

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
April 5, 2022

The April 5, 2022 City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 6:30 p.m. at the Crest Hill Public Works Building, located at 2090 Oakland Ave. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman John Vershay, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Administrator Jim Marino, Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Economic Developer Steve Gulden.

Absent were: Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, City Attorney Mike Stiff, IT Director Tim Stinnett.

TOPIC: Visioning Session

Director Gulden explained that during this vision session, members of the public are not able to ask questions or participate in the discussion. Director Gulden thanked Director Siefert for setting up the location for the meeting. The goal tonight is for interaction among the Council members. This is to discuss the vision of department heads and Council. He believes everyone in the room has the same vision, but feels we have different routes, thoughts, and views on how to get to there. It is okay to disagree and have different opinions. Our main objective is to not take the comments that are made during the session personal. Director Gulden asked that everyone write down, "When we have a clear sense of where we are going, we can be more flexible in how we get there." We need to have a clear sense of where we are going with the future of the City. Director Gulden explained that the following ground rules will apply for tonight's discussion:

Ground Rules:

No one takes it Personal
We are here for one purpose
Every opinion/idea is welcome

Goals:

First we must create the Foundation for "our vision"
How do we "Build the Foundation"
Step #1 Define the culture we want
Step #2 Establish Organizational Philosophies

Goals for Next week:

Step #3 Define our "Core Values"
Step #4 Where do we want to go with "our vision"

- What: Everyone knows it
- How: Some know it
- Why: Very few know it

Director Gulden asked several members what they do in their job/position with the City. He then asked how they do their job/position. He then asked each person why they do what they do, some of the answers where:

- Maximize revenue
- Reach people, and accomplish goals for Crest Hill
- Accountability
- Change the way of thinking and diversity
- Love of Crest Hill and to see change
- Improve operations and better serve
- Make local government better
- Make people lives better
- Pride/Integrity, next generation a better quality of life
- Keep Crest Hill safe, protect residents
- Improve infrastructure with clean drinking water
- Home, want it to be the best
- Help residents have a voice

Even though we don't always agree, everyone has the same goal, and that is to make Crest Hill better, though we may have different routes to get there.

Alderman Jefferson asked, with all the different bullet points being presented, how do we make it happen, Steve stated we will get there next week.

What is culture:

Culture is a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that define and characterize your organization. Director Siefert asked several members, what their culture was like, and is that culture who we have become. The lowest paid person in an organization is the most important person since they can make or break the culture.

Organizational Culture: Attributes to a successful culture:

- Trust and mutual respect
- Open to change
- Shared values
- People driven
- Acceptance
- Recognition
- Innovative
- Continuous improvements

Director Gulden gave a handout to each member for a group exercise. He would like to have them write down examples and be honest, on what the culture is today.

Then he asked what is the culture that they see today. The following was mentioned:

- Frustration
- Lack of guidance

- No clear definition of roles
- Not on the same page
- Driven staff
- Family
- Get it done, roll up your sleeves and get dirty
- Disorganized at times
- Lack of direction, vision, and goals
- Lack of diversity
- Lack of acceptance
- Segmented – silos
- Lack of revenue planning
- Vertical leadership should be horizontal
- Lack of honest communication
- Adverse to change

Director Gulden said we have problems that need to be solved. Does he feel there is a lot of frustration. Yes, there is. Why is there frustration with staff. It's because of mixed messages, turnover, lack of guidance, and lack of direction. Director Gulden commented that you need to treat people the way we want to be treated. We do things the way we do since that is the way we always did it. We all need to accept change. Mayor Soliman stated he has a card at the dais that reads, "Grow is to change, grow much is to change often"

He asked everyone to write down the culture they would like to see:

- Clear definition of employee and elected officials
- Trust and mutual respect
- Collaboration
- Transparent decision making
- Honesty
- Service oriented
- Innovation
- Passion and desire
- Steve commented passion always wins
- Lead and empower
- Stronger together
- Professionalism
- Service without boundaries
- Accountability and integrity
- Teamwork
- Set policy and procedures
- Vision
- Define duties and clear roles
- Honest community and follow chain of command

Alderman Kubal commented that we should contact the Administrator and he get the answer for us instead of going to the department head. Alderwoman Gazal feels that they should go to department heads. Steve commented that if a department head is contacted then the Administrator should be informed of it. Communication continued regarding the chain of command. Several would like work sessions to be in more of an informal environment.

Diplomacy – Give and take, it's about we, not I
 Progressive – innovation (head of the pack)

Director Gulden feels this culture is awesome and there is a lot of work needing to be done to get there. It takes 2 people to listen and speak and absorb it. He feels accountability is the worst problem we have. You cannot grade what you measure. Change is a law of life. Those who live only for the past or present are sure to miss the future. This is a quote from President John Kennedy. We all have to focus on the future and move on.

Organizational Philosophies: Philosophies of successful organizations

Amazon

Customer service
Free shipping
Take over the world
Automation
Inventory

Walmart

Affordable
Greeters
Assessable
Customer Service

Nike

Just do it
Strong
Image
Active
Compete
Class A product

Costco

Savings
Exclusive
Customer satisfaction
Quality

Disney

Fun
Magical
Experience
Flexible

Understand what operation philosophy is.

Group exercise

give 3 examples of operating philosophies for the City of Crest Hill

- Welcoming environment
- Safe environment for our residents
- Business friendly
- Friendly, people centered, neighborly
- Respectful from council and staff to residents
- Safe workplace
- Service driven
- Resident satisfaction
- Look forward to coming back
- Residents and businesses to have an enjoyable experience
- Destination to visit or live

- Strive for excellence
- Be better tomorrow than we are today
- Quality service and programs
- Show empathy
- Continue improvement
- Attractive for new businesses and residents, stand out

It should be known that if we will fix it. If a resident has a problem we need to let them know we will get it done.

Organizational Philosophies – Goal Setting

Let's create Crest Hill's organizational philosophies

Examples

Empower employees

Provide a safe environment for our residents

Provide leadership with a common vision among City officials and employees

Challenge employees to be innovative and creative

Steve commented that we should create inventive ways to get revenue. We should always look at creative revenue streams.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05p.m.

Approved this 18 day of April, 2022

As presented ✓

As amended _____


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR