

SMITHVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
WORK SESSION
May 5, 2026 6:30 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers and Via Videoconference

1. Call to Order

Mayor Boley called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present: Marv Atkins, Kelly Kobylski, Melissa Wilson, Leeah Stone and Dan Hartman. Chelsea Dana was absent.

Staff present: Cynthia Wagner, Gina Pate, Chief Lockridge, Jack Hendrix, Rick Welch, Matt Denton and Linda Drummond.

City Attorneys present: Padraic Corcoran.

2. Strategic Plan Overview

Cynthia provided a brief overview of the Strategic Plan adopted in 2019 and noted that the FY2026 budget included funds for an update to the plan. She noted that the City received five submissions in response to the Strategic Plan Update RFQ. Staff reviewed the proposals and selected three firms to participate in interviews. Following the interviews, BerryDunn was chosen as the preferred firm. Cynthia introduced Maddi Powers Spencer the project manager with BerryDunn.

Maddi Powers Spencer, Project Manager and Facilitator with BerryDunn, provided a comprehensive overview of the City of Smithville's strategic planning process and BerryDunn's role in facilitating the effort. She noted the firm's experience working with state, local, and quasi-governmental organizations across the country. She explained that BerryDunn's understanding of municipal operations and business processes. She noted that they have worked with more than 625 public-sector clients.

Maddi described the purpose and value of a strategic plan, noting that it is intended to be a dynamic, living document that guides decision-making and help the City plan for the future. She explained that a strategic plan assists communities in setting clear goals and priorities, allocating resources effectively, maintaining focus on the most important issues, and providing transparency and accountability to the public. She further emphasized that the strategic plan allows the City to adapt as circumstances, needs, and opportunities change over time.

She outlined why a strategic plan is important for the City of Smithville, explaining that it helps establish a clear direction by defining goals and objectives, prioritizes the use of limited resources, and focuses City efforts on the areas identified as most critical to achieving desired outcomes. Maddi clarified that while the strategic plan outlines what the City will prioritize, the "how" of achieving those priorities is addressed through a separate implementation plan that includes objectives, performance measures, and action steps.

Maddi reviewed the primary elements of a strategic plan:

- Mission - what the City does, for whom, and how
- Vision - what the City seeks to achieve for the community
- Values - how the organization conducts itself and interacts with the public
- Strategic Priorities - the key focus areas that move the City toward its vision

She noted that these elements collectively guide policy decisions and organizational direction.

She also described the roles of participants in the strategic planning process. The Board of Aldermen will play a role in establishing the mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities, as well as defining goals and desired outcomes. City staff will support the process by refining these elements, developing objectives, defining outcomes, and establishing performance measures and implementation details. Community members will contribute by sharing perspectives and priorities, participating in engagement activities, and providing feedback on the draft strategic plan.

Maddi explained that the planning effort will be informed by multiple sources of data and input. These include direct engagement with Board members, City staff, and community stakeholders through interviews and group discussions; community forums; and online engagement using the Social Pinpoint platform, which will feature surveys, ideas wall, and discussion forums. Additional inputs will include City and regional demographic and economic data, as well as existing City plans, budgets, and policy documents.

Maddi outlined the three-phase project approach.

- Phase One: Project Planning and Management - will establish a foundation for the work through initial planning meetings, document and data review, development of a detailed project work plan and schedule, and ongoing coordination through biweekly project status meetings.
- Phase Two: Community Engagement, Data Gathering, and SWOT Analysis - will focus on collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative information. This phase will include stakeholder interviews, employee and community surveys, development of a communications strategy, community forums, and preparation of an environmental scan and SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the City.
- Phase Three: Strategic Plan Development - will involve facilitated strategic planning sessions with the Board of Aldermen and City staff, refinement of objectives and performance measures, preparation of an initial draft strategic plan, community review and feedback, and development of the final strategic plan and implementation framework.

Maddi noted that communication with the community will be a key component throughout the process. She highlighted potential outreach methods, including information shared through utility billing, online platforms, and public forums, to keep residents informed and engaged. She also explained that community feedback gathered during the review phase will be incorporated into revisions before the plan is finalized.

Maddi explained that BerryDunn will serve as a facilitator in the process, using structured facilitation, consensus-building techniques, and change-management methodologies to gather input, synthesize information, and present it back to the City. She noted that while BerryDunn provides guidance on best practices and process design, the vision and priorities ultimately belong to the City and its residents.

Alderman Wilson asked about the timeline for the process.

Maddi explained that work would begin immediately, with community engagement and analysis occurring over the coming months. The process is expected to continue through late September or early October.

Gina added that the final strategic plan is anticipated to be presented for adoption in November. She noted that following adoption, staff would develop an implementation plan during the winter months. Gina also noted that, because this is a strategic plan update, the community survey will ask residents to reflect on the current strategic plan pillars to help identify whether they remain relevant and whether there are any gaps. This feedback will be gathered as part of the environmental scan.

3. Adjourn

Alderman Hartman moved to adjourn. Alderman Kobylski seconded the motion.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, motion carries. The Mayor declared the work session adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Linda Drummond, City Clerk

Marv Atkins, Mayor Pro-Tem