

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Rossford City Council Special Meeting
Held July 18, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Neil Mackinnon followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Staczek, Oberdorf, Eckel, Marquette, Ruse, Heban, and Densic all present. Mayor Mackinnon said tonight's meeting is a special meeting to give input to the O'Brien/Gateway group on the Master Plan project for the city.

The representatives of the various team members present introduced themselves to council and the audience (see list attached).

Mick Granlund of O'Brien said they are looking for feedback from council as to what council is expecting.

Mr. Heban said he is looking at the pros and cons of development in the Crossroads and whether to rezone parcels. Mr. Staczek said we need to get balance with some residential rooftops in the Crossroads and changing the image of downtown which right now looks rundown. He said the marina is a jewel of the community that we need to showcase. Mrs. Eckel said the example provided by Mr. Densic of the marina in Huron, OH. is a good example of what ours should be. Mr. Ruse said he agrees with Mr. Staczek in that we need sustainable business downtown and to understand what is around us. He said we need to add heads to the area and explained financial issues related to the reciprocity agreement. Mr. Densic said we are spending \$500,000 of taxpayer money for this plan and it should focus on what we can do to bring good paying jobs to Rossford and how we compare to other communities that are seeing success and growth. We should find out what we can do to make us more marketable while making economic sense and not doing the developers job. Mrs. Eckel said we need jobs to bring revenue to the city. Mr. Staczek said the focus should be on the reality of now not what ifs i.e. reciprocity. Mr. Oberdorf noted that the previous attempt at ending reciprocity had organized opposition and that after the team talks to the various groups they will have a better handle on what people (landowners) want and that he agrees we need residential development in the Crossroads so empty buildings like the former Giant Eagle get filled. He would like to see the casino develop the waterfront and would like to know what other communities our size have done.

Mayor Mackinnon said we have great geography, that the casino anchors our business end, that we are closest to downtown Toledo and adjacent to affluent Perrysburg, that we have the largest retailer in NW Ohio (Bass Pro), and that we are close to 5/3 Field, the Toledo Zoo, and the Docks. He said the retention and attraction of talent needs amenities, cultural diversity, and public transportation. He agrees we have great things to work with, that we have a good relationship with our neighbors, and that we offer a great place to do business.

Mr. Oberdorf said part of the problem is that many businesses in downtown Rossford do not own the building they are in and also we have a lack of downtown parking. Mrs. Eckel said we have torn down two houses in the downtown area and she does not think council is against possibly using that space for parking. She would like to see some unique businesses in the Crossroads with more diverse retail that we do not currently have in NW Ohio i.e. Ikea to encourage people to come here as a destination. Mr. Staczek noted that are identity is glass and multi-cultural. Mr. Oberdorf said we need to identify the type of residential we want i.e. age groups. Mr. Densic said we need to identify what are target audience is and what the demographics will support and put all the pros and cons on the table. He does not care what kind of business comes as long as they are successful and part of the community. He agrees with the mayor

that we have to grow our way into prosperity. Mr. Heban thinks the new schools will attract young families and that we will need things that will attract and entertain 30 year olds.

Mayor Mackinnon said he would like to see Rossford become a live-work-play environment.

Mr. Ruse said we need sustainable businesses downtown and he is interested in hearing what the property owners in the Crossroads have to say.

Scott Polikov of Gateway Planning said currently they are working with a major Indian tribe to develop land around a gaming operation and that he realizes that eventually destination viability will go away. They are also working with a production business that sells primarily through Amazon.

Mr. Oberdorf said the key will be the flexibility of the landowners and business owners because the plan will not be successful without them.

Mayor Mackinnon said he would like to see outside investment and that he is excited that they are here.

Mr. Densic wants to know what is holding people back from coming here or what makes them stay. He noted the ProMedica concerts by the river and Mr. Polikov noted a development in Arkansas based on transit boating. Mr. Densic asked about the meeting with residents saying he did not see them publicized. Mr. Polikov said a direct mailing was made to all owners of 5 acres or more and all downtown businesses and will talk to anybody that wants to engage. He said they will have some type of town hall meeting for the public but it is really not that kind of process and that there will be an online survey. He said the plan will be a roadmap and that we cannot expect the state to be a magic bullet for funding. Mayor Mackinnon said the RCVB will be a great resource and cited the response to the Great Balloon Fest.

Audience comments were made by Kevin Urrutia who said we cannot be compared to development in Texas as they have no state tax. Real estate developer Brian McMahon thinks a good idea would be to get pictures of downtown Toledo when the Rally by the River used to take place. He said the vitality of downtown Toledo is coming back due to ProMedica and talked about our section of the river being the most attractive to boaters. He thinks Rossford has been a little hard on itself and said that Rossford's vision made the Crossroads happen and made the county a lot of money. He noted the success of Bass Pro and the amount of land still available saying that Rossford is one of the few places in the Midwest with this much property in title and infrastructure in place. He said the ideal scenario is we get a not just a plan but a champion like Toledo has ProMedica and Detroit has Dan Gilbert.

Mr. Densic said we need to understand where we are as to zoning regulations and if they hold us back and what can council do to make all the land in Rossford desirable.

Mr. Staczek moved and Mr. Heban seconded the motion to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.

Neil A. Mackinnon III
Mayor

Robert P. Watrol
Clerk of Council