

MINUTES

DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING City Council Chambers VIA ZOOM

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 - 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Harry Steinmetz called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Deputy Mayor Harry Steinmetz, Mayor Traci Buxton, Councilmember Gene Achziger, City Manager Katherine Caffrey, Deputy City Clerk Sara Lee, Bettina Carey, Teri Chase, Eddy Duggar, Colleen Gants, Paul Gustafson, Magda Herera, Kersten Hubbard, Mary Ellen Laird, also former members Chuck Coleman, Randy Williams and Victoria Andrews

AGENDA

Discussion on City Appointive Committees

City Manager Caffrey has been speaking to members of the nine appointive committees, many of whom have indicated they have found their roles not “super fulfilling.” Because of staff limitations, her proposal is to restructure five subcommittees under the CAC: Arts, Human Services, Senior Services, Parks & Recreation and (new) Emerging Issues. Some only need to meet on an ad hoc basis when they have projects.

Feedback: Because these committees are established and members have expertise that should be utilized, some might not appreciate the CAC being “over” them, so they should retain some autonomy. CAC members could serve as liaisons on each subcommittee. The subcommittees would meet informally as needed (no staff) and report to the CAC, whose meetings are recorded and staffed. Councilmember Achziger noted that this would also give their ideas a chance to be vetted by the CAC before they go to council.

Next steps: Retain the focus on neighborhood representation- actively try to recruit new members who represent our diversity, maintain the

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2025

primary and alternate structure but perhaps reconsider strict term limits.

Strategic Plan Discussion (City Manager Caffrey's questions for the group)

"What kind of community do we aspire to be in 5-10 years?"

- Vibrant marina district (that also capitalizes on Saltwater State Park on our back door)
- Coastal destination with a unique maritime culture
- Opportunities for businesses to thrive in the downtown core
- Communication (and problems that continue to plague it) addressed as an investment, to include a communications professional who can diffuse misinformation and track intellectual "capital" in one place to avoid constantly going over the same issues
- A safe, prosperous, vibrant, sustainable and connected community (capitalize on the incoming light rail system)
- Utilize Highline College as a resource
- More collaboration
- Make Des Moines the best and safest place to raise the next generation and for businesses to be successful

"What are the challenges?"

- No reason for traffic to stop, e.g. grocery stores, so our main street is just a thoroughfare
- No signature event since Waterland Festival is gone, and with it our identity
- Businesses, particularly restaurants, come and go but need help to be successful

"How can we ensure long-term financial stability?"

- Expand MaST and marine life education, work towards creating an aquarium
- Light rail area represents a tremendous opportunity
- Don't focus exclusively on our marina
- Ferry system realized
- Marina Steps – make it happen!

"Are there populations whose needs aren't being addressed?"

- Commuters and others who don't drive- continue pushing "Last Mile" solutions to connect them to public transportation
- Underserved: young adults, minorities, kids, retired veterans

NEXT MEETING DATE

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2025

April 23, 2025 Citizen Advisory Committee

ADJOURNMENT

Direction/Action

Motion made by Chair Harry Steinmetz to adjourn; seconded by Eddy Duggar.

Motion Passes 12-0.

Adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

DISCUSSION