

**MINUTES
CITY OF ORMOND BEACH
COMMUNITY CONVERSATION WORKSHOP**

April 18, 2015

9:00 a.m.

Performing Arts Center Blue Room

I. Welcome and Introductions

Present were Facilitator Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida, City Manager Joyce Shanahan, Police Chief Andy Osterkamp, Economic Development Director Joe Mannarino, Information Technology Director Ned Huhta, City Clerk Scott McKee, Utilities Manager Dave Ponitz, and Executive Secretary Terri Hamsher; and 45 citizens that were distributed amongst seven (7) tables.

Ms. Joyce Shanahan, City Manager, welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for being there, especially early on a Saturday morning. She explained that this was the first Community Conversation Workshop and that it would begin the strategic planning process for the City Commission. She noted that two Community Conversation Workshops would be held and explained that as both would follow the same format it was not necessary for any of those present to attend the second one in addition to this one. She explained that the feedback that the citizens provided in this workshop would be shared with the City Commission for their Strategic Planning Workshop. She welcomed the audience to the workshop and thanked them for attending on behalf of the City Commission.

Ms. Shanahan introduced Ms. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida. She explained that Ms. Crotty held Community Conversations and Strategic Planning workshops throughout Central Florida and the state. She asked those in attendance to join her in welcoming Ms. Crotty.

Ms. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida, thanked Ms. Shanahan and the audience. She stated that Ormond Beach was a beautiful city. She stated that she lived in Seminole County and noted that on her drive into the city, she thought that Ormond Beach was a special place. She explained that she was a native of Florida and had grown up in Orlando and visited the beach in Volusia County every summer as a child. She stated that she was delighted to be there today to assist.

II. Overview of Strategic Planning Process

Ms. Crotty explained that she wanted to let those in attendance know that most cities did no strategic planning. She stated that only good cities undertook strategic planning and that the ones who most needed to do so usually did not. She noted that those cities that needed it were often focused just on the issue of the day without thinking of long term consequences and were usually more concerned with their own positions rather than the future of their community. She stated that Ormond Beach was going through a strategic planning process and was also engaging their citizens. She noted that most cities confined strategic planning to City Commission and staff participation only. She explained that Ormond Beach was starting their process by

asking citizens about their dreams, desires and interests for the community. She stated that she hoped it would be a pleasant experience and that the citizens would gain as much as they gave.

Ms. Crotty stated that the conversation would be totally participatory and asked that citizens be equipped to both talk and listen. She explained that the city staff present would observe but would not be a part of the discussion as this part of the process was just for citizens. She noted that there would be a repeat session of this workshop on Wednesday, April 22, 2015. She invited the citizens in attendance to share that information with their friends and neighbors so that they could take the opportunity to weigh in with their ideas, as well. She stated that the City Commission would have their Strategic Planning Workshop on May 12, 2015, beginning at 3:30 p.m. She explained that members of the public were welcome to attend and observe the session. She explained that all of the information generated at today's session would be put into a report that she would write for the City Commission to use during their process. She stated that the city would use the contact information on the sign-in sheet to email or mail a copy of the report to those in attendance once it was completed.

Ms. Crotty noted that agendas with a worksheet on the back had been given to each participant. She explained that conversations would be held and ideas would be shared amongst the groups at each of the tables. She explained that in order to capture the conversations each table had a flip chart on an easel and markers. She stated that each table would need a volunteer to serve as the recorder or scribe. She noted that the only requirement to serve as the scribe was to have somewhat legible handwriting as she would have to interpret what was written in order to include it in her report. She explained that not everything said needed to be recorded but that the scribe should write down the key points discussed and the essence of what comments were made by the individuals in their group. She explained that reports would be made from each table to the overall group summarizing their discussions. She stated that someone at each table would need to serve as the speaker to make their report.

III. Identification of Community Treasures and Values

Ms. Crotty stated that she wanted the audience to think about treasures and values. She explained that this meant to think about the qualities, characteristics and things in Ormond Beach that made it a place that they loved. She asked them to think about the things in the community that mattered a lot to them and about the values that they would like to see continued in the future. She asked the audience members to introduce themselves to the other members of their table groups before beginning their discussions. She explained that some of the things discussed would be specific physical characteristics of the city and some would be qualities that made the city the place it was. She asked them to think about the values of the city and things that were guiding principles that people in the city subscribed to and wanted to see the city continue to have. She requested that treasures be discussed first. She noted that values underlie actions, activities and the sense of community in Ormond Beach.

The worksheet discussion question was presented as follows:

Part I – Treasures and Values

What are the treasures and values of Ormond Beach... the things (whether physical places, or intangibles like community character) you love about the city and want to see continued, protected or improved? What would you want to ensure is preserved as Ormond Beach plans for the future?

Ms. Crotty asked if there were any questions.

An individual from the audience asked if a roster of those participating in the workshop would be included in Ms. Crotty's report; whereby, Ms. Crotty stated that the city could add that information.

Ms. Crotty requested members of the audience to raise their hands if they had lived in the city for 50 years or more. She repeated the exercise with those that had lived in the city for 30 years, 20 years, 15 years, ten years, five years and less than five years. She noted that there were respondents for each category. She stated that a great mix was represented among those who had lived in the city long term and those that were fairly new to it.

An individual in the audience asked whether someone would be presenting the plan adopted by the city; whereby, Ms. Crotty explained that the city did not presently have a strategic plan in place but noted that they had many plans for different aspects. She explained that the citizens present had an opportunity to help the overall strategic plan that was being developed. She noted that at this session they did not want staff or elected officials to influence the citizens' input and wanted to hear from the citizens directly.

Another individual in the audience inquired about whether they could keep the agenda paper provided and another individual inquired about getting an extra agenda handout.

Ms. Crotty clarified that anything anyone said at the table was valuable and that the entire table group did not have to agree on an idea for it to be included on the flip chart. She stated that she would give the groups about 15 to 20 minutes to complete their first discussion and reminded them to give themselves time to discuss the values as well as the treasures.

Ms. Crotty instructed the group discussions to begin at 9:24 a.m.

Discussion among the groups at the tables ensued.

Ms. Crotty asked the groups to complete their discussions and to provide their reports at 9:54 a.m.

The citizens in attendance had been divided into seven tables. The table groups' reports were presented in no particular order. Ms. Crotty asked for volunteers and the groups presented in the order in which they volunteered to speak.

Table 4:

Mr. Jeff Boyle, 614 N. Halifax Drive, was the speaker for Table Four. He stated that history was a treasure in Ormond Beach, which included historical architecture such as the MacDonald House and Ames House, as well the historic heritage in the city

such as the Tomoka and Timucuan Indians, Birthplace of Speed history, Three Chimneys site, Spanish and English area history, and Rockefeller era history. He stated that the city's history was unique, and they had listed it first on their list of treasures. He stated that Ormond Beach was well served aesthetically and in function by its parks, open spaces, and recreation. He noted that a real treasure was the city's unique natural beauty including its two rivers and an ocean. He stated that other treasures included Ormond Beach's small town flair, trees, and conservation areas in the city and bordering it to the north, eclectic residential neighborhoods both old and new, particularly along the river and in older communities, and efficient responsive government.

Mr. Boyle stated that people built Ormond Beach one brick at a time. He noted that values in Ormond Beach included a spirit of volunteerism and a positive community spirit. He relayed a story of two Ormond Beach residents rescuing others on boats in raging seas in 1896 and cited it as an example of people helping others in the city. He noted that spirit continued in the city and was evidenced by community members attending the session this morning to try and make the city a better place. He stated that other values in Ormond Beach included a sense of place, a small town atmosphere, and the responsibility and recognition to take care of seniors and children in the city. He noted that leisure activities served those groups well.

Table 7

Mr. Charles Ferguson, 44 Kent Drive, was the speaker for Table Seven, he stated that the outdoor recreational opportunities in Ormond Beach were wonderful. He stated that other treasures in Ormond Beach included true wildlife areas and wonderful parks including Central Park and Andy Romano Beachfront Park. He explained that his group felt that Ormond Beach was very unique and had a wonderful history. He lamented the destruction of the Ormond Hotel and noted that it had been the largest wooden hotel in the world. He stated that the loss of that hotel was a tragedy and a tremendous demonstration of ignorance. He explained that he knew money was a factor in its loss, but he felt that it could have put Ormond Beach on the world's map. He stated that another mistake like that should not be made with the history of Ormond Beach, noting that Ormond Beach still had a lot of historical sites such as The Casements.

Mr. Ferguson stated that City Hall and the library were beautifully combined with the river and Granada Bridge. He stated that Ormond Beach was blessed by God and nature to have treasures such as the Halifax River, Tomoka River and ocean. He explained that while Ormond Beach was a small town, it had a lot of culture and a level of sophistication. He clarified that sophistication was not snobbishness. He cited Palm Beach as an example of an area where the population felt very separated and were trying to outdo one another. He stated that Ormond Beach had family friendly values and remained affordable. He noted that Ormond Beach had sensible development and needed to continue to maintain that pattern. He stated that trees and historic buildings should be protected. He stated that the public school system was good and cited Seabreeze High School and the new middle school on the mainland as examples. He summarized that Ormond Beach was a wonderful city and should be kept that way.

Table 6

Ms. Shannon McLeish, 25 Live Oak Drive, was the speaker for Table Six, she noted that her table had discussions that were similar to Table Four and Table Seven. She

clarified that the treasures and values she would mention were not necessarily in any order. She stated that they discussed placing a high priority on river and beach access and public access to parks. She stated that other treasures and values included leisure services, celebrations and festivals, volunteerism, the library and museum, and history and historic buildings, such as The Casements, MacDonald House, and Ames House. She noted that walk-ability was also mentioned as well as neighborly values, the safety of city, the feeling of comfort and well-being, and the small businesses. She noted that her group discussed the responsiveness of city officials including the continued need for transparency without hidden agendas and the preservation of public space and history. She explained that what made Ormond Beach was that the community and community groups were committed to preserving the history of the city. She stated that they all discussed environmental preservation and family values. She also noted that blight remained in core areas but that would be a later topic for discussion.

An individual at Table Six noted that Ms. McLeish's two young daughters were seated at the table and that they were two of the youngest Ormond Beach residents. She explained that the two girls had spoken up and had contributed the topic of environmental preservation to the discussion.

Ms. Crotty noted that strategic planning was important as it was for the future of Ormond Beach which included the young girls and their friends.

Table 2

Mr. Harold Briley, 902 Village Drive, as speaker for Table Two, stated that the first treasures they discussed were the city's recreational facilities, noting that the citizens of Ormond Beach were blessed to have the finest recreational facilities in Volusia County and maybe even the east coast of Florida. He stated that other treasures and values in the City of Ormond Beach included the small town feel, strong sense of community, maintaining height limits on the beachside, parks and beautification, smart development, historic preservation of historical sites, such as the MacDonald House, historic Fire station and Ames House, the beach and river, first class facilities, parks, City Hall, library, and Performing Arts Center. He stated that Ormond Beach had the finest government services in the area and that citizen participation was a key value. He noted that the four corners of the bridge were also a treasure. He stated that other values discussed included the low crime rate, safe neighborhoods, community events and diverse population based on age. He noted that Mr. Rick Fraser, Executive Director of the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce, was seated at his table and had shared that 20 years ago the demography was much older than it was presently. He stated that environmental assets such as the Tomoka River were also city treasures. He stated that business diversity and the business park distinguished Ormond Beach from other communities.

Table 3

Mr. Jerry Valcik, 236 Ormwood Drive, as speaker for Table Three, stated that he was chosen to speak by default and noted that his hearing was limited. He explained that since this was a workshop his group's intent had been to throw up ideas but not in any particular order. He stated that developers needed to provide more than minimal landscaping for aesthetic value and that the height limit should stay at 75 feet for buildings. He stated that the city should have appropriate signage announcing entry into Ormond Beach, but he noted that while it cost a lot of money to have a very nice

sign or signs they felt it was important to have. He noted that recreation facilities were a treasure in the city. He explained that the preservation of historic buildings was important to some and that the preservation of the MacDonald House was a big issue. He noted that many members of the Ormond Beach Historical Society could not attend this workshop session, but they would attend the following one to present their information. He explained that he had taken ten minutes to put together his own views on the MacDonald House, but he felt that this was not the venue to present that information and he would make it available electronically.

Mr. Valcik stated that the city took advantage of recycled water and charged \$17 a month for all of the recycled water one desired. He noted how important that was especially in light of the water supply issues in California. He stated that there should be consideration in the city to expand recycled water and water conservation measures. He stated that road and utility improvements should be tweaked, as well. He noted that the city had a wonderful and solid capital program, but it needed some adjustments. He explained that years ago the city replaced concrete aprons when roads were improved, but those aprons were now cracking. He noted that he was a civil engineer and knew that expansion joints were necessary. He stated that 95% of driveway pads were cracking and that more attention needed to be placed on the good design of utilities. He stated that green spaces also needed to be preserved and noted that 75% of Florida voters voted for Amendment One in order to maintain more green spaces. He noted that there had been some resistance to that in the legislature.

Mr. Valcik stated that Ormond Beach had a fine quality of life and noted that the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) had designed Ormond Beach as the best place to retire several years earlier. He stated that Ormond Beach values were family-oriented and pet-friendly. He stated that another value was the responsiveness of the city government, noting that you could send a message and receive a response within a day. He stated that Ormond Beach needed to attract more young people without gray hair to the area. He stated that fiscal responsibility was another value, and he noted that the elected leadership was working hard to be fiscally responsible, which was appreciated. He noted that pension reform was an issue, however. He explained that State Representative Fred Costello was forward thinking in that respect and suggested that any changes in the pension system had to be made gradually and not abruptly. He stated that Ormond Beach had a nice appreciation for, and catered to, senior citizens. He stated that Ormond Beach also had values as a strong faith-based community. He noted that it was appreciated that Ormond Beach was open to citizen input.

Table 5

Mr. Al Jorczak, 679 N. Beach Street, as speaker for Table Five, noted that many items on his table group's list had already been discussed. He stated that they valued the beach, recreation facilities and historic buildings. He explained that he had lived in many parts of the country and had yet to see another city that matched Ormond Beach with respect to its quality of life and resident involvement in the city. He noted that many groups participated in citizen involvement. He explained that there was an obvious attitude of being protective of nature as evidenced by maintaining nature facilities, the geographic area of The Loop, and the connection of the waterways in Central Park. He stated that the facilities and activities for seniors were a treasure in the city and very important due to an older population base and the amount of retirees in the city. He stated that one value was the safety of the city,

noting that while every city had elements of crime it was mostly controlled in Ormond Beach. He noted that significant improvements were made in the police department over the years to stay on top of the activities going on.

Mr. Jorczak stated that another value was transparency with respect to the city and communication with city leaders and the community as a whole. He explained that the city's website was a great source of information and that the city did a good job of keeping the community apprised of what was going on in the city. He commended Ms. Shanahan for her reports to the City Commission and noted that they were extremely detailed, and he had never seen anything like them in other communities. He explained that those reports detailed meetings held and provided a broad framework of the workings of every department operating within the city. He stated that conservation activities and the small town atmosphere in Ormond Beach were also valued. He noted that Ormond Beach was a clean and orderly city.

Mr. Jorczak explained that zombie homes were still an issue but noted that the city was working on correcting that. He noted that it was a nationwide problem not exclusive to Ormond Beach. He explained that the city was doing what they could within the limits of the law to rein in the portion of Ormond Beach that was not up to standards. He stated that Ormond Beach had good quality schools and a diversified economic base. He explained that a hot button topic for him to tackle would be future planning and what was wanted and where it should be located. He stated that transitioning Ormond Beach from a bedroom community for the Daytona Beach area to something greater than that would be a very important part of the discussion.

Table 1

Ms. Elaine Tindell, 5 Riverside Circle, as speaker for Table One, explained that she was elected to speak for her table group because she was the longest residing Ormond Beach resident at her table, as she had lived in Ormond Beach for over 45 years. She stated that treasures in Ormond Beach included beach driving and preservation of historical sites, noting that historical sites had been discussed at length already by other tables. She explained that when she moved to the city, Granada Boulevard was a two-lane dirt road and that a lot of growth had occurred since then. She noted that while growth was often good, it was important to preserve history as well. She stated that other treasures in Ormond Beach which were discussed included parks, golf courses, The Loop, community activities, Granada Boulevard nightlife, the ocean and rivers, and the beautification on Granada Boulevard, which was quite important to their group.

Ms. Tindell stated that the lack of traffic, polite consideration citizens, fitness and recreation opportunities, and the preservation of trees were also valued. She stated that Ormond Beach had a lot of trees, especially in the Riverside Drive area and in The Loop. She explained that a lot of people looked for trees on their property when purchasing a home and as such would want to live in an older established neighborhood. She stated that other treasures mentioned included the airport and the quality of life in the city and its weather and climate. She noted that John D. Rockefeller thought that Ormond Beach was perfect. She stated that her group also valued the cleanliness of the city, lack of overcrowding, the abundance of churches, good schools, the Nova Skate Park, and the Ormond Beach Sports Complex. She noted that preserving history was especially discussed.

Ms. Crotty noted that there was obviously a great deal of consensus on several topics among all the table groups, which sent an important message. She noted that while there was much support for similar issues at each table group there was also a unique flavor from table to table.

Ms. Crotty announced that there would be a short break in the session. The break began at 10:23 a.m. and concluded at 10:38 a.m.

IV. Ormond Beach – 2025 Vision

Ms. Crotty noted that there had been a small amount of attrition during the break. She asked the group members at the least populated tables to fill in at the other tables wherever there were available seats, which resulted in the loss of one table.

Ms. Crotty asked the participants to redirect their focus from what they loved about the present day community to the future of the community. She asked them to think about Ormond Beach ten to 20 years into the future. She invited them to dream their best dreams. She asked them to think about their aspirations for the community in that timeframe, even if they were no longer there. She asked them to think about what the city would look like in ten to 20 years, specifically what residents will have, what businesses will be like, and what functions the government would provide.

Ms. Crotty explained that there were no restraints in this exercise and advised them not to get bogged down in what cost too much or was feasible. She stated that if they did not put forth their true dreams for the future, then they would not come close to getting the future that they wanted for their children and grandchildren. She noted that reality would set in during the strategic planning process and all of the developed goals and objectives may not all appear. She stated that this was their chance to inform the City Commission of their dreams so that they were aware of the things citizens wanted to see in the future. She stated that she wanted them to talk about the future of the city and how Ormond Beach could be better than it already was. She noted that these were brainstorming conversations so no topic was out of bounds and that every idea was valid. She noted that reports would be presented again after discussions as had been done for the previous topic. She stated that she would give the groups 40 to 45 minutes for this conversation and that this was their chance to dream.

The worksheet discussion question was presented as follows:

Part II – Visioning

It is the year 2025. In the years since 2015, the City of Ormond Beach has fulfilled all the hopes you had for the future of the community back when you attended the community meeting in 2015.

What is the City of Ormond Beach like? What does it look like? What is it like to live here, work here, raise a family here, retire here? What kinds of economic activity take place here? What else would you say to fully describe the City of Ormond Beach you would like to see in ten years?

Ms. Crotty instructed the groups to decide the three most important things that they would like the city to accomplish in the next ten years and would like the City Commission to pay attention to. She asked for the groups to identify them so that the City Commission received clear direction when planning for the future of the city. She explained that the groups could vote or agree on these items by consensus and asked for them to identify their top three priorities on their flipcharts with a star or check mark by them.

Ms. Crotty instructed the group discussions to begin at 10:42 a.m.

Discussion among the groups at the tables ensued.

Ms. Crotty asked the groups to finish their discussions and to provide their reports at 11:28 a.m.

Due to some attrition during the break, the citizens were now divided amongst six tables instead of the previous seven. The table groups' reports were presented in no particular order. Ms. Crotty asked for volunteers and the groups presented in the order in which they volunteered to speak.

Table 4

Mr. Jeff Boyle, 614 N. Halifax Drive, as speaker for Table Four, stated that his table sort of "cheated" on their first priority as they had named their first priority to be to maintain all of the treasures and values that were listed during their first report. He noted that maintaining those treasures and values would achieve a sense of permanence and predictability in the community and noted that change was not always good. He explained that their second priority was the main arteries in the city. He stated that they would be very critical as there was no opportunity to build new arteries into the city and named the present two arteries as US1 and State Road 40 (SR40). He noted that A1A was built out except for abandoned commercial properties. He explained that the city and the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce had been working on gateway concepts for 20 years and explained that it was hard for the government to get private property owners to do the right thing. He noted that they worried about the new development outside of the city along the city's border and how it would impact the city's traffic. He explained that while Granada Boulevard did not need to be six lanes presently, it may need to be expanded to that during the future 20 years. He noted that it was built to accommodate that change.

Mr. Boyle stated that the US1 corridor needed to be enhanced to better draw business and industry into the Ormond Crossings project. He noted that Ormond Crossings presently was not off of the ground due to the economy and market. He stated that their final priority was smart growth, and he explained that Ormond Beach needed smart growth and standards for residential and commercial properties both in form and function. He stated that smart growth also dealt with renewable energy sources and being a good steward of the water, noting that the city was already a good steward but could be even better. He noted that smart growth also covered biking and beach access. He stated that the city also needed government to still be responsive in the future. He explained that this exercise was indicative of the government wanting to know the feelings of the people. He noted that this was a new endeavor and explained that when he served as a City Commissioner the Commission sat in a room by themselves with staff during their planning processes.

He hoped the exercise would be perpetual and would still be done 20 years in the future.

Table 6

Ms. Shannon McLeish, 25 Live Oak Drive, as speaker for Table Six, stated that their first priority was to enshrine, perhaps in the city codes, permanent protections and the highest possible maintenance for the city's cultural properties, public spaces and history. She stated that the city was not making the best use of what they had, much less adding to it, and it was important to do so for the future. She stated that another participant at her table would help her elaborate on this priority.

Ms. Alice Jaeger, 10 Beechwood Drive, as speaker for Table Six, stated that Ms. Alice Strickland wrote a book on the history of Ormond Beach that she encouraged all to read. She stated that Ormond Beach had a great colorful history and was once home to smugglers, shipwrecks, and even a bordello on Orchard Lane. She stated that "history sells" and cited the City of St. Augustine as an example. She suggested that Ormond Beach could have outdoor theatre performances of the history of Ormond Beach. She noted that The Casements and the Ormond Beach Historical Society both sold the book she had mentioned. She stated that Eileen Butts' House was a beautiful jewel and noted that Ms. Butts' daughter used to tell stories of riding horse carts to the beach. She stated that John D. Rockefeller and a female Olympic golfer had played on a local golf course.

Ms. Jaeger asked why these great ideas connected with Ormond Beach were not being marketed. She stated that highlighting the city's history could lead to economic development and diversity. She hoped for a permanent answer to preserving the city's historic buildings. She noted that groups of citizens had been fighting to save some of the mentioned buildings since 1993. She stated that all of the beautiful preserved historic sites in Ormond Beach had been kept because citizens fought for them. She stated that they did not want to lose the MacDonald House or the historic Fire Station, like they had lost the Ormond Garage. She stated that they did not want to lose The Casements, like the Ormond Hotel had been lost. She explained that the Ormond Hotel no longer existed and that ghostly images and remnants of old hotels did not add to the economy but real historic buildings did.

Ms. McLeish stated that these historic buildings should not be gotten rid of and that the time spent fighting to preserve them could be better spent. She noted that was why her group mentioned enshrining protection for them. She stated that their second priority was conservation, sustainability, and environmental efforts. She explained that this included reuse water, researching pesticide and herbicide usage, solar hot water heaters, and possibly grants for homes. She stated that public building roofs were wasted spaces that could be used for solar panels.

Ms. McLeish stated that their third priority was walk-ability and public open spaces for bicyclists and pedestrians. She explained that in cities such as Neptune Beach and Atlantic Beach those cities slowed traffic on their streets that would be similar to Beach Street in Ormond Beach, and it caused tremendous development in the area in those cities that were similar to US1 in Ormond Beach. She stated that natural areas close to the river were a booming community core and needed public open space to encourage walk-ability. She noted that also included underground wiring and more sidewalks. She explained that Buford, South Carolina, was an intercoastal city that made its downtown area by the river and implemented a promenade there

which in turn caused business development. She noted that St. Augustine had many walk-able areas and the improvements there had branched into nearby neighborhoods which highlighted its history and architectural diversity. She stated that Ormond Beach had funding in the form of monies that came into the city earmarked to address blight, but they were not going where they should because of a lack of knowledge and participation. She noted that those funds were going to things like paving baseball diamonds instead of repairing homes which were falling down.

Ms. Crotty reminded everyone to focus on presenting their top three priorities.

Table 3

Mr. Jerry Valcik, 236 Ormwood Drive, as speaker for Table Three, stated that the first future priority for his table group was an emphasis on vocational and technical training. He explained that one of the participants at his table had a contracting business and had difficulty finding good people to do blue collar work. He noted that a lot of people were not college material, and they felt that there should be a good focus on vocational schools. He stated that their second priority was affordable medical care which included affordable and sufficient facilities for elder care, assisted living facilities, and facilities which were pet friendly. He stated that their third priority was to control environmental degradation. He explained that the latest technology should be applied to any wastewater discharges from Ormond Beach into the Halifax River. He noted that there recently had been a lot of focus on degradation in the lagoon system since it had finally gotten to a point where it was interfering with the economic well-being of the fishing industry. He noted that he had read an article in the religion section of the newspaper that day regarding the stewardship of the Earth. He stated that the environment should be a priority for the legislature and awareness of environmental issues should be increased.

Table 7

Ms. Kimberly Park, 911 Hibiscus Avenue, Holly Hill, as speaker for Table Seven, stated that one of their priorities was to preserve the beauty and quality of life in Ormond Beach and to improve and maintain sensible development and smart growth. She noted that they were referring to physical beauty in nature as well as architectural and historic beauty. She explained that she did not live in Ormond Beach and was new to Florida and noted that her table group contained someone who had lived in the city most of their life and also another couple who were newer to the area. She further explained that if she moved to a new city in the area she would decide between Daytona Beach and Ormond Beach and was weighing the pros and cons of both.

Ms. Park stated that another priority was to develop a Main Street area. She explained that they did not want a Main Street like Daytona Beach's, but one more like the ones in Deland and Winter Park. She stated that Winter Park was too far to travel to visit that type of area. She noted that parking would be the key to creating a downtown Main Street community area. She noted that such an area would draw in diverse crowds. She stated that it would have to provide walk-ability. She explained that she presently drove 15 minutes to use the YMCA and felt it was a long round-trip coupled with the time it took to perform her exercise. She stated that in a Main Street type area citizens could talk to community members while they strolled and enjoyed restaurants. She stated that such an area would bring businesses to the area.

Ms. Park explained that she lived in California for a long time and that the new couple at her table was from New York. She noted that both places had more diversity in age and ethnicity. She stated that she thought that Ormond Beach could do better in that regard. She noted that the dilemma was how to do so. She stated that a diverse economic base would help achieve increased diversity in the population. She suggested that businesses beyond hospitals and retirement related businesses be targeted. She suggested the city get a technology-related employer, but they were not speaking about manufacturing as they wanted to preserve the clean air and water in the city. She explained that high paying jobs would bring in ethnically diverse individuals and attract a population who liked to go out and spend money after work hours. She noted that would allow businesses to stay open later and serve larger population groups. She stated that they desired businesses beyond the traditional economic base which was just professional uses and “mom and pop” type businesses. She explained that a large high-technology business would bring in a large number of families and individuals who could provide a different kind of life blood for the community.

Table 1

Ms. Elaine Tindell, 5 Riverside Circle, as speaker for Table One, stated that when she was living in Ormond Beach during the 1970s and 1980s she never gave a thought to the fact that the Ormond Hotel would not always be there. She stated that historic preservation was their top priority. She noted that she could not imagine the future of Ormond Beach without the MacDonald House, the historic Fire Station, and the Ames House. She explained that her group recommended that the MacDonald House be renovated, and that the Tennis Center and its parking area along with all other historical homes be maintained. She stated that their second priority was to encourage new business for clean development. She stated that members at the table had stated that there was not enough being done to attract new business in the area, especially at the airport, and they felt that the airport could be made more attractive to pilots coming in. She stated that their third priority was to develop more beach accessibility. She noted that all citizens needed to be able to get to the beach and that the beach needed to be accessible for citizens and not just tourists.

Table 2

Mr. Harold Briley, 902 Village Drive, as speaker for Table Two, stated that one of their priorities was to focus attention on older neighborhoods and areas that were blighted and run down. He stated that the other priorities were a walk-able downtown and no high rises on the beach. He stated that other topics discussed for the future were traffic issues, having more African American owned businesses in the Sudan area north of Granada Boulevard and US1, identifying more of the founding families in the Sudan area, and possibly naming streets after them. He explained that members of the table also spoke for and against dog-friendly beaches and businesses. He stated that the table discussed continued improvements on Beach Street and Granada Boulevard, including landscaping and redevelopment of existing businesses, and there was a suggestion to create a Birthplace of Speed museum, possibly in the old S.R. Perrott building on Granada Boulevard. He noted that they discussed having direction signage in the city, more outdoor event venues, more opportunities for higher paying jobs, the construction of Ormond Crossings, and redevelopment on north and south US1 and South Nova Road.

V. Conclusion

Ms. Crotty stated that there was a lot of consensus regarding several issues which would be reflected in her report. She noted that there would be a clear direction provided to the City Commission. She stated that some of the same comments and issues may come up again during the April 22, 2015, Community Conversation session, but some different subjects may also be discussed.

Ms. McLeish asked if she could add something that their table forgot to mention; whereby, Ms. Crotty stated that she could.

Ms. McLeish stated that her table group wanted to see parks and historic properties added to but not at the expense of losing current historic properties, and she cited the historic Fire Station as an example. She explained that the Fire Station had been a tremendous loss and should be returned to the city, but no other historic properties should be lost in order to do so.

Ms. Crotty thanked the reports and scribes from each group for volunteering. She asked the audience members how they heard about this session.

Various audience members stated that they heard about the session by mail, email, the newspaper, or at church. One individual noted that he heard about the session the prior Wednesday and thought there should have been more advance notification.

Ms. Crotty asked the audience members to please raise their hands if they felt that this was a worthwhile activity. All audience members raised their hands.

Ms. Crotty explained that she would be facilitating the session with the City Commission and that the feedback from the citizen sessions would be included. She explained that all of their ideas would be fed into the City Commission's activity.

Ms. McLeish asked if the City Commission's Strategic Planning Session would be open to members of the public.

Ms. Crotty replied that it would be. She stated that their session would be held on May 12, 2015, at City Hall. She explained that the City Commission's session would be in the form of a workshop and not a regular meeting, and as such citizens would be welcome to attend but would be doing so in an observational role. She noted that any ideas the City Commission wished to adopt would be before them again at a regular City Commission meeting for a vote. She explained that the City Commission would not vote or make any final decisions at their session.

Mr. Briley stated that he wished to thank Ms. Crotty, Ms. Shanahan, and city staff for the session.

Ms. Crotty thanked the audience and noted that everyone had participated and added something to the discussion. She stated that everyone had listened to each other, and it had been a great opportunity for them to get to know someone else in their community and hear other opinions. She noted that it had been an outstanding atmosphere.

Ms. Shanahan applauded Ms. Crotty and thanked her. She noted that there was another Community Conversation being held on Wednesday, April 22, 2015, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and that the City Commission's Strategic Planning Workshop would be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, from 3:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. She explained that the Commission would have their discussion and develop a strategic plan which would be formally adopted at a later City Commission meeting.

Ms. McLeish asked if there was a date for that meeting available yet; whereby Ms. Shanahan replied that there was not, but an email list could be developed from the sign-in sheet from this session and notice could be provided as to the date when it was scheduled.

An individual in the audience asked if the City Commission's Strategic Planning Workshop would be held straight through from 3:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; whereby, Ms. Shanahan replied that while there may be a break in the session, the City Commission would not leave and the meeting would encompass that timeframe.

Ms. Shanahan explained that this session was a demonstration of active citizen engagement and volunteerism, which was what community was all about. She thanked the participants on behalf of her and the City Commission. She encouraged them to attend the Celtic Festival being held that day in Rockefeller Gardens.

The workshop ended at 11:58 a.m.

Transcribed by: Colby Cilento