Roll Call: Council Member McCracken, Council Member P. Martinez, Mayor Pro Tem F. Martinez, Mayor Hamilton, One Council Vacancy

Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Pedro Martinez
Invocation: Moment of Silence

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS
None

SCHEDULED MATTER
1. GOALS AND PRIORITIES

City Manager Longley presented the item. He reviewed the 21 power curve projects and the current project monthly reports which included three questions for Council, 1) whether the monthly reports were useful, 2) which projects should be placed “on watch” or “priority”; and 3) which projects should be added or deleted. The City Manager stated that Lucie Garcia had agreed to facilitate the meeting. Mr. Longley stated that the number one question was whether the Council found the monthly reports beneficial. Council concurred that they found it to be a useful tool.

Lucy Garcia welcomed everyone and stated that it would be five minutes so she could correct a technical problem. She invited everyone to help themselves to the refreshments in the meantime.

Mayor Hamilton stated that he had a conversation with the City Manager and a couple of the Department Heads, and some issues came up that were pertinent to how they govern. Some minor things came up, and the staff’s frustration with some matters. The Mayor stated that he thought they could take a few minutes to discuss this while they waited.

The City Manager stated that it seemed that one of the main frustrations was that they tended to bounce around in terms of priorities. He stated that it was called the priority of the week, and staff felt it could be much more effective if objectives to accomplish were defined, and then they were allowed to stick to them for a period of time. The City Manager stated that it would be beneficial coming out of the session to move in that direction–having a span of control in having three to five, but ever more than seven, priorities.

The Mayor stated that the Council got lobbied all the time, and the Council started making decisions on what the developers want instead of going through the process—and that was very frustrating to the staff. He stated that the Council needed to listen to the citizens, but they also needed to let the process take place the way it was supposed to. He stated that there were channels to follow, especially with new development, and the Council members should probably tell individuals that they were staying out of things until it came before them.
The City Manager stated that he had a discussion with a number of staff yesterday about the difference between how the City operates and how a number of those large governmental entities operate. The feeling was that below the manager level, and to some extent below the director level, it was perceived that there was a tremendous amount of premature Council involvement then typical in other organizations in the community. He stated that it was a style thing, but it was thought to be less than effective because the directors became focused on dealing with political challenges rather than dealing with getting the work out, making things happen and focusing on the technical leadership they need to provide. It distracted from effectively accomplishing their mission.

The Mayor gave an example of getting involved in a developer’s request, and in the end the problem was with the people on the developer’s end and not staff, but in the meantime a lot of staff time and effort was taken instead of allowing the process to proceed. He stated that the Council was getting one side of the story. The Mayor stated that there was 145 projects, and every time they involved the management staff, they were taking personnel away from accomplishing what they needed to be doing. He stated that they should be going to the City Manager to get any answers they needed without taking the staff off-task.

Baldo Rodriguez, Director of Public Works, stated that part of his frustration was when his staff was told they screwed something up and it became a heated debate out in the field. He stated that it would be a benefit to him if, when he was told staff screwed something up and he could show them that it was not staff’s fault and here was the problem, he could tell his people that there was problem, but they needed to make it work. He stated that he was ready to fix any problems possible and move ahead, and he would like to tell his staff that they would get it done, but it was known that it was not the staff’s fault, no matter what was being told to the Council.

Brad Dunlap, Director of Community Development, stated what staff was looking for the Council to do was set the course for the goals they want the City to achieve. He stated that they had 145 projects with defined and limited resources to achieve the Council’s goals, so it needed to be focused. From his standpoint, development started with them, and if they were pulled in many different directions, apart from the primary goals of the Council for the City, it took the whole program off course. Mr. Dunlap stated that they needed a vision cast by the City Council and a clear commitment to achieving those goals—and that goes toward the decision making that feeds into achieving those goals. He stated that when they say they are committed to economic development and they made decisions contrary to creating jobs, or diluting their ability to move in that direction, it’s an oxymoron and worked toward opposite ends. Mr. Dunlap stated that for example, whatever the decisions were that went into the Porterville Commercial Center versus Riverwalk issue, it was still an opportunity to create jobs and amenities for the community, and allow for the residents of Porterville to spend their tax dollars here complimentary to the other project. In regard to community development, he heard continuously that they were not doing anything, but he could not tell them how much time they spend doing that nothing. They spent a long time working on potential projects and working inquiries. Mr. Dunlap stated that they were looking for the Council to set a clear goal and clear course, and the decisions made in meetings week after week need to align with achieving that goal, and when they didn’t, he felt like they were chasing their tail. Mr. Dunlap stated that many times they made decisions that expended resources in areas that were duplicative of services, and those resources could very well be used at
fulfilling mission critical objectives that they know the Council holds as a high priority, like spending a few hundred thousand dollars on a project that may be a duplicate resource in the community when that money could go into capital projects elsewhere that were mission critical and defined by the Council as being a major goal. He stated that what he was looking for in order to be able to plan effectively, and to promote economic development effectively, was decision making on the Council level that would move them in that direction. Mr. Dunlap stated that staff spent a lot of time bringing projects to Council only to not have a decision made, and then staff goes back and recreates the wheel again, and brings it back and circles back again. He stated that he had seen Jim Perrine circle back three or four times on the same project, only to not ever have it decided on. Director Dunlap stated that they were there to serve the community, and to serve the Council through the City Manager to make a productive contribution to the community, and they cared. He stated that oftentimes, beyond what he just said, one of the things communicated back to staff was that “it’s us against you”—they were not together synced as a team. He stated that they were not there to contradict the City Council, or work contrary to the City Council, they were there to work for the City Council through the City Manager, but they had this thing going—“I want you to go over here—I want you to go over here.” He stated that they needed that agreement from the Council in which direction they were moving and then they needed to move that direction. He stated that they were there to follow Council’s direction, but it needed to be understandable and clear.

Mayor Hamilton asked if any staff wanted to focus on what Brad said, or were they in agreement, because Council was going to set goals and objectives that day. The Mayor stated that with what Mr. Dunlap spoke about, and what Mr. Rodriguez spoke about, did the staff feel the same way or have more information before Mrs. Garcia got them started.

Frank Guyton, Deputy City Manager/Fire Chief, stated that they put it in a nutshell, as he had those same issues the staff was talking about, and then they always had people coming in wanting to spend money in some other arena. The priority projects, the money distribution projects and the vision set during the budgetary process should be adhered to unless it was something dramatic.

Mayor Pro Tem F. Martinez stated that it was like having a football team and when they got out there they were told not to tackle the guy, and then asked why they were losing. That was what he heard and he wanted them to start tackling.

Mr. Guyton laughingly stated that perhaps they were playing soccer, and Mr. Perrine stated that was also the problem, it sometimes felt like they were playing different games.

Council Member P. Martinez stated that he understood that this body needed to come together as a Council to set priorities, understanding that they all have individual interests and goals. He stated that in looking at what was best for the City, some of those personal goals may have to be categorized as level two or three. He stated that Pete McCracken used to say when he was running for Council that they needed to figure out what their wants were and what their needs were, and he believed for the community that was what they needed to do—figure out the needs that Porterville has for this year that this Council can move toward, and then the wants they may have could be worked toward, but understanding that would take more time. He stated that
pushing for an individual item could be undermining the goals of the Council, so they to set their priorities and work toward them.

Lucy Garcia, Director of Community Relations and Foundation Development for Sierra View District Hospital, stated that strategic planning effected everyone and she wished more people were in attendance. Ms. Garcia stated that she did research on the community development process and there were three pieces to it--strategic planning, implementation and evaluation. She stated that one of the first things they would do was talk about the vision, but they would have to continually do implementation and evaluation--'this is the big picture, this is what we want it to look like--this is how we’re getting there--this is how we’ll do it.’ Ms. Garcia stated that they did a strategic plan to basically create a vision. They needed to know what they were doing, where they’re going--what did they want their future to look like. They needed the big picture of the how the community, the economy and the people will be changed to make sure everyone in the community shared in its well being. She stated that it was not the Council’s plan or the City’s plan, it was everyone’s plan. They needed to agree on a common goal, find out how much time, money and resources were needed to create change. Ms. Garcia stated that Federal, State, private and non-profit partners were needed to achieve those goals. Ms. Garcia stated that the elements of the strategic plan were vision, community assessment, goals, strategies, and then evaluate the process. She stated that today’s focus would be on the vision and community assessment. Ms. Garcia stated asked what was important to our community; what values will get guide our activities; and what do we want our City to look like in ten years, in fifty years?

Avtar Singh asked the Mayor about the notification on this meeting. Mayor Hamilton stated that notices were sent and it had been the newspaper and on KTIP.

Mrs. Garcia and those in attendance then made the following lists:

**Vision:**
- restoration of livelihood
- more business
- collaboration of organizations
- safety/security
- youth activities (lack of)
  - influx of gang activities
- higher education
- four year college program
- decrease drop-out rates
- how do we sell Porterville as a product to bring people in?
- support of existing businesses
- access to community
  - entrance
- vocational training
- recreational city-owned facilities
- growth issues - while we maintain quality of life
- gateway
- place to play

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institutions that support & sustain personal growth
Increase economic development and jobs

Values
- community involvement/collaboration
- patriotism
- music
- education
- amenities
  - parks
  - culture
  - community recreation
  - fine arts
- encourage family input
- support personal growth
- technology
- smart infrastructure
- embrace diversity
- safe environment
- faith based
- support youth
- gateways
- increase education success rates
- promote City link to Sequoias
- look at what works on Main Street
- improve image downtown
- affordable, safe housing with basic services
- parenting
- identify and decrease gang activities
- quality air
- Be an advocate for better life
- politically
- embrace difficult decisions
- flexible
- connect with new families re: resources

Ms. Garcia asked the attendees to put their email addresses on the sign in sheet so she could follow up with notes and information to the participants.

Community Assessment
Lucy Garcia then reviewed some of the market characteristics and trends from the 2006 Strategic Plan for Sierra View District Hospital.

Jim Perrine asked Ms. Garcia where they went from here, and how did they get Sierra View District Hospital involved..
Ms. Garcia stated that she was not sure, as they were trying to raise money to have Kevin Kelly come to Portrville. If Mr. Kelly was not coming, then they should meet again two weeks, but that would be the Council’s call.

Mayor Hamilton stated that this needed to be done for the City as Mr. Kelly was an outsider with a unique view.

Mayor Pro Tem F. Martinez stated that when they finished the community meetings in October, hopefully they could get input.

The City Manager stated that they would finish the community forums and then get back together on the SWOT Analysis.

Mayor Pro Tem F. Martinez stated that they needed a call to action. He stated that Council would have to make the hard decisions.

Ms. Garcia stated that after today they all responsible to find ways and avenues for community involvement. She stated that they needed to create a crisis to get a response from the community.

The City Manager stated that it would be easier to hold a meeting in the evening and they would need to feed them.

Avtar Singh stated that he would provide the food for such a meeting.

The City Manager stated that this would be on the next Council meeting.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**
None

**OTHER MATTERS**
None

**ADJOURNMENT**
The Council adjourned at 12:10 p.m. to the Council Meeting of September 25, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Georgia Hawley, Chief Deputy City Clerk

Cameron Hamilton, Mayor