

**THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO  
KENT CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
WED., JULY 9, 2008**

This work session of Kent City Council was called to order at 7:07 p.m. on Wed., July 9, 2008, by John Fender, Mayor & President of Council.

**PRESENT: MR. AMRHEIN, MR. DELEONE, MR. HAWKSLEY, MS. SHAFFER, MR. TURNER, MS. WALLACH, AND MR. WILSON**

**ALSO PRESENT: J. FENDER, MAYOR; D. RULLER, CITY MANAGER; AND L. COPLEY, CLERK OF COUNCIL**

**ABSENT: MR. KUHAR AND MR. FERRARA, COUNCIL  
J. SILVER, LAW DIRECTOR**

Mayor Fender explained this is their third planning session. He said the first session was at Kent State University. He said the second session allowed the Manager to give them a two page informational questionnaire asking for their "make or break" items. He said he sees three objectives to this meeting. He said they will highlight and give their three to five objectives. He said the City Manager's assistant, Suzanne Robertsen, will write the information on the sheets that were displayed on the walls. He said they may end up talking about their ideas for the process of strategic planning. Mayor Fender said the third objective is where they want to go from here.

Mayor Fender said the Manager distributed a handout listing strategic values. He said as they itemize their make or break points, they should come under one of the eight strategic values. He said they will be categorized accordingly. He said he assumed some were specific, while others would be broad. He said a specific one may include resolving the old hotel issues, while a wider one would be to look at the downtown.

Mr. Hawksley suggested they sit at the table, and asked if they needed to record the meeting, and the Clerk said they had to record it.

Mr. Ruller said he has been more immersed in this than most people, since the staff lives it a lot more. He said one thing is important from his perspective. He said he hoped when they went through the thick notebook that they remember they are not starting from ground zero. He said as they look at most of what they are working on, it is a continuation of fundamental areas. He said there are certain themes that are present. Mr. Ruller said they probably would have come up with the same categories, as there should be no surprises.

Mr. Ruller said they are in good shape right now, adding they have a coarse grain of strategic planning. He said on the larger sheet he dispersed, they are trying to show the strategic values and objectives, as well as activities going on right now. He said it is their work plan, adding it is aligning with those broad areas. He said they should not feel stressed about coming up with a first time, insightful strategic goal. He said many are already underway, as they have things going on in every area. He said if they are happy with the project, the City is in good shape. He said what they are doing is fine tuning this information to the Council. Mr. Ruller said there is no hurry to come up with something brand new. He said they know they have things going on in every area, adding a lot of their activities fit well with the overall strategy. Mr. Ruller suggested they should customize it a bit more, being a new Council, and possibly bump up a few things.

Mr. Ruller said that the Mayor talked about the outcome, adding his outcome is not to have a final plan, adding there is no such thing. He said as they discuss specific issues, the staff can really work their way through those issues. He said they have looked at other city plans, who use a similar process. He said one city called the items their focus areas and core principles. He said they further defined those

principles, and named specific goals. Mr. Ruller said for each goal, they can discuss the policy actions and operation actions needed. He said they are not ready, at this time, for an action plan. He said his personal goal was to get a better feel, and to have a brain storming session. He suggested this was a night for putting this on paper.

Ms. Shaffer said it is difficult to put one item in one category, adding she is about interconnection. She said one item could fit under several categories, and asked if that can be done, and Mr. Ruller said he had a similar experience with an item serving a lot of their priorities. He said this could be a start toward the prioritization process. He suggested they list it in as many categories where it will fit.

Mayor Fender said they will be fleshing out their options and setting priorities. He said they are not in a hurry, as this does not need to be done by the next day. Mayor Fender referred back to something said by Mr. Lillich in the first session, where he said the staff would like to see some direction. He said that may take time. Mayor Fender said there is no plan, and they may change. He agreed with Ms. Shaffer that there is a lot of connectivity.

Mr. Hawksley said there is a ninth category, adding that is the distinction between Council's work and the Administration's work. He said Council should focus on the future. He said in the public sector, strategic planning is more than looking at the corporation, but includes looking at the partners that need to be engaged. He said there are a lot of things important to the City then can do nothing about, and include working with the schools, the University, townships, and non profits. He said that deploying resources is relevant to whom is best suited to do them. He said the make or break issue he sees is getting Council to stay in the future. He said by doing that they are letting the Administration know where the City should go and how the resources should best be used. He said that related to that, they need to see how the sustainability goals mesh with this is something to discuss in the future. He said they have twenty-four sustainability goals, covering various parts of these topics. Ms Shaffer noted they have twenty-five goals.

Mr. Hawksley said those are things already done. He said they adopted a comprehensive plan and the sustainability goals, and all are very familiar topics. He said the Manager's framework comes from those goals. He said what they should do is continually look at those goals, making sure they are relevant and up to date. He said the last time they were reviewed was four or five years earlier. He said while some are accomplished, others have not had much work done on them.

Mr. Hawksley said his three issues are 1) How to stay focused on the future; 2) How to engage stakeholders/partners; and 3) Implement and continually update sustainability goals and the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Ruller agreed, adding they are going to have one sheet with the make or break questions. He said they need to look at how to answer that question in the category.

Mr. Wilson said asked where the Manager's information does not cover everything they are deciding. He asked where they are left out, and Mr. Hawksley said they are not left out. He said he felt they need to develop a process for constant updates with public engagement. He said that comprehensive planning and the setting of goals are a continuous process. Mr. Wilson said all of his items fit together and asked if he wanted them as a #1 or #4 goal of the City. He asked if this is what Mr. Hawksley felt was their main concern, and Mr. Hawksley said it is a main concern of Council. He said that there is no one goal that is the most important. He said he was talking about the goals for Council, adding they must do those three things. Mr. Fender said it is a continuous process, with continual looks into the future, continual upgrade of the stakeholders, and to look continually at the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Fender said he had some thoughts, adding they are not "make or break" points to write down. He said his questions are what they need to do; when to do it; do they have the resources; and who are the partners. He said those are the important items they need to discuss and a lot of them are futuristic. Ms. Wallach asked Mr. Hawksley if he wanted to institutionalize the Council goals, with a monthly meeting, and Mr. Hawksley suggested they review them twice a year, with a more deliberate planning process. He said they spend a lot of time reacting and not planning.

Mr. Fender said there are no right answers. He said through their discussions, they have to flesh out what is most important. He said as he mentioned before, some are very broad, while others are more specific. He said that he felt downtown development is a make or break issue, and something they have stated numerous times previously. He said they need to focus on the hotel, Main Street, and the boat livery.

Mr. Ruller said the question is how do they achieve what he is looking for, and what does it mean in the basic overall approach. He said the question is, if this is a make or break issue, where does it get solved. Ms. Wallach said economic growth and development is a make or break issue. Ms. Shaffer said she would include it under exceptional quality of life also. She said this gives them public spaces and recreational opportunities, so people do not jump in their car for shopping. She said it can be economic, as well as quality of life. He said it would make Kent a complete town, rather than a bedroom community. Mr. Ruller said if it is done right, there will be financial implications. He said the whole idea is to restore the economic engine of the downtown. Ms. Shaffer said they should include it under neighborhoods, adding that a strong downtown will spill into all neighborhoods, and would shore up the property values. She said it would be a more desirable place to live when it is more vibrant with more quality of life places.

Mayor Fender said his second make or break issue is collaboration and working with Kent State University. He said they are an anchor in Kent and it is important to collaborate in any way.

Mr. Wilson told the Mayor he took his first one. He said his second make or break issue dealt with their safety forces, and a new police station. He said they need to do something about that building, and it should be a priority. He said he was also talking about the level of service and their response times. He suggested it be placed under "Safe Community."

Mr. Wilson said another issue was their housing stock. He said after looking at Spicer Village, it shows that things can be turned around. He said they can do better with respect to student rental properties.

Mr. Turner said they need to create greater home ownership in Kent. He said quality job creation is need, where people receive living wages. He said that should be considered when discussing businesses. Mr. Turner said that job training is an essential, so when they do have industries move in, they need to be able to plug in so people are properly trained. Mr. Turner said the quality of their work force is important. He said they need to identify who the leaders are in their neighborhoods. Mr. Turner said they need to look at their neighborhoods, seeing what is going on, plugging it into the overall goal.

Mr. DeLeone said he is going in a different direction with development. He said they have a lot of businesses in Kent, adding he knew that Mr. Weddle was doing the ambassador program. He said those businesses have a lot to do with what makes or breaks them. He said they need to know what businesses are doing in Kent, so they do not decide to leave. Mr. DeLeone said he has not had an update recently, adding that retention of businesses is important. He said it can also be tied in with their JEDDS. Mr. DeLeone said there are a lot of other businesses beside the downtown, such as the West Main Street corridor. He said a lot of people are asking him, "What about us?"

Mayor Fender asked how many businesses they have in Kent, adding it seems like an enormous number. Mr. DeLeone said that along that line, they received an email earlier in the day about a new company. He said it appears that Dan Smith is working hard.

Mayor Fender asked Mr. Ruller to elaborate on the company, and Ms. Wallach asked where they are coming from, and Mr. Ruller said they are in Tallmadge. He said it will be about twelve to twenty professionals. He said their business is booming, similar to KAPCO. He said that KAPCO got into the latex glove business, and it is booming. He said that is good news for Kent, adding they told him they cannot keep up with their sales, and their sales are setting records.

Mr. DeLeone said that part of the ambassador program is to see if they need help any of the businesses.

Mayor Fender said another one he has are regionalism and planning. He said Mr. Turner mentioned job training, and although they cannot do it in Kent, it may be done countywide. He said there are some

things they cannot do, and need to collaborate with the County.

Ms. Wallach said with that collaboration, they need formal task force or committee of all stakeholders. She said they need more than informal communication, which is what they have now. She said they need a formal task force with Kent State and their JEDDs.

Mr. Ruller said when Yank Heisler was hired at the University, one of the first things he did was invite the County, City, some University staff, NEOUCOM, and the county commissioners for relatively informal discussion sessions, monthly, about what is happening in the region. He said it has been very helpful. He said that Dr. Pat Book started the Kent Growth Collaborative, which was similar but did not have the stickiness. He noted that Mr. Heisler is high in the organization.

Ms. Shaffer said that she reviewed the citizen surveys, adding that people highly rated the need to improve the roads, as the infrastructure is pretty bad. She said she did not want to focus just on the roads, but on transportation. She said they need strong transportation, alternative transportation, and the enhancement of walkability of Kent. She said this will allow for safe communities and a better quality of life. She said they need to improve pedestrian access, and need to encourage and invite pedestrianism. She said if they try to walk down S. Water Street, they will see it is not inviting with narrow sidewalks and broken glass. Ms. Shaffer said the image of Kent is important to those who participated in the surveys. She said that Code enforcement is also important. Mr. DeLeone suggested that under improved transportation, they should include streets and sidewalks. He suggested this would include bike lanes, and Ms. Shaffer suggested they include busways. She said they need to work on more bus shelters and the transit center.

Mr. Amrhein said he had some of the same ideas. He said his ideas included building a partnership with Kent State, providing services to citizens to make Kent an ideal place to live, keeping Kent safe, promoting economic development, and a strict code for rental houses. He noted that rental houses account for 75% of the housing stock, and Mr. Hawksley said it is about 63% or 64%. He said it is also skewed by the apartment buildings in Kent.

Mayor Fender said another make or break issue is the need for proactive and positive communication with the citizens. He questioned how they can get out the information that they are doing well, adding it is difficult. He said that Kent 360 is good, as is the newspaper, adding it is easy to pick on an old city. Mayor Fender said the school system does an excellent job telling their story.

Mr. Turner noted none of his ideas were original. He said one of his issues was how they better communicate with the residents. He said one issue was how they get out of the Council Chambers and go to the neighborhoods. He asked how they can better communicate with people in their own environments. He said a lot of the time they are more comfortable in their own settings. Mr. Turner questioned how they can take their show on the road periodically. He said they would also get a feel for what is going on in a certain area.

Mayor Fender said at times the School Board would have their meetings in the elementary schools. Mr. Amrhein said they still do that in the school year.

Mr. DeLeone said Mr. Kuhar brought up the fact that they need to be sure they are doing everything possible with respect to being more energy efficient. He said they have to start at the government buildings. Mr. Hawksley said the schools have that program, and Mr. Fender said they have an employee that does that. Mr. Hawksley said they used the NOPEC monies to be more energy efficient, and figured on a payback in about three years. Mr. DeLeone said those were some of the things Mr. Kuhar said, adding they need to spend some money to save money in the long run.

Mr. Ruller said one issue that has been implied is how they afford to do the things they want to do. He said whether it is infrastructure, transportation, or sidewalks, the question is about affordability. He said it is implied that development will help the tax base grow. He said that quality of life matters, also. Mr. Ruller said a lot of the issues they are discussing falls into the question of affordability.

Mr. Hawksley said a lot of communities are reducing the subsidy for parking. He said they have 500 parking spaces downtown that are subsidized from the General Fund budget.

Mr. Ruller said in a meeting with Mr. Heisler, the question was asked if the University would consider a bonus to faculty and staff who would live in the neighborhoods. He said he knew they could not reduce the tax rate, but asked if the City would offer a tax credit. Mr. Turner said he loved that idea. He said there are occasions where they need a Marshall to deal with issues in the communities that are at risk. He said they could identify those needs and go after it. He said he sees elements for identifying areas that have a need, and can create new opportunities by making them useable again. He said that is a big hope. He said if they can create that incentive to get people to move into a neighborhood, making it attractive again, that is where they need to be. He said they cannot afford to have unuseable neighborhoods. Ms. Wallach suggested they check with the local banks to see if they would supply low interest loans for property renovation. Mr. Turner said it is important they encourage a mix of incomes and different types of people. He said he grew up in a mixed neighborhood, but now there is a disproportionate number of low income subsidized housing. He said it is acceptable, except it becomes the dominate feature of the community, diminishing the quality of life.

Mr. Turner said there are lots in his neighborhood that would fit condominiums in his neighborhood. He said they do not wish to knock people out, but it is a possibility to uplift the neighborhood.

Mayor Fender said that was similar to what Mr. Hawksley said about future planning with partners. He said it can be taken off the shelf, adding that is what happens in many cities. He said it is a future plan, and asked the Manager if he wanted to share the gerontology thoughts he heard.

Mr. Ruller said he had a call from an investor in the area who owns property in Kent. He said this individual discussed his vision for Kent, adding he was full of vision. He said he was talking about the graying of America. He said they speak of the young population because of the University, and ways to keep the younger population in Kent. He said the caller's point was to not forget the older age individuals with a younger spirit. He said the caller said those college kids do not have a lot of cash, but those in the work force like being close to a university, as it keeps them young. Mr. Ruller said the caller commented about Kent having that small town, intimate feel, which is nice.

Mr. Ruller said the caller talked about how there is a great opportunity to cultivate and partner with the University. He said the caller felt they could create a College of Older Services, which would be multi disciplinary, with a lot having to do with wellness. He said they need a full range of care givers, with some needing home care. Mr. Ruller said the gentleman spoke of how the community would benefit, and that would feed on itself. He said there are a lot of older people with higher medical needs. Mr. Ruller said medical growth is in the region, which is a plus.

Mayor Fender asked if he meant something like a retirement village, and Mr. Ruller said that was correct. Mayor Fender said more universities are going to that, like Miami, and OU. Mr. Ruller said he gets a lot of calls from graduates who would like to come back to Kent. He said they need a housing mix for that to happen, adding it would be interesting to have that futuristic point of view. He said that some cities have looked ahead and started cultivating this idea, and are ahead of the game.

Ms. Wallach suggested Mr. Ruller suggest this at the next meeting with Mr. Heisler. Mr. Ruller said he told the individual he would try to float the idea.

Mr. Turner said they have to start building community support for their agenda. He said they have to have victories, adding it is not just about the downtown. He said they need to see the benefit for the neighborhoods, including things like new revenue streams, upgrading infrastructure or grant monies to help those impacted. He said they have to build in those things that register with people. He said they have to build overall community support for whatever they end up doing. Mr. Turner said it is always a visual for him. He said people buy in with visuals. He said they need to do a better job of connecting in the neighborhoods, as to what they have to sell.

Mr. Ruller said they wrestle with this, adding they try to be open and transparent. He said a challenge is getting their attention. He said when they did their community meetings for the Blue Ribbon Panel, not a lot of people showed up. He said they do not get great attendance. He said they are trying to do more in the Tree City Bulletin, and on Kent 360. He said he meets with the reporter from the Record Courier, Matt, so he hears the stories and put things out there.

Mr. Turner said they need to come up with a new way. Mr. Hawksley quoted John Kennedy at this time, "My experience in government is that when things are non controversial and beautifully coordinated, there is nothing going on."

Mr. Turner said people need to visualize. He said if people felt there were more immediate goals, and it was up to them to get their neighborhood more invested, possibilities of the turnout will increase. He agreed that when things are not controversial, people will not come out. He said people need to see something positive and have to think something is possible. He said most are detached and believe that government function will not impact their lives. He said that something has to start breaking, and people will start to believe they are capable of doing something in Kent that can impact them for twenty to fifty years.

Mr. Fender said the schools have that networking, with a PTO and a vested interest in children. He said if that were a goal, they could work on it. He said he agreed with Mr. Turner that it takes the leadership of those in the community, not Council.

Mr. DeLeone spoke of victories. He said the JEDD has new growth going out to SR 76, which is all zoned commercial. He said he knows they have met with the Township trustees, adding that is a small victory that needs to be expanded.

Mr. Wilson said both JEDDs have a board. He said they work on economic development all of the time, and Mr. DeLeone noted they are involved also. Mr. DeLeone suggested they do not have enough publicity. Mayor Fender said that has great potential. Mr. DeLeone said he views that as a victory.

Ms. Wallach said they had a presentation from the man from Boulder who said they need to celebrate their successes. She said they should celebrate the new business, and make an event out of it. She said when the public sees positive things, other things will start to snowball.

Ms. Shaffer said she wished to piggyback on the concept of neighborhoods. She said that celebrating success is important, but she is concerned with civic engagement. She said neighborhood Councils is one way to give people real power. She said she wants a budget for the neighborhoods, and wants them to create names and markers for those neighborhoods, so they can have an identity. She said they need to prioritize what is important to the neighborhoods, adding it would be helpful for developing civic engagement. She said they are better with communication, adding they are an open government. She said they can go to both websites if they want information. She said there is still a divide between the University and Kent. She said they do not make as good a use of volunteers and/or interns. She said they need to focus on intercommunications between the City and the University. Ms. Shaffer questioned how they can do this, adding they could have a joint electronic sign. She said they can create kiosks. Ms. Shaffer said as they develop the walking paths between Kent and downtown, they need to look at creating a place of interest along the way, while increasing the ability to communicate to people where they live.

Ms. Shaffer said she wished people would be better informed, adding they need to broaden those channels. Mr. Ruller said most cable companies provide a community channel, and asked if Kent has that. Many said they do have a local access channel. Mr. Hawksley said they have tried several times to get their meetings televised, adding Time-Warner would provide the equipment and would work with the students to broadcast the meetings. He said they have a community bulletin board at this time. Mayor Fender said it is mandated by the FCC that cable companies must have public information channels.

Mr. Hawksley said in cities like Cleveland, a typical neighborhood is about 20,000 people. He asked what a critical mass is in a neighborhood. He said other cities have neighborhood block grant programs, and

acknowledged at times it does become political. He said he has seen a competitive process, adding they could have three or four neighborhoods going after small grants. He said they have block grant monies, and there is validity in pursuing this issue. Mr. Wilson said that has been done. He said that Artemis Park and Plum Creek park are both funded by CDBG monies. Mr. Hawksley said he was talking about the neighborhood group applying for funds.

Mr. Hawksley said it is an intentional program to get neighborhoods to prioritize and coordinate. He said they have had a lot of discussion about more people working from home, adding it is a home occupation issue. He said neighborhoods used to be bedroom communities, and now more people are working at home. He said he works at home, and sees others who work at home in the coffee shop, bank, and/or copy center. He said they have discussed how to attract people to their neighborhoods, adding they need to talk about making it friendly for people to work at home.

Mr. Fender said he will not become negative. He said he has gone through these sessions, like Mr. Wilson and Mr. DeLeone. He said that it is difficult to get anything done, and it takes leadership, planning and perseverance. Mr. Fender said it is difficult to do, possibly because of the lack of money or resources. He said that the staff is filled to the brim. Mayor Fender said they have generated a lot of ideas, but have not come up with a small number to allow victories. He said some are ongoing already, adding they are already dealing with issues like code enforcement. He said he felt himself being overwhelmed by the Manager's spreadsheet, and noted they are only part time people.

Mr. Fender suggested that for them to get on the road for success, he would like to see the next session be with a facilitator. He said he did not feel capable of bringing this all together, adding he does not know where he is going. He said they need someone who is more professional who can hone it down and bring it together. He asked if they are going to end up just talking, while a facilitator could bring them to their results.

Ms. Shaffer said it would be helpful if they looked at some type of facilitator to get a sense of time line. She said they can discuss what they are doing now, and what they want to see by the end of the year. She said they need people to know they are on a positive path, and need to discuss the next three to five years. Ms. Shaffer said they have the vision in the big binder previously distributed, adding they need to fine tune it. She said one of the most important documents deals with the sustainability goals, as it encompasses everything.

Mr. Fender noted that many of those items were on the spreadsheet. Ms. Shaffer agreed, that a lot of the actions items listed are going on currently. She said the plans have created the seeds of what is occurring now. She said she cannot take credit, as they were already underway. She said they need to decide what they want to see in the next few years.

Mayor Fender said what bothers him is that he feels handcuffed. He said the questions they need to answer are what they want to do, when they want to do it, whether they have the resources, who would be their partners, and how do they measure the process. He said those are big things.

Mr. Ruller said the information gives them a better sense, at a staff level, where the Council sees the world of Kent. He said there are no surprises, adding it is fairly consistent with things already underway. He said they will continue to work on clarification, adding it is hard as it does feel like it is all over the map.

Mr. Ruller said the staff could immerse themselves with the information, and try to plug it in a different way to allow the next step. He said they need to summarize the information into a framework that begs the next questions which are about the logistics. He said they cannot do a fraction of the ideas with the current resource stream. He said they can reach out to partners, and are doing so currently. He said it gets them to the issue of choice, and what is their top priority for the year, or next two to three years. He said if Council can be patient, the staff can help this along. He noted they are busy, but they were not trying to delay this unnecessarily.

Mayor Fender asked what they can do now, with relatively little cost. He said celebrating successes may

be one of the things they may do. He asked if there are things they can do now without a lot of money. He asked where they are with some of the things, and noted Mr. Wilson mentioned the safety forces and their building. He said they need to know how far they are in the process. Mr. Fender said that as a principal, they always came out of a meeting knowing what they accomplished, and had homework.

Mr. Wilson said they are the policy setters, and the manager is charged to do the tasks. He suggested that instead of hiring an outside facilitator, they let the Manager and his staff look at the information. He said they can decide what they are already doing and what they plan to do. He said they can come back with a report, and Council can change the priorities. He said they need to let staff decide what can be done. He said they will then make the policy.

Mayor Fender said the Manager told them initially to not feel stressed that they have to do something. He said they may be happy about a number of things they are doing.

Ms. Wallach said from what she has heard, it seems like they already picked their #1 make or break priority, which is financial health. She said they have already taken a big step in that direction, adding that is what they need to look at. Mr. Wilson said they are not done with that yet, adding they have further items to discuss.

Mr. DeLeone said as he looks at what was written down, he said their whole goal is to balance the budget and come out ahead. He said they are trying to look a few years down the road, so they are not in the hole. He said they have a small cushion they do not want to lose. Mayor Fender said people where the money will come from.

Mr. Turner said he not only wanted to discuss these items and set their priorities, it will be helpful to know what kind of resources are necessary to make those things work, such as economic development projects, and the expected payoff. He said they need to know that information when they make determinations. He said they need to know the outlays of money needed, the return of the money, and a time line for the return. He said they all know the issue will be how to generate income back to Kent in order to do those things they want to do. He said it is important to understand if they have a Fairmount project, as opposed to another project, like B-Tech, which gives the ultimate benefit, payback, and time. He said they have to look at their stakeholders, and their relationship with them. He said a lot of things will confront them down the road in their overall economic development strategies. He said that will impact the community. Mr. Turner said it will depend on the buy in of the people, and whether they want them to do what they think they have to do. He said the Mayor said it, adding it is about explaining the outcome at the end of the day. Mr. Turner said they are looking at sunsets on paying, as well as benefits for businesses. Mr. Turner said they have to explain first before taking action, so that people are knowledgeable. He said they have to go that extra mile before asking them to sacrifice. He said an example is the tax credit, adding they need to let them know that the City gets it and want to make the community better. He said at the end of the day, they have to express themselves so people know this government is not apart from them, but instead, a part of them.

Mayor Fender said that was a great theme, but questioned how it happens and who does it. He questioned who would be the leaders, adding that is the big part. He said the overall theme is great, adding the activity part takes brainstorming.

Mr. Amrhein said the ward meetings have twelve people show up when presenting the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations. He said he expected hundreds of people. He said Mr. Turner was right, as this is a hard economic time. He said his family will pay as well for the tax credit. Mr. Turner said it is not going to get any easier. He said they have to look at the newspaper to make their case a priority so they can let people know it is a critical time that needs promotion. He said the people have to be at the table, and have to provide their input.

Mayor Fender said he was a trustee at Coleman Professional. He said that they had a feeling a number of people in Kent felt the mentally challenged were thieves, crooks, and rapists. He said they started a program where they brought in ten to twelve people, gave them lunch, and they became their

ambassadors to let people know the mentally challenged were not that way. He said it spread. Mayor Fender said they felt networking was extremely important.

Mr. Hawksley said he wanted to speak to the process. He said they need to work through how they want to take this, working along side the Administration. He said no one is perfect. He agreed with Ms. Shaffer that they are doing things now because previous Councils did the right thing. He said they are all part timers, with one staff person. He said they are a small city the size of a neighborhood. He said they need to find a way to do policy making more deliberately. He said he does not know how that will happen.

Mr. Ruller said he appreciated that, adding it gives them more to think about. He said they can continue this at a reasonable pace, and will bring something back as they try to narrow it down, forcing the next steps and questions.

Ms. Wallach said if they need a facilitator, she would suggest Mr. Helsel, who offered his services before at no charge. Mayor Fender said that Mr. DeLeone and Ms. Wallach have hit the nail on the head, adding it comes down to finances. He said that is the backbone of all the issues. He said they need money.

Ms. Shaffer said they need to find money to cover their deficit, and also have to look long term at the health of the community so they do not sacrifice. She said there are different ways to engage the communities.

Ms. Wallach asked if they are going to set another session now, or wait until the staff is ready, and Mayor Fender asked Mr. Ruller his thoughts. Mr. Wilson asked if they were clear that the Manager and his staff would discuss this first, and most agreed. Mayor Fender asked the Manager when it might happen, adding the Administration has daily jobs they must perform. Mr. Ruller suggested he would have to check with the staff because of people's summer schedules. He said he was taking some time in August when he moves. Ms. Wallach suggested they just leave it open.

Ms. Wallach said that Mr. Turner expressed concerns about sacrifices, talking to people and educating them. She said when they ran for election, she did a lot of face-to-face contacts. She said this is just as important, adding they need to go out to their rewards. She said it is a big issue, up to them, and their responsibility. She said they need to spend that one-on-one time with their constituents. She said she has received positive responses so far adding that they are supporting the issues.

Ms. Shaffer said that an action they can do now, is to develop materials they can use to provide that information. She said they will have three meetings, adding she hoped people will come. She said she has already received phone calls and emails, adding it caught their attention. She said it would be helpful for small groups to work on those materials, to help people understand what it means and where it is going to go.

Mayor Fender said he received four calls on reciprocity, and others acknowledged they, too received calls.

Hearing no further business before this Council, Mayor Fender adjourned this meeting at 8:40 p.m.

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Linda M. Copley, Clerk of Council

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John Fender, Mayor & President of Council