

GO FORWARD PINE BLUFF
INFRASTRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT PILLAR
Agenda – July 29, 2016
Jefferson Regional Medical Center
Henslee Conference Center

- I. Welcome

- II. Review of Revised Recommendations
 - A. Downtown Pine Bluff
 - B. Government
 - C. Repurposing Certain Areas in Pine Bluff
 - D. Support for Existing Public Providers
 - 1. Liberty Utilities
 - 2. Mayor
 - 3. Street Department
 - 4. Fire Department
 - 5. Police Department

- III. Representative to HUB Study Group in Economic Development Pillar

- IV. Study Groups
 - 1. Leaders
 - 2. Complete Sign-Up
 - 3. Tasks

- V. Implementation Matrix – Making the Recommendations a Reality

- VI. Announcements
 - 1. UAPB Football – Tailgate – November 19, 2016

- VII. Next Meeting
 - When? August 17
 - Where? JRMC

GO FORWARD PINE BLUFF
Infrastructure and Government Pillar
Possible Recommendations as of 07/20/2016

Downtown Pine Bluff

1. Strengthen efforts to support the Pine Bluff Historic District.
 - a. Insure adopted Street Scape Plans are implemented and specifically address utility issues (specifically including, but not limited to, water pipes) for historic structures.
 - b. Insure demolition plans do not reduce the number of historic buildings to the level that tax credits and incentives are lost.
 - c. Further explore Pine Bluff becoming a member of Main Street AR.
2. Establish as anchors and strengthen efforts to save the Saenger and Mosaic Temple. Initial efforts to preserve the building as they are to allow for future rehabilitation.
3. Explore and create efforts between UAPB and Downtown Pine Bluff as the same may relate to the Convention Center Hotel.
4. Explore the utilization of the Pine Bluff Convention Center as the new multi-purpose recreational center.
5. Support the Public Library's relocation to Downtown Pine Bluff.
6. Support the creation and development of an "Innovation Hub" in downtown Pine Bluff, utilizing the existing UAPB Business Development Incubator and Arts and Sciences Center.
7. Retain the Pillars of the Pines Hotel, demolish the remainder of the building and create a green space (park, garden, etc.)

Government

1. Establish a Candidate Institute that will recruit and train citizens wishing to run for public office, including, but not limited to, mayor, city clerk, city council, school board officials (We would solicit comments from the Education Pillar.), etc. and those who wish to serve on City Commissions.
2. Identify the Plans and Codes of the City of Pine Bluff that are not current, obtain funds to retain third parties to update the same, and work to have the same adopted by the City Council. Insure the Plans and Codes are enforced in a legal and economic development friendly manner.

3. Recommend the “renewal” of the 1 cent sales tax (currently 3/8 for economic development) that sunsets in 2018. Renewal might be 2/8 for economic development and 1/8 for land bank or vice versa with 10-year sunset provision.
4. Recommend the City hire a Grant Writer to explore public, private, and public/private funds.

Repurposing Certain Areas of Pine Bluff

1. Repurpose certain areas with vacant lots, condemned structures.
2. Establish a Land Bank or similar entity.
3. Consider one of the first areas to be in downtown Pine Bluff.

Support for Existing Public Providers

1. Liberty Utilities
 - a. Work with privately owned water company to insure sustainable, safe drinking water for Pine Bluff.
 - b. Work to include short and long range plans to replace pipes and (3) treatment facilities.
 - c. Public education efforts to increase understanding of water costs combined with wastewater and garbage.
2. Mayor’s Office
 - a. Crime - Support City’s efforts to force landlords to take responsibility for crime committed on their property; continue to build the landlord data base.
 - b. Code Enforcement – Support strict enforcement of code violations. Continue work to resolve lack of enforcement that has existed for years.
 - c. Inventory of Condemned Structures and Vacant Lots – Support city’s continuing efforts to keep the inventory up to date and available to potential developers.
 - d. City Image – Support City’s hiring of a Marketing Director.

3. Street Department

- a. Develop short and long range plans to hire and retain qualified employees. Low wages are an issue.
- b. Office is a WPA building built in 1943 – Long range plan for renovation.
- c. Old equipment.
- d. Public education efforts to decrease the flooding issues.
- e. COOP Plan of policies and procedures needs to be updated.
- f. Stronger code enforcement needed.

4. Fire Department

- a. Develop short and long range plans to hire and retain firefighters – training costs are high, pay is low, and retention is difficult.
- b. Educate public regarding international, state and city code requirements for new construction and renovation.

5. Police Department

- a. Develop short and long range plans to hire and retain police officers – training costs are high, pay is low, and retention is difficult. Issue is wages after (3) years.
- b. Support cooperation from landlord where most crime is committed – participation in data base and fines.
- c. Pine Bluff needs more special drug agents and drug rehabilitation facility.
- d. All downtown one-way streets need to be converted to two-way streets.

June 15, 2016 Meeting Summary Infrastructure & Government

Dan Hilton, Liberty Utilities, a privately held water company

[Show details](#)

- White Hall plant currently off line due to lack of need.
- PB has 390 miles of lines, installed in the 40's-70's, some in the 1990's.
- Replacing as funding allows, only 20% of the 390 miles in PB and the 55 miles in White Hall has been replaced.
- Federal support for infrastructure improvement not allowed for privately owned water company like Liberty.
- P.B. Industrial Park is maxed. "Can't take another 10K per day user." Water'd have to be routed from another station.
- Gas to liquid plant would need to make decision regarding whether city water or plant's station would be cheaper.
- 14 Deep Water wells, 700-800 ft., utilizing Sparta Aquifer. Current price in the .01 to .015 per gallon range.
- PVC replacement pipe costs \$30 to \$100 per ft. depending on location. Last water rate increase avg. 0.88 per mo.
- Using another type of pipe would require a change in water treatment methods, which Liberty will not consider.
- Seeks partnership with community and wishes to be very involved with any downtown development and execution.
- DHS worker, who stated DHS works to restore water access for poor families who have either moved into a new place or gotten behind on their water bill, faces a challenge due to Liberty's "tampering fees charges" for a stolen water meter. DHS can pay for water, but not the tampering fee. However, Pine Bluff's agreement with Liberty allows them to charge for water or meter theft. DHS employee stated that the fee is often attached to the location, not the customer. New folks, therefore, get stuck with a former owner's bill or live without water at that location. (Encouraged stronger prosecution of theft/tampering.)

Mayor Hollingsworth: City issues.

- Encourages pillar to focus on root cause of various problems as we fashion solutions.
- No Downtown code enforcement for years, resulting in many owners now owing significant sums to bring up to code.
- One owner faces \$50,000 in improvement, but wishes to do so only if others in neighborhood will also meet code.
- Currently, many downtown buildings are in disrepair and some have suggested their demolition. However, when a city loses more than 50% of the buildings that contribute to their historic district, the Historic Downtown status can be lost.
- Believes Census count is inaccurate due to some residents failing or not choosing to respond in a timely manner.
- Research indicates Pine Bluff's population could be at least 6% higher than current tabulations.
- Main Street Arkansas might be a good partner

- City recently hired a marketing director
- Newspaper coverage is key to city's image.
- 40% of single family units are rentals, but they generate 80% of the crime. "More police is not the answer."

Fire Chief Howell

- 8 firefighters short. Three teams, (A,B, and C) rotate in a 24 hours on, 48 hours off pattern.
- PB a training city. Pay is low, so turnover is high. Get certified after one year, then move on. Training costs = \$25,000
- 100 employees, 95 male, 5 female. Seven stations. ISO rating 2. White Hall's ISO rating is 5.
- All employees trained in Hazmat, EMS, and firefighting.
- Landowners should involve the Pine Bluff Fire Department from the beginning of a building project.

Police Chief Hubanks

- Data driven enforcement helps identify where officers need to be deployed.
- There is benefit is considering the conversion of one-way street into two-way streets.
- According to data, 64% crimes are associated with drugs in some way.
- 7 Prisons for incarceration, no drug rehabilitation facility. Data shows need for more halfway houses.
- While some neighbors have resisted the placement of halfway houses near them, statistically, no increase in crime has been reported in areas where they've been placed.
- Landlord data base is effective tool to reduce crime.
- Officer retention after 3 years is difficult.
- "City will not get back into the jail business."

Rick Roden

- Areas of Responsibilities: Streets, lights, paving, striping, drainage, sink-holes.
- Challenges: city's low pay. (Example of \$11.87 per hour for drivers with a CDL) Department wide, 13 workers short.
- Old Equipment: Most 30 years old, though new paver has been purchased for \$750,000
- 440 miles of paved road and 880 miles of ditch.
- Flooding due to trash or yard waste clogging drainage system.
- Street Department housed in a WPA building in need of \$100,000 of electrical repair.
- Seeks to be involved in any policy and procedure change or "Streetscape" type program.
- Cooperative plan of policies and procedures needs to be updated.
- Stronger Code enforcement needed.

GO FORWARD PINE BLUFF
Infrastructure and Government Pillar
Land Bank Study Group

Jimmy Dill, Co-Leader
Cooter Failla, Co-Leader
Kevin Archer
Renata Harper
Chuck Morgan
Rosalind Mouser
Harold Terry

GO FORWARD PINE BLUFF
Infrastructure and Government Pillar
Code, Plans, Enforcement Study Group

Larry Reynolds, Co-Leader
Frederick Jackson, Co –Leader
Kirby Mouser
Bob Purvis
Eric Walden, Jr.
Shirley Washington
Jessica Yarbrough

RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX _____PILLAR

STRATEGY:

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

ACTION STEPS:

-
-
-
-

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

-
-
-
-

RESOURCES NEEDED (FINANCIAL & OTHER)

-
-
-
-

COMPLETION/IMPLEMENTATION DATES

-
-
-
-