

6/6/2019 | 8:15 AM

The meeting of the Citizen Financial Review Task Force was called to order at 8:25 a.m. in the Lower Level Meeting Room, located at 3600 Tremont Road by Chairperson Ann Gabriel.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairperson Ann Gabriel, Colin Gawel, Greg Guy, Tim Keen\*, Matthew Rule, Kaz Unalan

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jamie Crane, Ukeme Awakessien Jeter, Matthew Kirby

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Clerk Ashley Ellrod

**1. Discuss Responses to Charges from City Council**

**2014 Task Force recommendations and implementation**

**Undertake a high-level review of the City's current financial status and overall outlook**

**Assess the status of capital investments made to date and the outlook/plans for the next 10-year Capital Improvement Program**

**Undertake a high level assessment of existing service levels to verify alignment with community needs and/or expectations**

**Explore further privatization and/or collaboration opportunities**

Chair Gabriel advised the 2014 Task Force recommendations included considering replacement of the current .5 mill bond levy set to expire in 2017/2020 with a levy for additional capital needs. This is this is part of the Committee's recommendations to address.

Mr. Gawel related once you do not have the funds you lose it. He conveyed not knowing all the implications financially, with all the support the city has shown with the schools and the income tax, it seems like it would be a good time to let it expire. He said if that was the decision, there needs to be strong messaging.

Mr. Rule said he feels once it expires, it is hard to bring it back. He said he would be in favor of replacing it. He stated it would provide some flexibility for the city in the future.

\*Mr. Keen arrived at 8:30 a.m. and was present for all subsequent business.



Mr. Gawel questioned where the money would be allocated to. Chair Gabriel advised the city is starting a feasibility study for an indoor recreation center, and this may be a potential option for funding.

Mr. Gawel stated having a goal would make sense. Mr. Unalan agreed, he said knowing what the funds are needed for would be helpful.

Mr. Gawel advised residents have stepped up with schools and income tax. This may be a good time to pause or find a real good opportunity.

Mr. Rule said if they recommend keeping it, it should be tied to a very specific purpose.

Chair Gabriel questioned if any of the 0.5% income tax increase should be available for an indoor recreation center. She remarked she would prefer to not use the 0.5% income tax increase and does not believe that was on people's radar when Issue 23 was passed.

Mr. Gawel said he is inclined to keep that as a separate issue. Mr. Rule agreed, and suggested explaining there are other potential sources of revenue that have not worked their way into the budget.

Chair Gabriel said the consensus today is if the city goes forward with the replacement, it should be very clear what the funds would be used for. It is the sense of the Committee the 0.5% income tax increase for capital improvements should not be part of the funding source for a potential indoor recreation center. Mr. Keen advised he agrees with that. They need to know the full costs for any major new infrastructure projects that are undertaken. He added revenues need identified to cover all the projected costs. The Capital Plan has been at a heightened level since the passage of the tax increase, but there are still infrastructure challenges they face and they would not want to dilute the ability to fund those needs.

Chair Gabriel said the Committee discussed having the city keep pursuing grants and other sources of revenue. The Committee questioned if grant writing was the best use of time for the Public Service Director. Chair Gabriel asked if it would it be wise to outsource or hire a grant writer to cover many departments. Mr. Keen suggested a consultant on an as needed basis.

Chair Gabriel advised when they discussed the 2014 Task Force recommendations, it was clear fees are not covering all the costs. Mr. Keen related City Council needs to identify what are the direct, indirect, operating and capital costs with programs, assess what level of fees would be necessary to cover costs, and then make judgements where fees should cover costs. Mr. Gawel agreed.

Chair Gabriel asked for feedback on the draft report to Council. Mr. Guy said he thinks the report is nicely done, he related the report could build out the vision a little more.

Mr. Unalan said they need to recommend a proactive plan to leverage assets they do not have or that are underutilized. He stated there needs to be a broad vision or plan and



said he likes the idea of a round table collaboration with business leaders to help accomplish these goals.

Mr. Gawel conveyed he feels they are very reactive, and do not seem to have a vision. Lane Avenue, Kingsdale and Arlington Boulevard are areas that need prioritized. Mr. Rule advised he does not want to discount the Henderson Road corridor. He feels it is a corridor that has not been activated.

Chair Gabriel questioned if they would be able to find a developer outside of the city that would reach out to people at Tree of Life, Mr. Guy said it is hard to speculate if that is already happening.

Mr. Rule advised the development community looks to the local jurisdictions to signal that they want to encourage development in that corridor. He feels there is an opportunity to clearly message the city would be willing to work with the development community.

Mr. Rule said he liked the discussion about TIFs and feels there needs to be more transparency added to it. He advised that dialogue might be better suited under the economic development commentary. He does not want to send a message to City Council the Committee is making a judgement they have been too aggressive with economic incentives. He thinks the message should be to consider if the city is using economic incentives appropriately and if there are incentives being left off the table.

Mr. Guy remarked they need to balance their report with excitement, because there are a lot of good things going on. He advised what is happening on Lane Avenue is encouraging. Mr. Keen said there is a lot happening, but it needs to continue to be forward looking.

Mr. Unalan said the Community Improvement Corporation is an example of the public-private collaboration, and questioned how active the group is.

Mr. Keen advised his understanding is the Community Improvement Corporation is a public-private entity with a lot of city membership and some private members, and he is not aware of how active it is. Mr. Guy said they could add to the report the Committee likes the idea of building up the Community Improvement Corporation, to the effect it is not as active as it could be.

Mr. Rule related the Economic Development Director's presentation was very interesting and project specific. He thinks there is a need to have something higher level that is geographic centric for activating the corridors. He acknowledged maybe there has been thought given to that and it has not yet been formalized.

Chair Gabriel questioned if the Committee had other additions or revisions.

Mr. Keen said he would reword "likely recession" to say they are right at the end of a long economic expansion and need to be cognizant of the risk of recession in the near term.

Mr. Unalan said they had the idea of a business survey and that could be included as part of it.

Mr. Gawel said in regards to leveraging what the city has, he suggested exploring renovating shelter houses, which could help meet a need in the community.

Mr. Rule said at the meeting last evening they discussed adding into the report the potential privatizations and collaborations.

Chair Gabriel asked the Committee to email any comments for the report to her. Her goal for next week is to have bullet points under each of their charges. She will provide an update to Council at the June 17, 2019 Council Conference Session.

Mr. Rule added when speaking about the indoor recreation center he thinks it would be wise to address the state of the Senior Center and recognizing that it is an issue.

## 2. Public Comment

In response to Chair Gabriel's invitation to speak, there were no comments from the public.

The next meeting will be June 13<sup>th</sup> at 8:15 a.m. in the Lower Level Meeting Room.

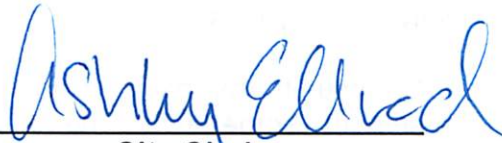
\* \* \*

There being no further business before the Citizen Financial Review Task Force, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.



**Chairperson**

ATTEST:



**City Clerk**

