

**MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING
of the CITY OF UNION, KENTUCKY
held DECEMBER 13, 2013**

The Union City Commission met in special session in the Commission Auditorium of The Warren S. Moore Union City Building, Union, Kentucky at 6:00 p.m. on December 13, 2013. Mayor Don Kirby called the meeting to order. The following members were present: Commissioner Donna Fryman, Commissioner Ken Heil, Commissioner Bryan Miller, Commissioner Deanna Kline and Mayor Don Kirby. Absent: none. There was a full quorum of the Commissioners. Also, City Clerk Kathy Porter and City Attorney Greg Voss were present. An attendance sign-in sheet from the audience in attendance is on file.

Mayor Kirby opened the **Special Meeting** at 6:00 p.m. and stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the results of the Focus Group Sessions that were held during October and November 2013. No other business will be discussed.

At this time Mayor Kirby turned the floor over to Mr. Larry Solomon, from Strategic Resources, Inc. who will present the results regarding the information gathered from the research study about the awareness of and reaction to the proposed Union Town Plan.

Mr. Solomon introduced Mr. Kevin Costello with Boone County Planning and Zoning who was involved with the group sessions. The purpose of the group sessions were to hear from respondents, they gathered a cross section of the Union resident to participate. The purpose was to get a representative sample of residents as opposed to just those who attend the regular business meetings. The attendees were recruited to dig deeper into the issues. The sessions were to build awareness and reaction to the Union Town Plan and to develop a communication strategy to better target residents through segmentation. The issues covered in the Focus Groups were resident vision of the Union Plan in the next five (5) years, resident awareness of the plan, and reactions to the plan.

The groups were broken down into groups. On October 20th, 2013 the group consisted of HOA presidents and board members. On November 5th, 2013 the group consisted of residents who have lived in Union less than two (2) years and those who have lived in Union between 2 and 10 years. On November 12th, 2013 the groups consisted of those who have lived in Union longer than 10 years and business owners.

Mr. Beemon asked how the people were chosen to be in the groups were picked. Mr. Solomon stated that it was a random sample.

Mr. Solomon broke his presentation into five (5) topics: Behavior Segmentation, Town Plan, Communications, Needs/Objectives and Building a City...Staffing Recommendation.

The first topic was Behavior Segmentation. While they were in the process of recruiting they felt there would be differences in the behavior. The Key Behavior Segments include Unique Haven Seekers. This is represented by people who moved to Union and want to take an active role in seeing the Union Town Plan develop. Most individuals in this segment were in their mid-thirties, were tech savvy, they communicate electronically, but still refer to the Union Recorder for basic information.

Another Key Behavior Segment is Country City Residents who like Union because it has a lot of country and has a little city. They know that the town plan will be developed, but do not feel they need to be involved. These residents are also tech savvy and refer to Union Recorder for basic information.

The last Key Behavior Segment is the Traditionalists. These residents would like to see Union to never change, but realize that it needs to. They would like for growth to be slow and methodical. They do not want to see it grow too fast and have empty stores. These residents are not very tech savvy therefore rely on the Union Recorder as their primary communication.

The next topic discussed was the Union Town Plan. Mr. Solomon began by asking the residents what they knew about the town plan, prior to giving them information about it. The typical assessment was: "While I'm aware of

the Town Plan, I have not heard about it lately.” Or “I have not sought out information...I am sure that work is going on with it.” There were gaps in information. Once they were aided and Mr. Costello explained to the residents what the plan was the overall perception was positive. One of the key drivers was the uniqueness of the town plan. But they also would like to see some movement.

The concerns for the town plans were that if the city tries to grow too fast that it would have empty stores. Mr. Solomon suggested having an anchor store. Possibly the Kroger store, that is currently being proposed, be built within the area designated for the Town Center. The residents also had a concern for parking and congestion. When the residents were shown an artist rendering of the proposed town plan they felt the buildings were too close together.

The next topic covered was communications. Mr. Solomon stated that there are two types of communication: Active and Passive. Union Residents are busy and do not have time to seek out what is going on. He suggested the commission to be more involved they can attend HOA meetings and attend festivals. Also the city should utilize the website, Facebook and Twitter. Another good resource is the library and newspaper.

The next topic covered was Needs and Objectives. There were three (3) key needs that were brought out from the research. They are to set up an active Communication Strategy. By doing this the city needs to make activities and planning more relevant to the residents and to customize communications and events behavior segments and to create a “face of Union” to residents.

The next need is to build a City. Mr. Solomon feels the city is at a fork in the road. It needs to decide if it wants to remain a small city or if it wants to prepare for growth. In order to prepare for growth the city needs to be staffed for growth. Mr. Solomon believes that the city needs to hire a City Administrator who will act as the City Manager. At the beginning the Administrator could be a part time employee.

Mr. Solomon asked the commission what their thoughts were on what was presented. Mayor Kirby stated that he was pleasantly surprised and validated by the feedback. Mayor Kirby stated as a result of this study he has been more active on putting items on Facebook and Twitter.

Commissioner Kline also mentioned the creation of a city newsletter. Mr. Solomon stated that the more communication the better.

Mayor Kirby opened the meeting up at this time for comments from residents who were in attendance.

Mr. Frank Beemon stated that he reads the recorder, but there is not much in it from the monthly meetings. Mayor Kirby stated there needs to be a balance in what is needed to be put in newspaper and what people would not really want to read.

Mr. Jim Longano stated that he is all about options and suggested that the commission stream the meetings so the residents who are not able to attend can watch them and know what is going on within the city. Mr. Longano stated that he agrees with the city hiring a City Manager. Someone a resident can come to on a day to day basis. Mr. Longano stated that the signs along the intersections were a big issue.

Commissioner Fryman asked if Mr. Solomon’s recommendation was to go to Frankfort to push through for the funding for the highway. And he said it was his recommendation.

The next regular business meeting will be held on Monday, January 6th, 2013. Commissioner Kline made the motion to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. and Commissioner Fryman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

Signed this 6th day of January, 2014

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Don Kirby, Mayor

Kathy Porter, City Clerk/Treasurer