

Columbia City Council Pre-Council Minutes

Monday, March 17, 2014 6:00 p.m.

City Hall – Conference Room 1A/1B

701 East Broadway

Council members present: Mayor McDavid, Fred Schmidt, Mike Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas, Laura Nauser and Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

Mayor McDavid called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council presentations from Michael Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas and Barbara Hoppe regarding the National League of Cities (NLC) Conference:

Council person Skala provided a handout that summarized the sessions he attended. He explained that this was a 4 day event in Seattle that was held last November. It began with a "National Summit on Your City's Families" session and the "NLC Congress of Cities and Exposition". He attended some breakout sessions during the four days which included discussions on city teams. He found a session on youth informative as it discussed ways to encourage youth to take part in civic issues in town as well as how to prepare them for serving on council as adults. He attended the opening general session on "Leading Successful Partnerships for Children, Youth and Families". Mr. Skala also attended and enjoyed the keynote address on "Leading a Learning Revolution: Collaboration and Creativity" by Sir Ken Robinson.

Mr. Skala noted that he has been a long standing member of the National League of Cities University and he attended a few training seminars that went into greater detail than just sitting in on a regular session. Sessions included: Making Shifts Happen: From Political Drama to Finding Common Ground, and Breaking Down the Silos Between Economic Development and Smart Regional Planning (speaker Greg LeRoy). There were several committee meetings going on concurrently, he attended three of them.

Mr. Skala noted that he intends to make a pitch to increase the council training budget back to the \$5,000 level it used to be. It is currently \$2,500.

Mr. Skala attended the Authentic Youth Civic Engagement session comprised of a panel of young people talking about civic duties. The University Communities Council was a session that helps better utilize universities in engaged community solutions. Mr. Skala attended the Opening General Session which included a great story from Marie Lopez Rodgers, the Mayor of Avondale, AZ. Brad Smith, Executive Vice President and General Council for Microsoft, overviewed the potential for fiber. Mr. Skala highlighted the other sessions he attended including Using Technology to Bolster Economic Development, Strategically Investing in Green Infrastructure, Driving Change, and Economic Development Financing Tools. He mentioned that he had an audio from that session with tools developed on infrastructure and he would be happy to share it with anyone that asks. The final day included a Veteran Homelessness round table discussion and he

noted that Home Depot is very financially dedicated to this cause and has assisted Salt Lake City in wiping out homelessness by giving them very small homes.

The handout provided by Council person Skala can be viewed at the following link:
<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=13198>

Council person Mike Trapp noted that the most valuable aspect of the conference he found was the opportunity to meet and talk with other council people. He feels that Council faces a unique set of pressures and tasks. He spent some time talking with the Mayor of Pittsburgh and Alderman of Chicago and felt they shared valuable conversation. He also appreciated the opportunity to attend and represent Columbia. It's a great chance to shake hands with others and talk about how great our community is. He noted that Columbia has a great reputation nationally, especially in the biking community. It was interesting to see more commonalities than differences. He noted some of the best sessions he attended which focused on issues around climate change. It mostly featured Sustainability Managers and how to respond to climate change. The recommendation was to look both upstream and downstream. Upstream changes include the no parking ordinance that had huge dividends and we already do disaster planning. He suggested we look to be sure we include up and downstream issues in Emergency Management. Mr. Trapp wants to be sure we have the Sustainability Manager involved in this. He also encouraged the Mayor to attend the next conference.

Council person Barbara Hoppe noted that the first day was a regular program with the Library Association and public schools. They discussed how those entities can work together to up the game for education for young residents. More cities are getting more involved, so the city can act as collaborator and convener to make a goal of having a preschool for everyone in the future. NLC had over 100 youth and took a half day tour to learn about a city youth commission. She noted that she and Council person Thomas have been talking with Columbia Public Schools and high school counselors to put together a more effective youth committee. She attended a session on the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention program and felt that their program was impressive. In 2008 Seattle had five youth killings, and has had no youth killings as of November 2013. Their program is an intensive collaboration of city, non-profit, schools, and 50 private partners who provide intervention services to youth. Youth in attendance talked about their successes; some in college or had jobs. The program focused on result based accountability which tracks progress over time and is results oriented. She feels a good program looks at strategies and establishes a base line, knows end goals, and how to get there and measure results. She also feels it is important to have everyone at the table that needs to be there.

Ms. Hoppe noted another session that was useful on new ways to use universities as resources. The University of Oregon looks at things students and professors can use in their classes. There is a class to reimagine and design housing, multi-generational housing, cultural asset mapping, safe bike paths, etc. Mr. Skala added that downtown gateways could be farmed out to the University at virtually no cost.

Ms. Hoppe also attended the session on green infrastructure and explained that the end result was that green infrastructure is a lot cheaper and more effective than gray infrastructure. Cities are learning to incorporate that into many aspects of city. She also feels that it is important to get public input and that maintenance is crucial. She

provided an example of areas that had rain gardens in medians with native plants. Residents learned from that and then did a blend of grass and native plants when landscaping. The EPA approved a \$300 Million grant to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to integrate green infrastructure into every project they can. They have even added forest beds under basketball courts for quieter and faster drains. They are also looking to increase the tree canopy.

Ms. Hoppe attended a session on engaging residents and solutions using data and technology in government. They used a variety of online and software to engage citizens in ways other than old fashioned meetings. A City Council member from Madison, WI spoke and he is a technology user who introduced many new ways to reach and engage citizens.

The presentation by Ms. Hoppe can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=13211>

Council person Ian Thomas indicated that he also attended a number of sessions and appreciated the opportunity to attend. He attended many transit focused sessions and he applied and was accepted, to be a member of the NLC's Transportation and Infrastructure Services Committee. He noted that he also recently attended the Congressional Cities Conference, which was combined with lobby day in Washington DC. This was an opportunity for the NLC to focus on policy. He noted that the Highway Trust Fund will hit zero at some point since that is currently an unsustainable situation. The NLC focus is on local control, not decisions sent down from Federal level. They also focus on investing in maintenance and repair; and investing less in new roads and capacity increases. He added that the NLC partners with Smart Growth America and there are great resources coming out of that connection. He provided some data that showed that at the national level there is a system of rating the conditions of roadways. Data showed that between 2008 and 2011, roads in "good" conditions, fell by 4 percentage points. Various state expenditures were audited to compare new road construction versus maintenance expenses and data showed 45% was spent on maintenance and 55% on new roads and capacity increased. This totals about 9,000 new lane miles. They also estimate \$860 Billion in funds needed to bring poor conditioned roads up to good condition. He showed Missouri data showing we spent 38% on repairs and 72% on new roads, resulting 343 new lane miles. He also included a U.S. Department of Transportation graph indicating that people are driving less. He reviewed recommendations which include: raising public profile of repair projects, setting more aggressive targets and focusing on the more heavily used roads. Mayor McDavid feels that we have a gas tax funding mechanism that is flawed since people are driving less and now with hybrid cars, are paying less on gas tax. Mayor McDavid commented that the topic of "youth" was brought up several times today. He briefly explained the Cradle to Career program. It is collaboration with United Way, City, Columbia Public Schools and others to deal with youth opportunities. This came out of the STRIDE model. He added that it is a metric based analysis on what we are doing and how to measure it. He feels it's an interesting perspective to really measure what we are doing.

The presentation by Mr. Thomas can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=13212>

The Smart Growth Repair Priorities 2014 Booklet can be viewed at the following links, it has been broken into two parts due to file size:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=13199>

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=13200>

Other Topics Council Wishes to Discuss:

Mr. Matthes reminded everyone that the Council Retreat would be a full day on Tuesday, March 18th and a half day on Wednesday, March 19th. Topics were provided by Council and he noted that we would be looking for a conversational approach on each topic. Those conversations will form what staff takes on budget.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:54 PM.