

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSIONS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BISBEE, COUNTY OF COCHISE, STATE OF ARIZONA, HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018, AT 5:30PM IN THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEARING ROOM, 1415 MELODY LANE, BUILDING G, BISBEE, ARIZONA.

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR SMITH AT 5:33 PM.

ROLL CALL

COUNCIL

Councilmember Anna Cline, Ward III	5:39PM
Councilmember Joan Hansen, Ward II	Excused
Councilmember Frank Davis, Ward I	
Mayor David M. Smith	
Councilmember Bill Higgins, Ward I	
Councilmember Douglas Dunn, Ward II , Mayor Pro Tempore	
Councilmember Gabe Lindstrom, Ward III	Excused

STAFF

Robert E. Smith, City Manager
Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk
Dan Duchon, Personnel Director
Albert Echave, Police Chief

CITY ATTORNEY

Britt Hanson

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS DISCUSSED AND/OR CONSIDERED AT THESE MEETINGS:

1. Presentation of Recommendations to Council by Kimber Lanning, Executive Director of Local First Arizona Regarding Challenges and Opportunities for Bisbee.

Kimber Lanning, Executive Director Local First Arizona

Kimber Lanning, Local First Arizona gave some background into who she is, who Local First Arizona was and what they do. They have a diverse array of programs that they run that are all related to economic development.

Ms. Lanning stated that at the end of last year they came and interviewed 65 different people here in Bisbee both residents and business owners to get a better understanding of what was really happening. They identified four (4) key challenges that they thought were of the utmost importance to address. They aimed to build more collaboration and more of a shared unified voice.

The first key challenge that they identified was what they were calling inconsistency. They felt that the business community was delivering an inconsistent message. They believe that with some strategic facilitated conversation more than dialogue we could get to a little bit more of a shared vision. They felt that there needs to be more consistent collaboration with regional entities. They also thought there was inconsistency in terms of customer service, once a visitor gets here they don't always have a great experience.

The second key challenge that Local First identified was economic leakage from the community. Bisbee had a great number of people who live here who shop in Sierra Vista, Tucson, even Phoenix or shopping on Amazon. She was shocked at the number of people they interviewed that said they buy whatever they can on Amazon. The goal here was to keep dollars recirculating in the community. This problem needs to be addressed so that people who live here can understand the detrimental impacts of this type of massive economic leakage.

The third key challenge that they identified was an overall lack of collaboration, a unified voice and vision here in the community. At a certain point people need to check their ego at the door and get on board with a shared marketing and shared vision for who Bisbee was going to be. Bisbee needs to have conversations so that the strategies lineup to the goals that Local First identified.

The fourth key challenge that they identified was the workforce gaps that impact tourism. Local First thinks that this was a big challenge here. They also didn't see a unified strategy to attract businesses to come to Bisbee. They also noticed that AirBNB's were moving into Bisbee and putting pressure on affordable housing.

Along with these four challenges they made a wide variety of short, medium and long-term recommendations for the community in Bisbee to consider. Tonight she was here to talk to the Council about some of those recommendations, but to also hear from the Council what kind of things might they have overlooked in the work.

Mr. Hanson, City Attorney asked Ms. Lanning that at the beginning of her presentation she had mentioned what she was hearing from business owners and what you heard from the City were two different things, but I don't remember hearing what those two visions were.

Ms. Lanning gave an example she said that posted on line there was a strategic document for where Bisbee was going. There were two key factors that were identified as goals one of them was increasing the ability for people to age in place and senior living and the other was attracting more families. When she talked to the business community attracting more families was not on their mind at all.

Councilmember Cline stated that she really didn't have any questions we all know that we need to buy local, but there were some things that we can't.

Ms. Lanning said that the people they interviewed skewed older were actually shopping more on Amazon than those who are younger and younger audience was actually more determined to buy local. They understood the detrimental impacts of what happens when nobody supports locally owned businesses. They thought it was important for residents to learn what's here and can be purchased in ward 1, 2 and 3.

Councilmember Davis spoke about the survey's being done in November and since that time new people have moved into Bisbee. He stated that soon at a Council meeting there would be a discussion regarding the parking plan in Old Bisbee.

Councilmember Higgins thanked Ms. Lanning for her presentation and coming here. He said that really what we are talking about was changing not only people's perception but people's hearts. He said that if it doesn't work economically he didn't know how we were going to change their minds with just education.

Ms. Lanning said that when Mr. Higgins talked about changing hearts and minds that's what they do best at Local First Arizona. The real issue was that people don't understand the real consequences.

Councilmember Dunn stated that he was a person who focused on the positives, but certainly there were a lot of things to do to make improvements.

Alice Hamers stated that she was pushing banking locally and felt that the City could be an example by shopping locally.

Ms. Lanning asked a clarifying question to the City Manager had the City had the office supply company from Bisbee participate in and RFP. Mr. Smith said no not yet. He stated that the way the code was written we are encourage to go with large chains that have state contracts and we are encouraged to look at price. He stated also that same was true for banking we are required to request proposals from banks in order to secure banking services and the last time we did that no local banks responded.

Ms. Lanning gave some of the recommendations; to do an extensive feedback survey around the state to get people's perception, place a mailbox on Main street that says tell us what you think of Bisbee, digital newsletter calendar, photograph the events run on social media, more coordination with all the different organizations that host events in Bisbee, leveraging tour based destinations to cross promote other businesses in town, a more uniformed consistent messages, and the business owners are actively engaged in pitching the vision of what Bisbee is.

Councilmember Cline said that when Ms. Lanning talked about involving the high school students. We do have a big career day once a year the local businesses come out and participate. Ms. Lanning stated that she had heard it was very successful as well.

Ms. Lanning stated that they would like to continue the conversation. They have worked with the tourism office here as well as the iBisbee Committee. They are in the process of coming up with next steps proposal so that you can have a clear picture of how we recommend that you get from point A to point B. We can talk about the challenges and then we can dig into some of the solutions.

Mayor Smith thanked Ms. Lanning for being here and really appreciated all the time and effort that Ms. Lanning had put in. He thanked iBisbee for facilitating this and making it happen. He stated to Ms. Lanning that they looked forward to her proposal.

Mr. Miller, iBisbee Committee thought that this Council had a better understanding of what was needed for economic development.

Mr. Stern, Chair of the iBsibee Committee stated that he was very pleased to work with Ms. Lanning.

Councilmember Dunn stated he was concerned that the upcoming budget in the amount of \$20,000.00 that had previously been budgeted for economic development has been removed. He had concerns in the long-term assistance that the Local First could provide us as needed in this community may be beyond our budget capability. He felt that in terms of recommendations there were certain things that can be done now ourselves. He spoke about shopping Locally Campaign (Racheal Hudson).

Ms. Lanning clarified that Local First Arizona Foundation pays for Racheal Hudson to be here they contributed \$10,000.00 this year to place her here and they will do that for one more year. She made it clear that to see investment they want to see investment as well so she thought it would be a tough sell to continue to ask if the community doesn't also want to invest in this.

MOTION: Councilmember Higgins moved to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: Councilmember Davis

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT: 6:37pm

David M. Smith, Mayor