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ANNA BULLETT (4)
KATE SYKES (5)

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Annual Goal Setting

December 11, 2023 at 5:00 PM in the Clifford "Kippy" Richardson Room (Room 24) | Hybrid Meeting

REMOTE ACCESS INFO:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/86791388009?pwd=UHRCY3c1VzNPQkNQU2cvVFBBwVExQZz09>

Passcode: 374256

Or One tap mobile :

+13052241968,,86791388009#,,, *374256# US

+13092053325,,86791388009#,,, *374256# US

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

+1 646 931 3860 US

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Webinar ID: 867 9138 8009

Passcode: 374256

To view this workshop remotely, please visit the live-stream at

<https://portlandme.portal.civicclerk.com/event/6845/media>

AGENDA ITEMS:

Please refer to backup materials for the detailed agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

Portland City Council Goal Setting Workshop Draft Agenda



Monday, December 11, 2023, 5pm to 8pm, Room 24, Portland City Hall

About the Workshop

The City Charter requires the Mayor “To convene and lead an annual workshop session of the city council to discuss and identify the city’s goals and priorities in order to provide guidance for the city manager and to inform the public. The city manager shall attend this workshop session, and a summary of the session shall be made available to the public.” Basically, that’s what we’re here to do.

Yet at the timely start of the term we will also discuss how we want to work together as a Council, how we stay focused on our top priorities, and how we expect to communicate with each other.

So that our workshop is highly efficient, productive, and inclusive, we’ve engaged professional meeting facilitator Craig Freshley. [You can learn about Craig here](#). In addition to facilitating the workshop, Craig will also provide us with Highlight Notes afterwards.

Objectives

- Discuss and identify the city’s top 3-5 goals to be achieved in the next year.
- Discuss and clarify how we expect to work together.
- Get to know each other and strengthen our relationships for a productive term ahead.

Ground Rules

- This is a discussion among City Councilors and the City Manager
- Observers are welcome
- There will be no formal decisions
- We are looking for areas of agreement
- Let Craig manage the discussion
- Show what you think
- Forward focus
- Themes and conclusions now and later

Agenda

- 4:50 **Arrival**
- 5:00 **Opening**
- Mayor Mark Dion will welcome everyone and open the Workshop.
 - Craig Freshley will explain the agenda and a few simple ground rules.
 - We will do some quick introductions.
- 5:10 **Goal Setting – Ideas and Discussion**
- What are the 3-5 most important things – above and beyond business as usual – that the City should achieve in the next year?
- Each Councilor will write down their top 3-5 answers to this question.
 - We will put all the ideas on the wall, organize them, and discuss them.
 - We will also do a visual multi-vote to help us get a sense of priority among the goals.
- 6:15 **Dinner**
- 6:40 **Goal Setting – Conclusion**
- Over dinner, Craig will prepare a draft statement of top priority goals.
 - We will review, discuss, and revise the statement however we see fit.
- 6:55 **How to Work Together**
- Best Practices from Other Municipalities
 - Before discussing how WE want to work together as a Council, Craig will briefly share some best practices from his experiences in working with municipalities across Maine.
 - Our Expectations for Working Well Together
 - Each Councilor and the City Manager will be asked to complete this sentence in one minute or less.
 - In order to work well together and stay focused on our top priorities, it will be really important to _____.
 - Based on the answers, Craig will prepare an organized summary which we will discuss and refine.
 - As time allows, we will come to conclusions about our expectations for working together productively.
- 7:50 **Closing Comments**
- This is a chance for each Councilor and the City Manager to make a brief closing comment, perhaps a reflection about the workshop or a hope for the future.
- 8:00 **Adjourn**



Good Group Handout

by Craig Freshley

Basics for Municipal Leaders

Why it pays to be a good leader

High functioning municipal leaders, boards, and committees aren't that way by accident, they work at it. They invest in themselves. They are continually looking at their behaviors and attitudes and deliberately making improvements. And the investments pay off.

Here are just some of the rewards that come from professional, competent, deliberate leadership.

Attract and keep good people

Good leaders attract good people. Highly competent leaders attract good thinkers and doers. Good leaders and high functioning groups attract good staff and have low staff turnover. Dysfunctional leaders and committees repel good people and attract people with, well, nothing better to do.

Get stuff done efficiently

One reason good leaders attract good people is because they don't waste people's time. "Want something done? Ask a busy person." Busy people who get stuff done hate inefficiency and don't have time for it. Leaders and groups who invest in self improvement don't waste time and money, or cause frustration.

Valued and praised by constituents

It's fun when you are getting positive encouragement. When people seeing you trying hard – trying to implement best practices for the good of the community – they are not so inclined to throw stones "from outside the circle." Good leaders and competent boards and committees are not always "in battle" with constituents and defending their actions.

Fun and rewarding to be part of

When a team gets good stuff done – when a team is winning – it's a fun team to be on. Participating or "having to go to meetings" is not a burden, a dread, a source of tension,

Make good decisions that serve their people well over time

Isn't this really why we are serving? To help our communities? We want to make good decisions that will work well over the long run. Decisions aren't always being revisited when they are made well in the first place. Good decisions reduce conflict and increase efficiency.

Serve as a good example for other groups

Good leadership is contagious. People in the community are watching community leaders; and copying their behaviors and attitudes. High functioning leaders and groups are not modeling, promoting, condoning unhelpful behaviors and attitudes. Rather they are modeling good behaviors and attitudes.

What good municipal leaders do

There are books and books about leadership and group dynamics. Here are a few basics from experience with Maine municipalities.

Clear roles and responsibilities

High functioning leaders and groups establish well defined roles and clear responsibilities. Each person knows what they are supposed to do and what not to do, who the got-to person is for each topic, and the next step in every process. The best way to ensure shared understanding of roles and responsibilities is to 1. Write them down, and 2. Enforce them. Enforcing them means paying attention, calling things out, and when things are out of alignment: either correct the behavior or amend the role or responsibility.

Do what you say

The most effective way to build trust is to say that we will do something and then do it. The most effective way to erode trust is to act in ways that are out of alignment with our words. For policies to have any effect, they need to be acted on. All talk and no action is just talk. Good leaders can be counted on to keep their word. And they are extremely careful about the commitments they make; what words they use.

Transparency

In a high functioning organization each participant knows how things work. Each person has access to information. Knowledge and information is not used to have power over you but rather used to empower you to be more effective at helping the group. Things are written down and available. When information can't be available, an explanation is provided.

Group first attitude

Good leaders are more interested in success of the group than in personal success. My job as a good team member is to help my teammates look good. A simple test for integrity? Is my behavior or attitude good for the group or is it good for me? If I act in self serving ways I am likely acting without integrity. Good leaders are not so concerned with credit or blame, only with what's best for the group or community. And it is the special leader who goes beyond assuming that "because I think it's good, it must be good for my community."

Respect

Good leaders demonstrate a basic amount of respect for every person in every situation, no matter how strong the disagreement or the dislike. When I show respect I get respect. And without a basic level of respect, we can't work together. And just because I disagree with you on one thing doesn't mean I won't work with on another thing.

Humility

Good leaders are not afraid to call out a good idea when they see it; even if it's not theirs. Good leaders are not afraid to say "I don't know" rather than fudge an answer with what they do know or sort-of know. Good leaders are not afraid to admit mistakes and/or apologize. It's rarely the mistake that gets a leader in trouble, it's the cover up.

Think strategically and regionally

Good leaders, boards, and committees get stuff done day-to-day but they also take time to think long term and big picture. They recognize that their community is part of a larger community and so although it takes time, they meet and make collaborative plans with other leaders and other communities. They also recognize their role as "stewards" in a long line of stewards who came before them and who will come after them.

Development

Good leaders, boards, and committees take time to invest in their own development. They take time to do strategic planning. They take time to learn new things about the economy, the environment, demographics, and social trends. They take time to learn new techniques for meetings, conflict resolution, and communication. They ask their constituents about how they can do better, and they pay attention to the answers.

The board acts as a whole

Members of high-functioning boards recognize the limits of their individual authority and recognize that true authority lies with the board as a whole; the corporate board. Members give individual opinions but do not speak for or decide for the board as a whole. Town and city managers and administrators report to boards, not individuals.

For Videos, Tips, and Handouts on all aspects of group dynamics, visit:

GoodGroupDecisions.com



Good Group Handout

by Craig Freshley

Public Engagement Guidelines for Elected Officials

Here are some things to keep in mind to honor civic process and allow residents to be heard.

Let people talk and then show them that they've been heard

Paraphrase what you heard back to them in real time verbally or in writing, or in the meeting minutes later.

Demonstrate respect to all people at all times

Remain calm and polite at all times. Treat people as equals, not as less-than. Do not ascribe motive or question identity.

Steadfast allegiance to established rules

Do not waver on following duly established governance rules and procedures. Don't treat anything as a crisis or as an exception. The fabric has been tested before. It will endure.

Constant reminders about our common goals

We want the same things: safety and peace in our communities for our children and families.
We are working on ____ for the good of our community.

Correct locally-grounded mis-information

When people state wrong facts or imply bad things about your government or community, stand up to them with correct facts, if not immediately then later. The audience is broader than one person, so what you say will be heard by many. If people say questionable things about national trends or issues, there may be no need to counter that.

Be curious

Don't get furious, get curious. Keep in mind: I can be curious about your beliefs without having to change my beliefs. You are on solid ground if you ask questions yet agree to nothing.

Act as a corporate body

Stick up for each other. No one go it alone.

Guidelines for Personal Peace

It can be hard and lonely to be criticized just because you don't buy into certain political views. Here are some things to help YOU, the honorable elected public official, sleep well.

It's not about me, it's not about now.

Do your best and let that be enough.

Seek compassion and counsel from peers.

Keep in mind that you and your town are being subjected to much larger forces at play.