

Council Retreat

June 26, 2007

Two councilors were absent, so the group framed questions for future discussion rather than attempt to resolve any issues related to council dynamics.

Councilors attending: David Bragdon, Rex Burkholder, Kathryn Harrington, Robert Liberty, Rod Park

Staff attending: Dan Cooper, Michael Jordan, Michael Wetter, Dave Yaden

Questions Identified for Discussion at a Future Council Retreat

1. Role of the Council President (beyond basics of budget and chairing meetings) and agreements around consultation.
2. Communication
 - a. Use of policy assistants. Time available for communications. Also training.
 - b. Individual communication styles.
 - c. How to structure communication around projects.
3. Committee Management
 - a. MPAC/JPAC joint meetings. How to keep them connected?
 - b. What from the pending legislation list must go on the MPAC agenda?
 - c. What is the role of the MPAC liaisons?
 - d. SWAC—how to best use it
 - e. Are we working our partners too hard? Convening will tap many of the same people.
4. Time Budget. The Council (and individual councilors) needs to look at how it will use its time. What are the external commitments?
5. Role of the lead councilor and liaisons. Need definitions. What is their responsibility back to the council?

Proposal: Would like to have more discussion of roles and council involvement on big projects up front. Identify key decision points and agree on how council will be consulted. Should try this relatively soon on a big project like Urban and Rural Reserves.

Proposal: Would like to get feedback and observations from Dan, MJ, and MW on council dynamics.

Issues for Discussion with Staff

1. Staff advocacy (particularly solid waste and transportation)
2. Staff use of councilor time
3. Support for meetings—need support material well in advance.
4. Some staff presentations need improvement

Notes by Michael Wetter