

MINUTES
STRATEGIC VISIONING WORKSHOP
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 7, 2019
9:00 AM

The Mayor and Council for the City of Destin met in special session in the Destin Community Center with the following members and staff present:

Destin City Council

Mayor Gary Jarvis

Councilmember Parker Destin

Councilmember Rodney Braden

Councilmember Cyron Marler

Councilmember Skip Overdier

Councilmember Prebble Ramswell

Councilmember Steven Menchel

Destin City Staff

City Manager Lance Johnson

City Engineer John Geurin

Code Compliance Manager Joey Forgione

Deputy Public Services Director Tim Pietenpol

Deputy City Manager Webb Warren

Principal Planner Lauren Witt

Senior Administrative Coordinator Lorraine Berrish

Library Director Wen Livingston

Stormwater Manager Sara Sims

Land Use Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey

Public Services Director Michael Burgess

Parks/Recreation Director Lisa Firth

IT Manager Matthew Pace

Building Official Noell Bell

Finance Director Bragg Farmer

HR Manager Karen Jankowski

Deputy Parks/Rec Director Scott Berrish

City Attorney Kyle Bauman

Facilitator

Buz Eddy

1. Welcome Introduction – Overview of the Day

The City Manager welcomed everyone to the workshop. After introductions of all meeting participants, the City Manager and the meeting facilitator Mr. Buz Eddy provided a brief overview of the workshop, discussed its overall objective and reinforced what needs to be accomplished during this time.

2. Where Are We as an Organization?

A) Organizational Accomplishments for 2019

The City Manager and Deputy City Manager provided the following presentation:

Office of the City Manager

➤ Kicked off Energov Project

❖ Scanning documents

- ❖ Representative from Community Development, IT, Code Compliance, Public Services, Clerk's Office and City Manager's Office working together
- ❖ The organization is documenting their processes and finding ways to streamline our workflow and improve our work product
- Simplified the Paid Parking process
 - ❖ Drastically reduced staff time to manage paid parking
 - ❖ Increased revenue for parking improvements
- Civic Clerk Agenda System
 - ❖ Numerous new employees have been incorporated into the system in 2019 and is learning our agenda process
 - ❖ Increased use by the organization as well as required training for the system
- Wage & Classification Study
 - ❖ Increases to minimum market for job class
 - ❖ Staffing levels – recruited and filled 15 full-time positions
- Process Maps and Workflows within City Departments
 - ❖ All departments analyzing workflows and processes within their departments
 - ❖ Lays foundation for systematic processes to be implemented within Energov and other systems
- CIP & Special Projects
 - ❖ Joe's Bayou Recreational Area
 - In December 2016, grant application submitted for NRDA - Restoration Project. This \$12 million project will improve access to the existing boat ramp, enhance recreational amenities, and enhance and restore the topography and natural resources at Joe's Bayou Recreation Area and Mattie Kelly Park and Nature Walk. Grant to be managed by FDEP
 - ❖ Clement Taylor Park Renovations – Status:
 - OCBOC approved application submittal to US Dept of Treasury on 9-3-10. Initial Treasury review comments received, and replies sent. Awaiting Treasury to award the grant and then will enter into sub-recipient agreement with County
 - ❖ Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park & Plaza
 - Final design plans approved by Florida Communities Trust (FCT). OCBOC approved application submittal to Treasury on 9-3-19. Initial Treasury review comments received, and replies sent. Awaiting Treasury to award the grant and then will enter into sub-recipient agreement with County
 - ❖ Created the Public Beach Initiative in 2019 that has resulted in \$8.5 million in initial commitment to beach property purchase
 - HAAS Center is compiling economic/job data and survey to help secure Triumph funding through the application process
 - Data will drive final application

Public Information Office

- Increased presence with social media. The City continues to see growth on social media. Over 9,210 followers and 8,900 likes on Facebook
- The City launched Nextdoor to boost neighborhood communication, with targeted audiences of over 2,700 residents
- Staff has also been in contact with Get the Coast, a digital media outlet covering government initiatives
- Increased presence with print media

- Increased cooperation with strategic partners and other organizations such as the US Census Bureau

IT Highlights

- Installed a new virtual server backbone to support the Energov software package and increased capacity of cloud backups
- Upgraded our MUNIS financial system to the latest 11.3 version to provide enhanced tools for the organization
- Office 365 migration for all users to increase organizational productivity and sustainability in disaster scenarios (in progress). Also provides much improved real-time collaboration in office documents
- Short-Term Rental application process improvements
- Improved mobility and communication resources for Code Compliance
- IT has created a knowledge-based system that continue to grow with articles to help employees with everyday IT needs

City Help Desk – FY 2019

- Requests through website

CATEGORY	SUBMITTED	CLOSED
Active City Projects	9	10
Beach and Harbor	58	60
Building Licenses & Permits	33	33
Code Compliance	102	102
Garbage Service/Debris	13	13
Miscellaneous	26	24
Parks and Recreation	18	19
Public Records Request	69	94
Streets and Sidewalks	68	72
TOTAL	396	426

Code Compliance Office

- Code Enforcement changed to Code Compliance and moved within the City Manager's Office
- New Staff: Harbor Waterways Compliance Officer and Beach Compliance Officer
- Expanded hours of operation to include weekends
- New protocols to better handle after hours Code Compliance issues
- Increased visibility: striping & light bars on vehicles and mobile offices
- Tech Advances: Code Compliance now equipped with in-car computers and printers to increase efficiency and effectiveness
- Between 10/01/18 thru 09/30/19: 1894 registrations, \$303,325 (STR, LTR, Livery Vessels, Beach Vendors)
- Between 10/01/18 thru 09/30/19: 2746 cases, equaling 4640 code cases and 6693 activities

<u>➤ Code Compliance Registrations</u>		<u>Affected Areas</u>
Short-Term Rentals	1010	South of US Hwy 98
Long-Term Rentals	393	North and South of US Hwy 98
Livery	450	South of US Hwy 98
Beach Vendor	41	South of US Hwy 98

Community Development Department

- Realignment of the Comprehensive Plan/Land Development Code: 467 of 468 parcels successfully rezoned (99.78%)
- 1,250 lien search requests
- 3640 responses to property information and general inquiries
- 18,500 documentation and maintenance of records
- 3380 visitor signs in's responded with customer service
- 25 ordinances proposed by staff (3 by applicants); 24 were adopted by Council

Finance Department

- Government Finance Officer Association Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting – Awarded to the City for the 25th consecutive year
- Expanded the budget process to provide more review time for City Council and staff. Hosted 3 budget workshops
- Distinguished Budget Award – Awarded to the City for the 16th year in a row
- Paid Parking Project – Staff assistance and management of process
- MUNIS Financial System Upgrade – Staff assistance and training

Office of the City Clerk

- The Clerk's staff provided administrative support for 128 evening meetings totaling approximately 256 hours; and which required production of 128 sets of minutes
- The Clerk's Office completed and distributed meeting minutes within 10 business days following the meeting 96.8% of the time
- Minutes of meetings were approved by appropriate bodies without challenges or corrections 97.6% of the time
- Quarterly inventory of records database reveals timely destruction of obsolete records accomplished 100% of the time
- Public records provided within 3 business days of request 96.6% of the time. The 3-day standard is consistent with the standard set by most other local municipalities

Library

- 54,000-plus visitors in 2019
- 1,500-plus patrons attended programs and STEAM focused special events during the summer reading program
- 204 children and teens signed up for summer reading logs and kept track of their reading. The Rotary Club of Destin sponsored the summer reading program for 2019
- Code Club (started in the Fall of 2016). Every class has been filled to capacity since its inception
- Art hanging system was added to the library with a rotating exhibit from local artists

- New and expanded collections of e-materials including eBooks, eAudio books, digital magazines, Lynda.com, and Brain Fuse (learning and tutoring platforms). E-material checkouts have increased 84% from 2018
- Moveable shelving fixtures replaced static shelving which allows flexible use of library space

Parks and Recreation Department

- On-leash Dog Pilot Program was successful and expanded. We now have 5 neighborhood leased dog friendly parks
- Parks crew cover Beach Parks and Boardwalk from dawn to dusk to better serve our residents and visitors
- Replaced decking and rails at June White Decker, Crystal Shores
- Resurfaced walking track at Morgan's Sports Center
- Installed Earth Network Outdoor Lighting Alert System at Morgan's Sports Center
- FY 2019 Rentals and Registrations
 - ❖ Morgan Sports Center
 - Rentals - \$42,975.10
 - 18 Tournaments - \$55,757.84
 - Adult Program Registrations – 631
 - Children Program Registrations - 688
 - ❖ Buck Destin Park
 - Rentals - \$5,190.50
 - ❖ Joe's Bayou Boat Launch
 - Ramp Fees - \$85,283.00
 - Commercial Passes - \$2,060.00
 - Non-Resident Passes - \$5,125.00
 - Resident 2nd Passes - \$1,305.00
 - ❖ Community Center
 - Rentals - \$22,787.72
 - Adult Program Registrations – 712
 - Children Program Registrations – 895
 - Volunteer Hours – 2,654
 - ❖ Clement Taylor Park
 - Rentals - \$2,464.70

Public Service Department

- Secured amendment from NFWF to use remaining grant monies to fund two new stormwater projects – Calhoun Avenue and Cross Street
- Five major paving projects were completed – Mattie M. Kelly Blvd, Stahlman Avenue (98 to Kelly Street), Gulf Shore Drive (98 to Sandpiper Cove), Restaurant Row and Scenic Hwy 98 (Restaurant Row to 98)
- Public parking lots re-stripped: Morgan's Sports Center, Destin Cemetery, City Hall Annex and City Hall
- 1405 feet of sidewalk has been repaired or replaced throughout the City
- All Public Services staff has completed FEMA Emergency Management Training Modules for the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System. Supervisory staff in our Public Works Division have completed both the Debris Management Plan Development course as well as the Debris Operations course

- Embraced new technologies to streamline our processes
 - ❖ Digital on-line fillable permit application forms
 - ❖ Using cell phone apps to collect field data and import it into our geographical Information System (GIS)
 - ❖ Using updated aerial photograph to conduct infrastructure assessments (in progress)
- Permitting process started on two park projects – Construction of Royal Melvin Heritage Park and Clement Taylor Park
- Street Miles Swept – 230 miles removing approximately 75 cy of debris. Replaced over 400 signs
- Work Orders Received/Works Orders completed within 5 days
 - ❖ 933 work orders received
 - ❖ 692 completed within 5 days
 - ❖ Completion percentage – 75%
 - ❖ Rights-of-Way Permits Processed – 246
 - ❖ Main Street/City Hall Banner Poles Installation- Artwork Banners placed
- Added signage to all paid parking lots as well as added parking signs to help address parking issues on Stahlman/Sibert
- Emergency washout repair at Joe's Bayou
- Installation of two new transit stops
- Assisted Beach Safety installation of new lifeguard stands at Norriego Point
- Initiated a monthly safety training program for Public Services staff
- Truncated domes replaced – 100-plus installed

3. Where Are We Going?

A) Council and Mayor Key Initiatives and Projects

1) **Beach Re-nourishment**

- a. Establish a schedule with permitting and funding factored in.**
- b. Must keep East Pass open**

Councilmember Overdier wants the City to be proactive and work with the Army Corps of Engineer (ACOE), Okaloosa County, State and other appropriate agencies to be placed on regular schedule for beach re-nourishment and dredging rather than waiting until the beach is washed away before taking action. He stated that regular dredging is necessary to keep East Pass open and avoid involvement in litigations which only slows down the process.

Mr. Eddy emphasizes that the permitting process is very difficult. Early application is necessary to get on a regular schedule; and that if they have to put up matching money, it would be much easier to do it incrementally.

The City Attorney noted they have been in two permit administrative challenges. The City prevailed on the permit challenge to the City of Destin's permit. The challenge to the Army Corps of Engineer (ACOE) permit is still pending; however, it is a similar case and so they anticipate a similar result. He also stated that the City is working with the ACOE to expedite the process. The City has received some indications they may be able to dredge at the beginning of the year. It will be under the City of Destin permit, which would require disposal on the Holiday Isle beaches. They plan on modifying their permits after they get through with this process because these permits have left them exposed to administrative challenges under their present condition. They also anticipate ACOE and FDEP willing to work with the City to get on a 5 to 7-year dredge schedule.

2) Public Beach Access

- a. Pull trigger on land purchase.**
- b. Establish public access corridor along areas with private ownership**

The Mayor noted that they have approximately \$6.8 million earmarked for this initiative. The initial plan was to get as much money as possible before deciding which property to purchase; however, some Council members feel they need to start doing it now rather than later in order to get more things accomplished. He also stated that they are waiting for the Triumph funding as well as the report from the HAAS Center. They have submitted the preliminary application to Triumph; but before they could submit a complete application, they would need the result of the HAAS study to determine the return on investment and the economic impact of public beach park.

The Mayor suggests they go ahead and spend a portion of the available money to purchase some of the properties, some of which are located next to existing beach access points, since they do not now when Triumph funding will be available. He also stated that working with the federal government could be an arduous process; and that being able to provide beach access as early as next year would encourage and excite the residents.

Councilmember Destin suggests they preserve every advantage they have to be able to obtain the Triumph funding; adding they need this money in order to obtain their number one and number two options. However, he would be willing to support purchasing smaller properties that are already located adjacent to the property they already have as long as it does not exhaust their existing funds.

Ms. Sandy Trammell, a Destin resident, suggests the City pursue leasing some of the land with the option to buy when they receive the money from Triumph.

The Mayor noted there was a property owner who offered that option, but the City did not consider it. He also stated that when the HAAS Center produces their report, they would have a much clearer picture of all their available options.

Councilmember Braden suggests trying to lock in the price of some of the properties they have on the list now until the Triumph money becomes available.

According to the City Attorney, there are potential arrangements they could explore in entering into contingency agreement with property owners. If directed by Council, they could explore contingency contracts with property owners pending the availability of future funds.

The Finance Director suggests they do not limit themselves to the \$2 million the City has already committed; adding that if the right property becomes available and it is a good deal, they should go for it. He also stated that if the Triumph funding is still a few years away, the City would have enough time to accumulate additional money in their reserved funds.

Mr. Eddy stated that the City should try to communicate with the County Administration, the Triumph Board, and the HAAS Center staff the dilemma they are facing with the rising prices and with the parcels becoming less and less available.

Councilmember Destin recommends they discuss instructing staff and the City Attorney to try to negotiate some contingency contract with property owners at a future Council meeting.

3) Traffic

a. Develop a plan to improve level of service

b. Work with MPO and FDOT

4) Implement Destin Crosstown Connector (two lanes)

Mr. Eddy stated that traffic is always a big issue, especially during the summer season in Destin; and that it has come up more often in his discussion with individual Council members. He added that the Destin Crosstown Connector has become quite a controversial subject.

According to the Mayor, even though the crosstown connector is quite a controversial issue, he feels the Council came up with a real good compromise and staff is working hard to get a two-lane design done for the road. He stated they need to expedite this process so that the Council could approve the project soon. He also noted that when he and the City Manager met with FDOT Secretary Gainer, they were told the \$2.7 million funding for the project would still be available once the City approves the final design for the project. He added that two County Commissioners assured him TDC funding would also be available.

The City Manager announced that staff would be bringing back a list of qualified engineering firms willing to take on that project at the first meeting in December.

Councilmember Destin explained they are not redesigning the entire project. They are simply making some adjustments to the current design; and so, they would be using some of their continuing services contractors for this project.

Mr. Eddy stated that when talking about the crosstown connector, they need to consider other factors such as enforcement, traffic calming and traffic circles because they are creating a parallel facility to US Hwy 98.

Ms. Trammell mentioned that one of the things that contribute to the traffic problems especially during the summertime are people that are speeding up and then slowing down while trying to find places because they do not know exactly where they are going. Other cities handled this situation by numbering their traffic lights to make it easier for people to find places. It also makes giving direction much easier.

Councilmember Ramswell agreed with the numbering system, adding she had mentioned the same thing to Mr. Eddy when they met. She stated that the idea of having wayfinding signs that are numbered, such as Exit 1, Exit 2 and so forth, is much more convenient.

Councilmember Menchel noted that when he was a member of the Public Works and Safety Committee a few years ago, they suggested the numbering system for the streets because they felt it makes a lot of sense. He asked if they need FDOT's permission to install the numbered signs.

Mr. Burgess stated that since FDOT owns the right-of-way and they installed the signs, they would probably need to obtain their permission to put up numbered signs; however, he would investigate it to make sure.

Mr. Shane Moody of the Destin Chamber of Commerce stated they tried to undertake this initiative with the mile markers signs several years ago; but FDOT did not approve. They also tried to get Gulf Power to approve putting signs up on the power poles, but they also refused.

5) Underground Utilities

a. Implement in phases

b. Plant street trees immediately thereafter

The Mayor noted that in their negotiations with the new owner of the Gulf Power Company, one of the key issues being discussed is undergrounding the Destin utilities beginning in US Hwy 98.

According to Councilmember Destin, the single largest vision he has for the City of Destin is undergrounding the utilities and streetscaping. He stated that the City has approved too many large buildings, garish designs and signage. Their only option to bring back the charm they have lost is to underground the utilities and fill US Hwy 98 with Live Oaks and native landscaping. This would also provide added protections during severe weather. He continued they need to make an ambitious, multi-year investment in their infrastructure and aesthetics to be able to jump start the development and redevelopment in Destin and back the higher-level visitors they have lost.

6) Short-Term Rentals

7) 24/7 Code Enforcement

a. Body cameras for Code Enforcement

Mr. Eddy stated that people are building big houses along the beach and using the VRBO or Airbnb. A lot of people are showing up at houses to have a great time, but what they are doing are not exactly conducive to single-family home next door who wants the quiet enjoyment of their property. The idea of 24/7 code enforcement schedule to enforce short-term rental regulation was frequently mentioned during his conversation with each member of the Council.

The Mayor noted that the newly appointed Short-Term Rental Task Force are currently meeting on a regular basis to address some of these issues.

Councilmember Menchel stated they talked about additional manpower at the previous Council meeting; at which time he suggested a 6:00 PM to 2:00 AM shift because they need the coverage after midnight to take care of the noise and parking issues. He also stated that safety issue is not a big concern because if the code compliance officers need some assistance, they could always coordinate with the Sheriff's Office.

According to the City Manager, the Code Compliance Manager is interested in adding a later shift, possibly till 2:00 AM. However, the purpose of this Visioning Session is to prepare for FY 2021. If they implement this plan for the upcoming tourist season, they would need to do a budget amendment because there would be a need for some additional staff and probably an additional vehicle to cover the extra shift.

The Mayor stated that anything that happens after midnight is not normally related to trash or illegal parking, and so it ought to be the responsibility of the Sheriff's Department, not the City's Code Compliance Department.

Councilmember Braden stated that the Code Compliance officers need to issue more citations that warning tickets to discourage code violators.

Councilmember Marler suggests they consider having their Code Compliance officers attend some law enforcement standard courses to give them a better education and a little more

insight on how to approach people and how to react to certain situations from the law enforcement point of view.

Councilmember Menchel stated they could ride also along with the Sheriff's deputies to learn these things.

Councilmember Menchel also mentioned that several violations involve repeat offenders. He recommends considering some sort of elevated penalties for the repeat offenders.

The City Manager noted this is one of the issues currently being addressed by the Short-Term Rental Task Force; and that it would involve some amendments to the current ordinance. The goal is to get the amendments approved by Council prior to the start of the tourist season.

The Code Compliance Manager Joey Forgione discussed the following proposed schedule for the Code Compliance Department:

	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
Admin			8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5
Day Shift			6-3	6-3	6-3	6-3	6-3
Night Shift	3-11	3-11	3-11			3-11	3-11
Harbor Unit	7-4	7-4	7-4			7-4	7-4
Beach Unit	7-12	7-12					7-12

Mr. Forgione also noted that he has coordinated through the Sheriff's Office having a deputy to provide some assistance to the code enforcement officers on night shift duties, if necessary, when following up on a noise complaint.

8) Charge for parking near access points.

- a. Destin to maintain beach near the access points (i.e., trash pick-up and raking)**

Councilmember Ramswell stated that she had seen significant deterioration in the condition of the beach in terms of raking and trash. The beach was raked nearly daily when Sandman used to provide this service. Now it is a big deal if the beach is raked once every two weeks. The beach is their main feature and their number one tourist generator. They need to take pride in their beaches. They need to find a solution to this issue.

The Mayor asked the City Manager to discuss this issue with the County. One solution maybe to ask the TDC to set aside the money they would normally use to pay someone to manage the beaches and transfer the money to the City and let the City handle it.

9) Streamlining permitting

- a. Not by relaxing rules but by getting to applicants quicker with the information they need.**
- b. Certain conditional permits do not have to go back to Council**

Councilmember Braden stated that he hears complaints from a lot of contractors that it takes forever to obtain a permit in Destin.

Mr. Eddy noted that the Community Development Department staff is developing a system whereby a developer can find out the current status of their development application and the steps to be taken to expedite their permitting process. The system would provide more coordination, increase transparency and improve the process.

According to Deputy City Manager Webb Warren, it is one of the City's top priorities, and that City staff is very dedicated to this project as they expect to see significant improvement in the process. It is going to be a difficult process since they are changing the way they do business. It could take a year to get through the first phase because it is a monumental phase.

Building Official Noell Bell explained that implementing the new software is the key. There will be a checklist built into the system. It asks for information that the applicant would need to produce in order to go forward with the permitting process. The review time for staff will be a lot shorter because everyone will receive the information at the same time instead of being passed on from one division or department to another.

The Mayor asked when they could expect the system to take effect.

According to Mr. Warren, it is going to be a 12-14-month process to get through phase one. They are currently ahead of schedule but there are a lot more to do. They have been working with Okaloosa County as the County is also considering implementing a similar system.

Councilmember Destin noted they are channeling approximately \$400,000 into the Community Development Department for the next 1 ½ year from short-term rental fee increases. That money can also be utilized to hire more staff involved in permitting.

The City Manager stated they could expect improvements during the 12-14-month phase one period. The processes they have been working on are already in place. It includes some benchmark data for how long it should take to process each individual permit as each permit is different. This data will allow them to determine whether they are meeting their goal.

The Human Resources Manager noted there are still two positions open in the Building Department. It has not been easy getting people to fill those positions because it is currently a job seekers' market and they are losing people before they could recruit and interview them. They have made some offer, but the persons declined the offer.

Councilmember Destin stated that he understands they are competing with the private sector and so he supports giving staff the resources necessary to make compensations more competitive. He suggests re-addressing the issue with regards to compensation.

According to Mr. Eddy, another issue that came up during his discussion with the Council was the possibility of a code amendments for conditional use permit. Once the condition is met whether it should go back to Council for approval or if it can be handled at staff level.

The Mayor stated that he would prefer the latter because the Council's job is to legislate. City staff is the expert on this matter; and so, they should administrate the process. He added this is an issue they should discuss at a future Council meeting.

The Land Use Attorney stated it is the Council's prerogative to establish a policy in this regard; however, the Community Development Director is happy with the current procedure since

they do not have an excessive number of conditional use permits coming in that would fill the Council's agenda. She added the Council can always change the policy if necessary.

10) Complete Heritage Park Project Village Inn

No discussion

11) Establish regular communication with City Manager.

- a. Need system to follow up on items raised by Council and citizens.**
- b. Check minutes of committee meetings immediately to see what follow up is needed.**
- c. Check contracts to be sure vendors are providing services they are being paid to provide**

Mr. Eddy stated that this item involves meeting minutes of volunteer committees and boards. Sometimes the Council does not see the minutes until much later and so action items are not immediately addressed.

Councilmember Menchel stated that many citizens devote a lot of time on these committees. Motions are made and captured in the minutes. Since these minutes must be approved by the committees, it would take at least a month before Council sees them. They do not have a process in place currently for the committees to immediately convey the information to the City Council unless the members call their individual Council member and provide them the information. He also stated that as the previous chairman of the Public Works and Safety Committee, once the committee adopted a motion, he would ask to get on the Council's agenda to address important issues.

The City Clerk noted they make it a point to provide draft copies of the minutes to Council once they are completed; normally within days following a committee meeting. These minutes are considered draft until approved by the committee.

Councilmember Menchel remarked that in many cases some members of the Council do not read the draft minutes. He continued they need to establish a standard operating procedure to get important information to Council as quickly as possible. They need to inform the chair of each committee that they can get on the Council's meeting agenda and address any of their committee's action before the City Council.

Councilmember Menchel also stated they need to establish some sort of mechanism to quickly share more information to the Council, and that the spreadsheet the City Manager developed is a good start. However, they need to automate it to provide Council immediate access to it. This would alleviate members of the Council having to asked a lot of questions regarding the status of certain projects at Council meetings.

According to the City Manager, they are currently working on a technical solution to providing the spreadsheet "live" instead of just sending a .pdf version of it to Council once a week. The process will allow members of the Council to log in and review the material.

Councilmember Menchel also requested that more items, such as special meetings and events, be placed on the Council's Outlook Calendar,

The City Clerk noted he used to be able to update the Outlook calendar for several of the Council member who requested it. The new system requires him to have permission to access and input information into everyone's calendar. He would coordinate this matter with the IT Manager.

12) Need grant writer on staff. Need engineering consultant with expertise in underground wiring phasing and funding

The City Manager noted that this position has been advertised. The position involves a combination of grant writing and project management.

Councilmember Destin stated the undergrounding of the utilities is a massive project. They would need to have a project manager whose sole responsibility is to manage this project for the City over the next 10 years. It would require a lot of coordination with landowners, attorneys, the Gulf Power Company and other utility companies. This person can either be an outside consultant that they would have to pay on a contract basis, or a City employee with a sole duty of handling this project for several years. He would like to discuss how they would finance this position at future Council meetings.

According to Councilmember Braden, the new grant writer would need to handle this project similar to the way the previous grant writer handled the Heritage Park project. Once this project commences, someone would need to provide the Council a status update at every Council meeting.

Councilmember Destin stated that the project manager's responsibility should be segregated from the grant writer's responsibility because this project would be too much for one person to handle. Undergrounding the utilities is a highly specialized project and it would be almost impossible to find a project manager who is also a grant writer. He added that a grant writer's sole purpose should be pursuing grants for the City.

The City Manager agreed that undergrounding is a separate issue; and that they do not have the in-house capability to handle the project. He also stated he has temporarily placed the new City Engineer to be the point person for the project until they either hire a staff member or contract with an outside entity to manage the project.

Councilmember Destin noted that everything is contingent upon the City's franchise agreement with Gulf Power as to the amount they should earmark from the franchise fees they collect for the undergrounding. They would also need to budget for landscaping and staffing resources that go along with moving the project forward. He continued that he expects the franchise negotiations with Gulf Power to continue to next year. He recommends planning to make sure they either fund the project through the franchise fees or through their general revenue so that when the project starts, they would have money available from one source or another.

13) Need wider sidewalks. FDOT money is available

14) Finance needs to be more cooperative with Council

No discussion.

15) Look at restricting boat and RV parking in front and side yards

16) Improve entrances to Destin from east and Mid-Bay Bridge

17) Develop unified wayfinding signs and rekindle adopt-a-street program. Install hangers on streetlight poles for decorative and informative banners

Councilmember Ramswell addressed items 16 and 17 above. She stated this is about beautifying and creating a unifying theme in Destin. They could do such things as making all the street poles at certain style, adding drawing of a marlin or a dolphin on street signs, or something that would alert people they are in Destin.

The Building Official noted that the Community Development Director is currently working on a presentation on wayfinding signs and planned on bringing it to Council once it is completed.

The Mayor noted that the TDC is in the process of doing a County-wide wayfinding project. It involves a substantial amount of money which would include a "Welcome to Destin" sign on the Mid-Bay Bridge.

Mr. Warren noted that the City's Public Information Manager and other members of staff have been working with the County to make sure they are not running a parallel process.

18) Need staff to take initiative in bringing matters to Council – "They don't need to wait for us to see a problem."

Councilmember Ramswell would like staff to feel free to bring ideas, or something that they feel would make a certain process more efficient, to the attention of the City Council and not wait until a problem occurs before doing so. She stated they want staff and the City to be successful and they want to be able to empower staff to do certain things.

19) Install boardwalk under bridge to north and east to encourage further development of harbor side

20) Build parking garage with retail on first floor and with a charge for parking

21) Height limits to 5 rather than 13 stories

The Mayor recommends they address the above 3 items at the same time since they all fit together with their discussion about redevelopment.

Councilmember Marler stated there have been various complaints about inadequate parking in the harbor. He pointed out that according to the easement agreement between the City and various harbor property owners, the City and the property owners are to do whatever is necessary to provide sufficient parking, including building parking garages. He continued that they have the adequate land to start building parking garages, but they have never tried to pursue it. He added that providing adequate parking is the City's responsibility based on the easement agreement they signed with the property owners.

Councilmember Marler also noted that paid parking is now the norm, and that the City and most of the properties in Destin are now charging for parking. He stated that they need to come up with a system that is consistent and fair for everybody. The City currently charges \$5, while other properties charge \$10 to \$20 for parking. He added that visitors might find parking in Destin too expensive and decide to go somewhere else.

The Mayor stated that they would eventually need multi-story parking garages specially if they are talking about redevelopment of the harbor district as well as redevelopment between

Mountain Drive and US Hwy 98. They should start working on the funding and making other plans ahead of time.

The Mayor stated that establishing height limit to 5 rather than 13 stories is already included in the comprehensive plan they just approved.

Ms. Bell noted that the height limit in the comprehensive plan is 6 stories or 75 feet in both the North and South Harbor District.

Principal Planner Lauren Witt added that the only exception to that rule is if there is an existing development order which could be subject to the previous rule in existent at the time it was issued.

22) Install traffic calming features on certain neighborhood streets

23) Need more boat ramps and parking

24) Control signage. Amortization of certain existing signs particularly in western part of the city

4. Public Comments

Mr. Greg Darden of Structured Parking Solution stated that the parking issue is not all about the lack of parking. It is also about behavioral control, wayfinding signage and street improvements. He noted that the RFP the City Council put out over a year ago was not all about parking improvements. It was also about looking for a team that could make recommendations and perhaps provide transportation improvements that included parking, and that his company was selected to provide that service. They provided the City Council a forward-looking contract, and that the first thing they suggested on their report was to allow them to do some parking study and report back to Council. The process stalled for a lot of good reasons, but they are still available if called upon by the City.

Mr. Mike Raim, a Destin resident, noted that many of the roads in Destin are not striped. They also have bike lanes and "no passing" signs that are no longer visible. He stated that adequate and good street striping helps slow down traffic.

Mr. Raim expressed the need to establish rules relating to golf carts. There have been many violations including children that are not old enough to drive a vehicle but are driving a golf cart on the street. He also stated that by State statute, golf carts or SLV are not allowed on major roads or highways.

Mr. Raim noted that when short-term rental was first allowed to exist in his neighborhood at Bay Estates, there were 17 vehicles parked on the street during the first weekend of their existence. It has taken 2 ½ years to disallow short-term rentals in his community. He recommends that when anyone sells a piece of property, there should be a notification given to perspective buyers that no short-term rentals are allowed in the neighborhood.

Mr. Raim also stated he is a member of the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee and they supported building parking garages a few years ago; however, he does not think parking garages sell very well. He added that the Marler Street Parking Lot is never full except during special events such as the Destin Seafood Festival.

Ms. Sandy Trammell, a Destin resident, would like to see the re-establishment of the Environmental Committee. She also stated they need to consider a ban on plastic bags. They do not belong on recycling and that many cities are already banning plastic bags. She would like the City to address the short-term rentals situation north of US Hwy 98 as they also have problems in that part of town. She urges the City's Code Compliance Department to write more citations and impose higher fines. She also expressed the need to train the City's volunteer committees and generate a process whereby actions of the committees are taken to Council immediately. She also noted that the parking area behind the Destin Community Center seems to be full all the time, and that they should start there if they are thinking about building a parking garage. Another perfect location for a parking garage is the area near Destin Elementary School.

Ms. Leigh Moore, representing the Howard Group, stated that the City Council will be making a very difficult decision regarding the underground initiatives and the comprehensive plan rewrite. Undergrounding utilities on US Hwy 98 is a must because that is where most of the commerce happen. They also believe the cost for undergrounding has come down substantially and so now is the time to move forward with it.

Ms. Moore also stated that the City's code with regards to permitting needs to be clear, predictable and easily understood by people wanting to develop or redevelop and are willing to adhere to the code and follow the City's vision. The process also needs to be extremely fast.

Ms. Moore urged the City to be more assertive about architectural guidelines, signage control, landscaping requirements and lighting; adding they could have control and guidelines in place and still allow property owners and developers to be creative. They also feel the City could bring existing development into compliance. They could provide everybody an amortization period to bring their signage, landscaping and lighting into compliance with the new code.

Ms. Peggy Vinson stated that his company, Vinson's Investment Properties, serves as a consultant for metropolitan cities. Some of the things the City is undertaking will put them on a time scale with other metropolitan areas. Destin is so sophisticated, but they can offer something that would complement Destin. The City has all the watersports; but what they need is an ice-skating rink as there is nothing nicer than seeing young people learning to ice skate. Funding has already been established for it as private funding will always be available for the City. Hospitals are already on board with the ice-skating concept because families can do it for their health.

The Mayor noted it is not just about an ice-skating rink, but a multi-sports complex that would basically replace a community center. It would provide all the same services including basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer. They would also be able to hold conventions. It is something they would need to consider into the future. It would require a public-private partnership. He added that as Destin continues to grow, they will need to provide more things to their residents and visitors. .

Mr. Freedlander of the Pensacola Arena Development Partners stated they are developers of public-private partnerships; and that they have proposed the development of a multi-use Convention/Sports Center at Escambia County. They take responsibility for the design, construction, financing, maintenance and operation of the project, as well as seeking Triumph funding for the project. He provided a brief overview of the project and then offered their assistance to the City of Destin.

Lunch Break 12 – 12:30

Following the break, Councilmember Menchel noted there are some items that he brought up during his one-on-one discussion with Mr. Eddy that were not included on the list.

The Mayor gave Councilmember Menchel the opportunity to discuss those items.

Councilmember Menchel proceeded to discuss the TDC funding of the Sheriff's contract; stating there are other money available for law enforcement purposes that they have not capitalized on. The Sheriff's contract just went up considerably this year. He reiterated that 80 percent of the calls for service in the City of Destin are for tourists. The City of Destin should not continue to pay such a large sum of money for law enforcement when 8 out of 10 calls are for tourists. They were not able to pursue more money from the TDC this year because their budget process was already completed; but the need to make sure they collect that money next year. He also stated that the City has never factored in the cost of the building Sheriff's deputies are currently utilizing; adding it would need to be considered as the Sheriff's Office continues to raise their rates for services they provide to the City.

Councilmember Menchel stated that the other topic is about having continuity with the lighting along US Hwy 98. Each block has a different color light. They also have the new lighting as part of the 3R project, but they still have a lot of dark areas on US Hwy 98.

5. Prioritization of Initiatives and Projects

Mr. Eddy stated that all the objectives the Mayor and Council identified have all been listed on the board. He gave each elected official a set of "dots" (one dot equals one vote) and asked them to select their priority objectives for implementation by placing one dot per objective they wish to support. The projects will be prioritized by the number of votes received.

Yellow dot = Priority #1 (Most important)

Green dot = Priority #2

Blue dot = Priority #3

Voting on prioritization of objectives resumes.

The results of the voting are as follows. The number and type of votes received are identified in parentheses following each objective.

- 1) Public Beach Access (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1)
 - a. Cleanup/Raking/Maintenance
- 2) Undergrounding Utilities (1, 1, 1, 1, 1)
 - a. Streetscaping
- 3) Short-Term Rentals (2, 2, 2, 2)
 - a. Control "where"
 - b. More "violations" – North of Hwy 98
 - c. Consider report from committee
 - d. Repeat offenders
 - 1) Elevated penalties
 - 2) Pull the business tax receipt

- 4) Grant Writer (2, 2, 3, 3, 3)
 - a. Advertise
- 5) TDC funds for Sheriff (1, 2, 3, 3)
- 6) Multi-use Convention/Sports/Community Center (1, 1)
- 7) Traffic (2, 2, 2)
 - a. Complete 2-lane connector
- 8) Boardwalk under the Bridge (1, 2, 3)
 - a. Install and encourage development of harbor side
- 9) Parking Garage – (1, 2)
 - a. Build
 - b. Retail on first floor
 - c. Charge for parking
- 10) Beach Re-nourishment – Planning Schedule (2, 2, 3)
- 11) Communication (1, 3)
 - a. Streamline permitting
 - b. List of priority projects (status)
 - c. Regular meetings with the City Manager
- 12) Control signage. Amortization of certain signs particularly in West Destin (2, 3, 3)
- 13) Wayfinding (1, 3)
 - a. Unified process
 - b. Adopt-A-Street
 - c. Hangers and informative banners on street poles
- 14) Golf Cart/LSV Rules (2)
- 15) Continuity streetlights (2)
 - a. LEDs
- 16) Improve entrances to Destin from the east and Mid-Bay Bridge (3, 3)
- 17) Striping Streets (3)
- 18) Committee Training (3)
- 19) Sidewalks (3)
 - a. Wider
 - b. More walkable
- 20) Reestablish Environmental Committee
- 21) Boat and RV parking restrictions in front and side yards
- 22) Height limits to 5 rather than 13 stories
- 23) More boat ramps and parking

- 24) Install traffic calming features on neighborhood streets
- 25) Architectural guidelines
- 26) Install traffic calming features on certain neighborhood streets
- 27) Need more boat ramps and parking
- 28) Control signage. Amortization of certain existing signs particularly in western part of the city

6. Public Comments

Ms. Karen Lugo, a short-term rental owner, stated that listening to the conversation of the Short-Term Rental Task Force, what seems to be the solution to the issues identified are not being addressed. The City's leverage points are the property management companies and the homeowners' associations (HOA). The Task Force seems to have decided not to regulate the HOAs. She stated there are good and bad property management companies. It has taken her years to find an excellent property manager in Destin. She stated that it does not matter how many citations they issue, unless they are talking to people at the local units where either the HOA or the property managers have created the contract with the renter it would be very difficult to address and really resolve the problems that are identified. A lot would be accomplished if the Task Force were talking to a group of liaisons from HOAs and property management companies. She stated that she has been encouraging property managers to get more involved. She further stated that not all short-term rental owners make a lot of money. She has put in \$300,000 in her two homes over the last few years mostly due to a lot of moisture damage, and that she does not expect to see any profit any time soon. She added that she and most of the short-term rental owners love what they are doing and want to be part of the solution, but they have not been fully represented at the Task Force.

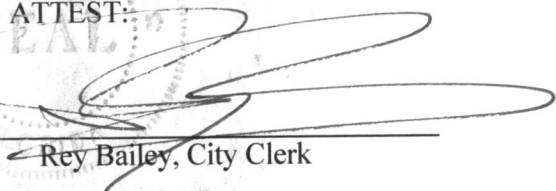
7. Closing Comments

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.



Gary Jarvis, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rey Bailey, City Clerk