and if any other aspects of County government should be listed as part of the Core Purpose. Finally, each Councilmember provided and discussed their definition of "great." Council and the consultant discussed the importance of and the ultimate prioritization of public safety, the strength of public safety in Lancaster County and specifically the Sheriff's Department, that leadership starts with listening and communication, and that government has to strike a balance between restrictions versus freedoms.

Council took a break in the Workshop, which began at approximately 1:44 p.m. Council resumed the Workshop at approximately 1:54 p.m.

After the break, Council provided feedback to the consultant on how they hoped the County would be described in about twenty years. The consultant explained that they came up with emerging strategic themes for the County via Council's top initiatives. Jason Gray did note that the emerging strategic themes may change. Council and the consultant discussed the importance of economic development and whether it should be part of the strategic theme framework or whether it should be a supporting component of a strategic theme. They then discussed how to define the target for economic development. Next, Council ranked, in order of importance, the emerging strategic themes: (1) public safety; (2) infrastructure; (3) funding and revenue; (4) quality growth; and (5) county workforce/high performance organization. Council discussed the rankings.

Analysis and Discussion on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

Jason Gray led Council through a discussion on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Council provided feedback to the consultant by listing the County's current strengths, and Jason Gray noted that the Strategic Plan should continue to capitalize on these strengths. Council discussed the definition of great workforce and definition of geography and location.

Next, Jason Gray asked Council to list the County's weaknesses and he noted that the Strategic Plan would need to try to mitigate these weaknesses. Council discussed the fact that too rapid growth was the greatest current weakness.

Next, Jason Gray asked Council to provide feedback and to list the County's opportunities. He noted that opportunities are characteristics that are not yet strengths but could possibly be in the future. He noted that opportunities are characteristics that the Strategic Plan would want to leverage. Council discussed whether the County's access to the Catawba River could be an opportunity to leverage.

Lastly, Jason Gray asked Council to provide and to list the County's current threats. He explained that the Strategic Plan would try to counteract potential threats to the County's vision.

Amy Lattarulo-Conrad provided Council with an update on the community survey. She noted that, thus far, fifty-four percent of the people that had completed the survey ranked Lancaster County as an excellent place to live. She further explained that the County ranked lowest on mental health care and overall built environment.

Adjournment

Terry Graham moved to adjourn the Strategic Plan Workshop. Seconded by Charlene McGriff. Motion Passed 5-0.; Abstain: Blackmon; Absent: Harper

There being no further business, the Strategic Plan Workshop adjourned at approximately 3:20 p.m.