

UNION CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING SESSION
Saturday, January 23, 2021 – 9:00 A.M.
Leonard Almquist Council Chambers, 342 S. Main St, Union, OR 97883

This meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Roll Call: Councilor Leslie McMillan, Councilor Terra Richter arrived at 9:39 a.m., Councilor Timothy Cox, Mayor Leonard Flint, Councilor John Farmer, Councilor Susan Hawkins absent, Student Liaison Riley Later, and City Administrator Doug Wiggins.

Mayor Flint said this is open discussion but we can't make any decisions. We will narrow down the list of goals as we go. We will see an impact from COVID-19 on the taxes we collect. Many people have lost their jobs due to COVID-19. We budget carefully due to the tax base and there are other laws that must be followed when distributing money throughout the budget.

CA Wiggins said for the bike paths I have been saving so we can obtain easements from the landowners. We would like to get more trails made to tie into the trail that goes along the river. Some of the landowners want a lot of money for the easement we need. If we condemn you can't use grant money to build the path.

Mayor Flint stated for each goal we have a two Councilors work on them with the citizens. Last year we had the Ranger Station. We are currently fixing up the first building. It's nasty in the last occupied building. They are not cleanly people. The Charter revision is ongoing.

Last year's goals were as follows:

Ranger Station

City Park the Ford Foundation has been trying to get student interest to reshape the park within four years. It kind of fizzled out last year, they did a survey on what they would like to see improvements on like park benches, park shelters, playground. The survey also asked what people would want to see added like a splash park or a walkway. Council may be able to help with match funds.

Tourism

Growth- make Union more attractive so people will move here

Walking path along Catherine Creek

Housing

Update Ordinances- Weeds and absent owners of business in downtown district

Rules and Regulations for Council meetings- for Councilors- absences

Develop a strategic plan

Complete community assessment- assets and strengths

Connect different organizations

With last year's goals Council discussed short term goal ideas for this year.

Short Term- Charter, Fire/EMS, Ordinances on Weeds and Absent Business Owners.

Council Decorum and procedure rules.

Long Term- Ranger Station, City Park, Working High School Students on the park, beginning process and plan for the trail.

Economic Development complete community assessment, work on tourism draws, growth and population, and monitor housing in Union, and get a strategic plan completed.

Mayor Flint said we did get police worked out; Fire/EMS is in progress with Councilor Hawkins. CA Wiggins said another victory was acquiring the land from ODOT. For the first time we have a shop. I would like to get the wagons that came with the land fixed up and placed at the Ranger Station. Also, maybe use a wagon in a parade. We are also working on getting lighting at the gun range to have night shooting on the range. I would like to get the Council decorum and rules going again. Council and staff discussed why this is needed and how it helps.

Councilor Cox asked what was the City Park Goal?

CA Wiggins answered our last student liaison, the school, and the Ford Foundation were working to get the park redone the way they wanted. It never happened, the students needed to develop a plan and then get it constructed. It never got to the plan stage. The Ford Foundation was going to give \$10,000 per year for four years, matching the city's donations. There is a grant we are working to get to replace lighting along the path in the park.

Mayor Flint stated I wanted to get that work commemorated with the work each class did to get the park upgraded with plaques for each year of completed work.

CA Wiggins said the Ford Foundation won't support it if just the city does it. They want the community involved and the students involved.

Council asked Student Liaison Later if she is willing to take the project on. She agreed to get the information about the project.

Council discussed not removing any goals. They want to keep Fire/EMS/Police because they are related. Councilor Hawkins sent a letter about discussions on the possibility of creating a new fire district. There is possibly movement to get this done.

CA Wiggins stated I don't have a problem as long as they have a fail-safe that the city can get our portion back if it fails.

Mayor Flint stated I have personal reservations about switching.

CA Wiggins said it still has to go before the voters.

Council and staff continued to discuss the possibility of a new fire district. CA Wiggins stated the pros to allowing a new fire district. Councilor Farmer and CA Wiggins discussed possibilities on the money savings going back to the citizenry.

Council discussed the ordinance review goal from last year. The idea was to get landowners to keep the building up and not let it fall apart. The weeds definitions are not very good and need to be updated so we can properly enforce the law.

Council does want to work on Council decorum and rules. They also want to keep working on the Ranger Station and getting it ready to be rented out as a camping area, a place for events, or possibly bed and breakfast. Maybe putting in a large kitchen.

Council discussed the purposes of the Ranger Station and the possibility of the new Community Hall on Main Street. The Ranger Station is being repaired and will take many more years to finish.

Council discussed the Long-term goal of Ranger Station repairs and City Park/ High School project along with walking, biking trails.

The Council discussed what to do with the Charter. Council and staff discussed a rewrite and repeal instead of changing the current Charter. Councilor Farmer and CA Wiggins discussed the rules in the Charter that are very difficult to follow. Short Term Goal. Staff and Council discussed having done committees and no one comes. Hopefully, on the next election year ballot a new Charter can be on there for the vote.

Economic Development- Finish community assessment, finish strategic plan. Short Term Council discussed COVID-19 and how that should be monitored and the vaccinations of the community.

Mayor Flint said we need community involvement. Councilor McMillan complimented CA Wiggins on the newsletter and how it gives a snapshot on what it going on in the city. Councilor McMillan asked about roads. CA Wiggins explained the cost of roads and repairs. I am applying for a grant from ODOT for \$100,000 that can go straight to street repair. We are going to look at Chestnut and maybe Elm.

Council and staff discussed a grant writer and it was explained that this has been addressed. Identify grant needs for community under economic development. Council will monitor the Sheriff contract. Since there is a contract police will be removed. Council and staff continued to discuss getting different types of grants.

CA Wiggins said I have been told for years that the work crews weren't happening. I talked to Sheriff Bowen, he did get a crew and went and cleaned up our recycle area. I will be having them come back to clean up more around that area. Council discussed doing a walk-through of the sewer department.

Councilor Richter and CA Wiggins discussed putting a dog park or run in town. Council discussed the pros and cons of a dog park. Council discussed the updates to the microphone system. They also discussed an emergency management plan and that currently the city follows the county plan. There may need to be updates on declaring an Emergency under ordinances. Council and staff discussed building up their emergency fund. Council and staff discussed adding utilities to the short-term goals to make a committee to implement water/sewer rate study. CA Wiggins explained that questions are already coming in about the water/sewer rate study. Council and staff discussed different meters in town that will be addressed.

This meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Approved: _____
Mayor, Leonard Flint

Attest: _____
City Administrator/Recorder, Doug Wiggins