City of Ellsworth
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 27, 2023 5:30 PM

Members John DeLeo, Rick Lyles, Casey Hanson, Jon Stein, Nick Turner, Paul Markosian, Jennifer Sala, Brian Langley, Nancy Smith, Eric Marichal, Levi Rogers, and Erin Witham were present.	**Twelve members present**
City Planner Matthew Williams and Assistant City Planner Elizabeth Littlefield attended the meeting.	**Two staff members present**
1.) Call to Order City Planner Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.	**Call to Order**
2.) Welcome/Introductions City Planner Williams welcomed the group and thanked them all for volunteering to become a part of this Committee. The group went around the table and gave a brief introduction of themselves.	**Welcome/Intros**
3.) Ethics Training City Planner Williams explained that in their packets was a copy of Ellsworth's Code of Ethics and a review test which was made by the Planning Department Staff. City Planner Williams asked the Committee to please complete the test and return it to him at the next scheduled meeting.	**Ethics Training**
4.) Review of Comprehensive Plan Scope, Timeline, and Goals. City Planner Williams went through the proposed timeline for the Comprehensive Plan process. City Planner Williams made a comment that this timeline could change depending on the decisions that the Steering Committee makes. The RFP has closed for consultants, and we have had three submissions which we will consider. Next is the determination phase where the Committee interviews and chooses one of the consultants for the project. Once they have made their choice, they must go before Council to ask for approval to enter into the contract with the consultant. City Planner Williams asked the Committee to bring the three proposals home to read them and score them based on the rubric provided. Member Langley asked for some clarification on how to score the consultants. City Planner Williams said he would add some explanations on how to score for each category and provide it to the Committee tomorrow so they can have ample time to review.	**Review of Comp. Plan Scope**
5.) Discussion of Steering Committee Procedures moving forward (i.e., quorum, voting procedures; public hearing procedures, etc). City Planner Williams explained a quorum and why it was necessary to the Committee and stated that 7 would be a good number of the quorum. **The Committee agreed that 7 would be the number of voting members needed to constitute a quorum.**	**Steering Committee Procedures**

City Planner Williams next asked about voting procedures and asked the Committee whether a simple majority or supermajority would be the threshold for passing motions. Member Smith said that she believed a consensus should always try to be obtained through discussion, instead of taking votes and having 'winners' and 'losers.' The group discussed that it would be the hope, however some voting procedures should be in place in case there are some major disagreements amongst the members. **The Committee agreed that it is the hope that a consensus would be obtained through discussion and, if that is not possible, then a simple majority vote of the present voting body would be the threshold.**

City Planner Williams then went on to talk about the public comment procedures. He asked whether the Committee wanted the public to be able to comment at will throughout the meetings or if they wanted the public to have a designated public comment time. Member Langley stated that he liked how Council does it, although he thinks the public comment portion should be at the end. **The group discussed and agreed that the public will have an opportunity for public comment at the end of every meeting**. City Planner Williams clarified that the public still has opportunity to comment at the public hearing portion of some agenda items as that is a legal requirement for any action to be taken by the Committee.

6.) Election of Officers City Planner Williams asked if there was anyone who wanted to be considered or if anyone had any nominations. Member Turner nominated Member Langley as Chair and Member Markosian as Vice Chair. Member Smith nominated Member Langley as Chair and Member Sala as Vice Chair, stating that she wanted to see more diversity in the lead roles of this Committee.	**Election of Officers**
After a brief discussion, Member Markosian ceded to Member Sala, agreeing with the Committee that there should be diversity at the head of the Committee. Both Members Langley and Sala approved of the nominations. Member Turner made a motion to elect Member Langley as Chair and Member Sala as Vice Chair. Member Hanson seconded the motion. **The vote to elect Brian Langley and Jennifer Sala as Chair and Vice Chair of the Ellsworth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was unanimous (12-0).**	**Vote to elect officers UNANIMOUS**
7.) Discussion and vote to establish a standard meeting time and date. City Planner Williams asked the Committee if the current day and time they were meeting would work for the remainder of the process. That would make the meetings every 4th Monday at 5:30PM. As there were no members of the public in attendance, there was no public hearing on this matter.	**Standard Meeting Time**
Member Smith moved to approve every 4th Monday at 5:30PM as the standard meeting time. Chair Langley seconded the motion. **The vote to approve every 4th Monday at 5:30PM as the standard meeting time for the Ellsworth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was unanimous (12-0).**	**Vote to approve time UNANIMOUS**

8.) Discussion and vote to establish a remote attendance policy. City Planner Williams went through the draft of the remote participation policy. He then went on to ask the Committee which reasons they think should be allowed for remote participation. Member Smith suggested that, instead of a list, the policy would be that in-person attendance is encouraged but Zoom would be acceptable. City Planner Williams explained that, in order to satisfy the legal requirements, they would need a list of instances where remote participation would be allowed.	**Remote Attendance Policy**

Member Hanson suggested a non-exhaustive list stating that the reasons for remote participation should be: 1) weather, 2) illness, 3) travel, and 4) unforeseen circumstances. City Planner Williams asked the Committee if they would like to make remote participation a possibility should the weather close down City Hall. The Committee agreed that if City Hall were closed on a particular meeting day, the meeting would be held remotely. As there were no members of the public in attendance, there was no public hearing on this matter.

Member Markosian moved to approve the 4 instances where remote participation would be allowed. Member Lyles seconded the motion. **The motion to approve the 4 instances where remote participation would be allowed for the Ellsworth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was approved by unanimous vote (12-0).**	**Vote to approve policy UNANIMOUS**
9.) Review of Bids for Consultants for Comprehensive Plan. City Planner Williams went through the general categories included in the proposals to give some insight on what to look at when the Committee is scoring the proposals. As stated previously, the rubric will be updated to give more explanation and a copy will be provided to the Committee.	**Review of Bids for Consultants**

Member Smith asked for some clarification on some of the rubric categories. Specifically, she asked what the difference was between the category asking about the firm's qualifications and the category asking about the personnel's qualifications. City Planner Williams stated that the difference was the first category is asking about the firm as a whole and the second category is asking them to look at the individuals who will be assigned to the project.

Chair Langley asked if there was any direction from the State as to what they look at when they approve a Comprehensive Plan. City Planner Williams said there are some base requirements as to what needs to be included in the plan, however they do not go into a lot of detail. City Planner Williams and Planning Staff will look into this and bring more information to the next meeting.

City Planner Williams said that in order to get the City Council to approve the Consultant, they would need to make a decision by the 9th, which would require a special meeting. Member Marichal asked how long they had to score the proposals and return their rubrics to City Planner Williams. Williams stated that rubrics need to be turned in to him by March 6th.

City Planner Williams then went on to ask about the interview process for the consultants. The group decided that not all members of the Committee would need to be present and interviews can be conducted by the Chair, Vice Chair, and Planning Staff. City Planner Williams stated that he will set up the interviews for the 7th and 8th of March after all of the rubrics have been turned in.

Then, City Planner Williams asked about the special meeting. It was decided that 5:30PM on the 8th would be the best date and time to hold the meeting. Williams explained that the only thing they would be talking about would be the result of the interviews and the decision on which of the consultants to choose.

10.) Staff Comments
City Planner Williams thanked everyone for attending and stated that he was excited to work with everyone over the next two years.

11.) Adjournment
Member Markosian made a motion to adjourn. Member Turner seconded the motion. **The vote to adjourn was unanimous (12-0).**

Vote to adjourn at 6:49PM

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Littlefield, Assistant City Planner.

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