

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT COLLINS  
FUTURES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Date:** July 13, 2020

**Location:** CIC Room, City Hall, 300 Laporte Ave.

**Time:** 4:00-6:00pm

**Committee Members Present:**

Mayor Wade Troxell

Julie Pignataro

Emily Gorgol

Kristin Stephens (alternate)

**City Staff:**

Jackie Kozak-Thiel, (Staff Liaison)

**Presenters:**

*Patti Schmitt, Director of the Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) at CSU Extension*

*Dr. David MacPhee, CSU Prevention Research Center and interim director, School of Social Work*

**Additional Staff present:**

Alyssa Stephens, Neighborhood Services

Amanda King, CPIO

Caroline Mitchell, Environmental Services

Lindsay Ex, Sustainability Services Area

Clark Mapes, CDNS

Dean Klingner, PDT

Ginny Sawyer, Connexion

Honore Depew, City Manager's Office

Meaghan Overton, CDNS

Noah Beals, CDNS

Rebecca Everette, CDNS

Ryan Mounce, CDNS

Maren Bzdek

Tyler Marr, City Manager's Office

Keli DiMartino, City Manager's Office

Shannon Hein, EHO

Shawna Van Zee, CDNS

Sue Beck-Ferkiss, SSD

Yaz Haldeman, CDNS

Leo Escalante, CPIO

**Community members:**

Kevin Jones, FC Chamber

Brenda Miles

Carolyn Tredinnick

Hannah Eppley  
Sabrina Duey  
Heather Meyer  
Mark Rose  
Shannon Hughes  
Sue Tungate  
Lisa Auer  
Marc Winokur

**Meeting called to order at 4:05 pm**

**Approval of Minutes:**

Julie moved to approve June 08 minutes. Emily seconded. Motion passed unanimously. 3-0-0.

**Chairman Comments:** None

**Summary**

- The future of Civic Engagement is a timely topic as the City considers how we are responding during COVID, reckoning with racial injustice and how to be resilient and regenerative
- Co-creation with the community is necessary to build Civic muscle and divergent views are necessary to strengthen those muscles
- Building Civic Capacity and community driven change is about Planning, Acting and Learning together with the community
  - It is important to think about our capacity for vital social connections
- Community driven change requires a sense of belonging and the ability to share power
  - Consider how to build skills to navigate system and redesign our current system through power-sharing lens
  - Consider if City as a Platform can be used as a way to share power with community members
- Community driven change is a key part of resilience and recognition no one sector or institution can solve the problems we are facing
- City has begun an equity indicators project and there may be alignment with utilizing the Civic Capacity index
- Reimagining engagement is a Council priority
  - Using the Our Climate Future and Home2Health as examples, we need to think about how we engage those most impacted that also have historically had the least power
  - BFO process can be a place of opportunity to reimagine engagement

**Think Tank Item 4-2020: The Future of Community Engagement: Civic Capacity Building**

- David and Patti each share a bit about their experience and what drives them to do community engagement and system change work.
- Introduce Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) which is a state-wide collaborative that looks at bridging the gap between community members and decision-makers

- 20-week leadership program and graduates represent many diverse community voices
- There are many community challenges such as racial inequity, job loss, and COVID that can seem overwhelming and addressing these issues takes bringing together many people with varied experiences
- Question becomes how do we look forward and strengthen our community knowing that these challenges can bubble up? And how do we do this in a community-driven way?
- Fort Collins demographics are changing and in about 10 years approximately 25% of the population will be representative of the Latin X community
  - This highlights the need for strategies that reflect multiple voices
  - What are the various ways community is brought to the decision-making table? Are we willing to “roll up our sleeves” work with and learn from community?
  - Building Civic Capacity is connected to Council priorities to reimagine engagement and to promote diversity, equity and inclusion
- Consider how community works together in the next 10 years? New challenges require multiple agencies, organizations and people working together to solve them and ensure strategies reflect community needs
  - There are many strengths in how the City of Fort Collins works and there is an opportunity to consider what new and dynamic ways we can work with community?
- Need to bring both content and context experts together
  - Content experts are the professionals and staff in organizations with formal power, knowledge, tools and resources
  - Context experts are the people with lived experiences including children and youth. They experientially know about these issues
- In the next 10 year, how can the City of Fort Collins Learn, Plan and Act Together?
  - This is Civic Capacity
  - When you have a strong civic capacity strong ability for community driven change
- Benefits of community driven change
  - More likely to have lasting effects
  - More inclusive and more democratic
  - Leads to more resilient communities
- Community driven change is part of 7 vital conditions for community well-being
  - Increases sense of belonging and builds civic muscle
- Civic capacity results in community benefits including better social connection:
  - This also leads to more empathy, willingness to work with others, lower levels of anxiety and depression
- Community-driven change is key to resilience:
  - Resilience can happen at the individual, family and community levels and includes things like developing coping skills, problem solving and reframing of issues, social support, and risk reduction adaptive processes
  - Parallels between individual/family resilience with community resilience include problem solving, involving multiple stakeholders, and having community resources including social capital and coalitions, processes addressing equity
- Community driven change involves examining the following:

- Who does the work (organizations and agencies OR neighborhoods, communities and regions)?
- Nature of the process (decide and announce OR agenda setting, problem solving and consensus building)
- Who organizes and energizes the process (content experts OR content and context experts)?
- Key leadership tasks—Consider how City of Fort Collins can share the leadership and power
- The Civic Capacity Index is a practical tool for communities to assess how well they can work together to create long-lasting change. It is a tool for:
  - Governments
  - Foundations
  - Civic Actors
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Community groups
- The Index was created by a panel of 34 experts on leadership including government leaders, practitioners and academics who generated ideas related to community driven change
- There are 7 dimensions of the Civic Capacity index:
  - Collective leadership
  - Confronting racism and injustice
  - Institutional Synergy
  - Engaging civic culture
  - Organic coalitions
  - Purposeful collaboration
  - Learning together
- The City of Fort Collins is already doing some amazing work in building Civic Capacity
  - Specifically, the work of Home2Helath that Meaghan Overton is leading is a good example of cross-collaboration bringing different groups together and being thoughtful about how to engage community and partners move the needle on important issues
- Core Elements of Civic Capacity and Resilient Community
  - Social Justice
  - Social Capital
  - Collaborative leadership
  - Collective Efficacy
  - Resource Equity
  - Adaptive Capacity
- Ultimately the City needs to consider where and how we learn, plan and act with our community? Patti concludes with the question of What is the difference that will make the difference in the City of Fort Collins?

**Comments/Q&A:**

- Mayor reiterates that the City of Fort Collins has a priority around reimaging engagement and that we
- Mayor asks how community is defined

- Community is how it defines itself and there are smaller communities within larger communities
  - It is also important to recognize that community can be how it defines itself
- Councilmember Gorgol reiterates the need for sharing power in leadership roles and wants to learn more about how the City can move into a place where it is not always hosting events and rather participate and leverage other resources
- There was discussion around how to help create a sense of belonging and make it possible for community members to feel like they have a seat at the table
  - Patti reiterates the need to be creative and to be willing to try new things without fear of failure
- Patti shares that it is important to invest in programs such as FLTI in order to see dynamic change of who is at the table
- Discussion around how to support work where community driven change is boiling up—what kinds of organizations, systems and platforms will allow for collaboration and inclusivity?
- Councilmember Pignataro mentions that there is engagement fatigue from the community and that one of the challenges in bringing context experts to the table is the fact that they have difficult life situations
- To continue to have context experts participate it is important to provide food, childcare and compensation
- It is important that we never ask people to share their opinion or story if we are not willing to act on it—we see this especially now when we are looking at racial injustice
  - Don't ask if you aren't willing to dive into what this is and really understand what we as an organization need to own and what needs to be changed.
  - Assess where you are with trust building—map where the organization is with perceptions of trust then think about what needs to be done to strengthen those areas of trust—recognize that this is an ongoing process
    - Mayor adds that trust can be a long time to build up and is quickly dismantled.
- Think about both the ways we engage and where we engage
  - Connect with people to design that process.
- The discussion ended with a question about how to authentically engage with the budget and there is hope that new engagement strategies can be built into the 2022 budget process

**Additional Discussion:** *None*

*Meeting adjourned by Mayor Troxell at 5:50pm*