

Status Report as of February 10, 2021

VISION Committee

Pullman Civic Organization

Eight months ago the VISION Committee had its initial planning meeting. After “introductions-around” we discussed mission, meeting protocol, major topics, and strategy. Now, after eight months and 18 meetings we still talk about mission, protocol, topics, and strategy. And delightfully, after all these meetings, we still get (with minor exceptions) 100% attendance. Focus, respect, and commitment have become part of the committee’s culture.

The committee’s first discussion included a review of the ten-year-old, final report of the first VISION Committee. We agreed to build on the spirit of working with difficult ideas. At that first meeting, June 2nd, we listed 10 talking points:

- Make PCO stronger and more engaging.
- Get residents to be more communicative.
- Deal with the problem that new residents do not engage enough.
- Be more welcoming.
- Extend the culture of the neighborhood.
- Incorporate renters.
- Get the PCO to be more diverse.
- Recommend a theme and message for the PCO.
- Look at the transparency of decision-making.
- Welcome all area residents.

That was Day 1.

We quickly decided to harvest our neighbors’ attitudes about the community in general. The resulting survey yielded over 150 responses and over 180 narratives. We found overwhelming support for Pullman. We also picked up ideas and concerns. When all those things were sorted and vetted we came up with an interesting to-do list. All this was happening during incredible times in America. Intense fears were building about the pandemic and the accelerating societal issues.

The committee decided to try something that suggested a breath of fresh air. We got permission to make and distribute positive-voiced yard signs. We instantly sold out 100 signs, 50 each of “Be Kind” and “Together We Can.” Since then we have nearly sold out of 50 signs in Spanish that tell the same two messages.

Of all the ideas that were simmering in the committee’s pot, we decided to begin work on a topic that had a high response rate in our survey. It is a topic we provisionally have called “Road Management.” It deals primarily with speeding, stop signs, and semi-trailer access. Road Management seemed a natural because it was actionable, had raised community concerns, elicited strong interest among a few committee members, and aligned with the DOT experience of our committee co-chair. We got permission from the PCO President, wrote an outline of our idea, collected some interesting data, met

with the Commissioner of CDOT and her senior staff, and communicated with the CDOT person designated as our liaison. Along with the Alderman's consent, some fresh ideas to attack the problems, and collaboration with another PCO committee that has similar interests, we are ready to roll. "Ready to roll" in our model means to bring it to the membership, get approval, receive input, and acquire assistance.

The next idea that demanded VISION Committee conversation is a compilation of kindred topics ...inclusivity, boundaries, and voices. We know that parts of this compilation can be controversial. We also know that it is imperative that Pullman have open conversation on all parts of this very difficult, sensitive portfolio. In order to make the conversation flow logically, the VISION Committee has begun to outline decision points that have their origin in well-tested methodologies. When we can meet openly it will be critical to have an open community conversation that is professionally guided.

Our goal today, and from the very start of the VISION Committee, has been to work with a group of concerned and committed residents who love Pullman and whose only reason in participating is to make living here an even better experience.

The VISION Committee thanks you for providing a forum to brainstorm, begin important conversations, share, use creative problem-solving techniques, apply empathy, and contribute to strong answers. All this occurs by promoting sensible, open-minded conversation. It is amazing what you can accomplish if you follow these rules.

"Be Kind" "Together We Can"