



**City of Seal Beach  
City Council Workshop  
Held March 5, 2020**

**March 2020**

**Management  
Partners**





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## Workshop Report

The City of Seal Beach held a City Council workshop on Thursday, March 5, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Fire Station #48. The workshop provided an opportunity for Council members to review the City's mission, values, civility principles and to identify priorities for the coming year. This report contains a summary of the results of the session.

Management Partners' team members Mary Neilan, Senior Manager, and Rick Haydon, Special Advisor, facilitated the workshop.

### ***Workshop Overview***

#### **Objectives**

- Review the City's progress on 2019 strategic objectives and context for setting Council priorities
- Reach Council consensus on strategic objectives for the year
- Discuss budget process improvements
- Determine next steps on other items of interest

#### **Agenda**

- Welcome and introductions
- Public comment
- City Manager's comments
- Review City's mission, values and civility principles
- Review recent accomplishments
- Determine Council strategic objectives for the coming year
- Discuss budget process
- Review other items of interest from Council interviews
- Wrap up and next steps

#### **Workshop Preparation**

In preparation for the workshop, Mary Neilan held individual interviews with each Councilmember and prepared various materials.

### Workshop Ground Rules

At the start of the workshop, the facilitator suggested several ground rules to help the group have a successful workshop.



- Participate
- Reach consensus
- Listen to understand
- Assume good intent
- Stay focused
- Enjoy the day!

*Bike Rack.* The facilitator explained that items raised that would not receive immediate attention would be added to a “bike rack.”

### City Council

Mayor  
Schelly Sustarsic



Mayor Pro Tem  
Joe Kalmick



Councilmember  
Thomas Moore



Councilmember  
Mike Varipapa



Councilmember  
Sandra Massa-Lavitt



### Executive Management Staff

- City Manager Jill Ingram
- City Attorney Craig Steele
- Assistant City Manager Patrick Gallegos

- Police Chief Joe Miller
- Public Works Director Steve Myrter
- Fire Captain Chris Caswell
- Community Development Director Les Johnson
- Marine Safety Chief Joe Bailey
- City Clerk Gloria Harper
- Finance Director Kelly Telford

### ***Welcome and Introductions***

The workshop began with a roll call and welcome from Mayor Sustarsic, who thanked the public, Council, and staff for attending. She highlighted the importance of taking time to identify Council priorities for the coming year.

City Manager Jill Ingram then explained the background of the day's workshop and introduced the consultants.

Mary Neilan provided an overview of the day to help develop a shared understanding about the workshop's purpose and objectives. She reviewed the ground rules and agenda.

### ***Review and Affirmation of Mission, Values and Civility Principles***

The Council reviewed and discussed the City's mission, values and civility principles and affirmed their importance during this workshop. The Mayor emphasized the importance in Seal Beach of preserving the "small town character" and what that means to residents.



## **2019 Accomplishments and Context for Setting Priorities**

Council members reviewed numerous accomplishments from the past year and discussed details with the staff. Of particular note was the budget surplus recognized in FY2020/21, completion of the pier restoration project, the enhanced traffic enforcement at Leisure World, increased staffing at the Police Department, and the city's continued progress on infrastructure improvements and various capital projects.

## **Discussion of City Challenges and Opportunities**

Council members and staff discussed the following questions:



Mayor Sustarsic started the discussion by reviewing the impact that Coronavirus will have on the city and community. A roundtable discussion was held on the subject. Following this discussion, additional challenges and opportunities were identified.

- Uncertainty about city finances long term
- Measure BB revenue – how much will be generated
- Community Pool – should the city invest in this amenity
- Restaurant at end of pier – community opinions vary
- Main Street streetscape enhancements – cost vs. benefit
- Technology – how to leverage technology to increase efficiency
- Infrastructure – ongoing maintenance
- Housing Element update – major project for staff in 2021





### ***Consensus on Council Strategic Objectives for the Coming Year***

Mary discussed the importance of prioritizing objectives and reviewed current and potential City objectives with the Council.

Thereafter, the Council members brainstormed potential objectives and reached consensus on their ten top priorities for the next six to twelve months. Staff agreed that each could be completed between April and December 2020.

1. Develop a three to five year citywide financial forecast to inform the annual budget.
2. Study the feasibility of reducing the City's pension liability and other long-term dept obligations, including an analysis of issuing pension obligation bonds (POB)
3. Review revenue generated from Measure BB, the history of expenditures and spending plan going forward.
4. Assess the existing phone system, identify deficiencies and solicit proposals for replacement.
5. Develop an IT Master Plan and needs assessment.
6. Prepare and present to Council an assessment of the City's development review and permitting process and possible improvements.
7. Improve communication with the community through enhanced use of social media and other outlets.
8. Compile results of community outreach and schedule a Council presentation on preliminary scope, project cost and options to finance the Community Pool.

9. Undertake community outreach on Downtown street/sidewalk enhancements; staff to solicit and present design concept for Council consideration.
10. Engage the community in a discussion about whether to allow a restaurant at the end of the pier.

### **Timeline to be Established**

Council then discussed establishing a timeline and identifying the responsible party for each of the strategic objectives.

Mary noted a matrix of these objectives would be provided to the City Manager to track progress over the next year.



### ***Discussion of Budget Process***

Rick lead a discussion regarding feedback and comments Mary received during her individual interviews with each City Council Member about the annual budget process.

It was noted that members of Council wanted to be informed earlier during the budget process as to proposed changes being submitted for the upcoming fiscal year. In addition, it was also noted that there was a desire to get earlier input from the public on the proposed budget.

### **Budget Prioritization Workshop**

After some discussion, the Council consensus was to have staff put together a budget prioritization workshop. This will be held around the end of March/beginning of April to provide the City Council and the public an opportunity to provide input on the 2020-21 proposed annual budget prior to staff compiling a draft budget for Council's consideration.

Staff indicated that they would also present a financial overview of major City funds to the City Council for their information at the workshop.

### **Budget Document**

Council discussed components of the budget process and budget document. Key items included:

- The role the City Manager and staff play in reviewing each departmental request and the steps in compiling the draft document;
- The value of including summary tables and noteworthy budget highlights to bring attention to the major changes from one budget year to the next.
- Incorporation of a three to five year General Fund financial forecast into the budget process and document.

The Council consensus was to include in the budget document a narrative describing the various steps of the budget process, summary tables identifying the budget-to-budget variances, long-range General Fund financial information as well as noteworthy budget highlights of all major budget changes.

### **Departmental Performance Metrics**

Departmental performance metrics were discussed and the need to develop meaningful metrics and to share them with the Council and the public.

It was decided that staff would work with the Management Partners in developing meaningful performance metrics for possible inclusion if not in the next budget document, then in future documents.

### **Prioritization of Capital Projects**

Lastly, funding prioritization of capital projects was discussed along with the need to assess current and long-term capital needs of the City before funding any specific one capital project.

After some discussion, the consensus was to have another capital improvement budget (CIP) workshop prior to May 28. The date of this proposed workshop will need to be determined.



### ***Discussion of Other Items***

Several items for discussion were identified by members of Council in their pre-workshop interviews with Mary Neilan. Council and staff discussed the following issues that were not included in the strategic objectives to address in the next six to twelve months, but which have significant impact on the city and will require continued attention and future action.

- Statewide housing legislation and the City's RHNA requirement
- Water/sewer rate study (complete; to be presented in March)
- Upstream pollution affecting beaches
- Local Coastal Plan sea level rise mitigation

### ***Wrap-Up and Next Steps***

The workshop concluded with Mary Neilan indicating that a workshop summary report will be prepared by Management Partners to document the key points of discussion and outcomes of the day. Also, a matrix to track progress on the priorities would be prepared.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their participation and the meeting was adjourned.