

South Portland City Council
Position Paper of the City Manager

Subject:

ORDER #190-17/18 – Adopting the Council goals set at the Goal Setting Workshop on March 28, 2018. Passage requires majority vote.

Position:

On March 28, 2018, the City Council held a workshop to review progress on its 2017 three-year goal plan and also to update the plan. Craig Freshley from Good Group Decisions facilitated the meeting. Attached is Mr. Freshley's "workshop highlights report". As noted in the report, Councilors came to a consensus that their goals for the coming three years should include:

- Waterfront master plan, including desired uses and climate modeling for adaptation, brownfield assurance, and an evacuation plan
- Diversity (ethnic, gender, age) in the City Council, boards, committees, and workforce. The City has assessed the barriers and mitigated them and has an outreach plan
- Make streets and sidewalks functional and safe
- Improve pedestrian and bike safety
- Reduce traffic congestion
- An open space plan with diverse stakeholder buy-in, to include an inventory of green assets and a 21st century green space plan
- Ensure optimal use and maintenance of City buildings
- Explore how to encourage more housing availability

As you will note, this revised listing of eight goals includes some holdovers from last year, an expansion of one of last year's goals, and a few new items. Some previous goals have been removed from this list. Council has requested a quarterly progress update from the City Manager on these items.

Council is now being asked to formally adopt these goals so that staff can begin working toward implementing them.

Requested Action:

Council passage of ORDER #190-17/18.



City Manager

South Portland City Council Goal-Setting Workshop

Highlight Notes

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

McKernan Center, Southern Maine Community College

About the Workshop

This workshop provided an opportunity for Council Members to proactively discuss goals and processes among themselves and the City Manager. So that the workshop was fully inclusive, efficient, and highly productive, it was be facilitated by Craig Freshley of Good Group Decisions. Craig's primary job was not to offer suggestions for goals or processes, but rather manage a good discussion among Council Members and the City Manager.

Attendance

- Mayor Linda Cohen
- Councilor Claude Morgan
- Councilor Katherine Lewis
- Councilor Adrian Dowling
- Councilor Susan Henderson
- Councilor Maxine Beecher
- City Manager Scott Morelli
- Facilitator Craig Freshley

Desired Outcomes

- Shared understanding of progress on existing goals.
- General conclusions about goals for the next three years.
- General conclusions about how to improve our effectiveness as a Council.
- Council members get to know each other better and appreciate each other's perspectives.

Agenda

6:00 **Dinner**

6:30 **Opening**

Mayor Linda Cohen will open the workshop and briefly explain our objectives. Facilitator Craig Freshley will briefly explain the agenda and a few ground rules.

6:40 **Three-Year Goals**
We will look at each of last year's goals, stated on the next page. For each goal we will briefly evaluate our progress and decide if we want to keep the goal as stated, or perhaps revise it. We will also consider adding new goals.

2017 Three-Year Goals

1. Waterfront Master Plan/Climate adaptation
2. Diversity in workforce and City Boards and Committees
3. Economic resilience/marketing
4. Streets/sidewalks
5. Implement Comprehensive Plan and involve neighbors
6. Senior "aging in place"
7. Access to detailed data to make informed decisions
8. Green space plan with inventory of assets

Lastly, we will have a brief discussion about how Councilors will regularly assess progress on the goals.

7:50 **Process Challenges**
Just before the break, each Councilor will be asked to write an answer to the following question:

In terms of how we conduct our business as a Council, what are the two most significant challenges currently preventing us from being the very most effective Council that we can be?

Answers will be written anonymously and submitted to Craig who will transcribe and organize them over the break.

8:00 **Break**

8:20 **Improving Our Effectiveness**
Craig will reflect to us and summarize what we identified as our most significant challenges. Beginning with those most mentioned, we will discuss and try to come to conclusions about how to overcome such challenges. We will try to conclude with a list of "Intentions Going Forward."

9:20 **Closing Comments**
Each member of the City Council and the City Manager will have an opportunity to make a brief closing comment, perhaps a reflection about the workshop or perhaps a particular lingering hope or concern.

9:30 **Adjourn**

Ground Rules

- What's best for the City as a whole
- Discussion among Councilors and the Town Manager
- Let Craig call on people
- Minimize distractions
- Flexible agenda
- No formal decisions
- Neutral facilitation and report

What we are proud of

Craig began the workshop by asking each councilor to complete this sentence:

One thing that I think we have done really well recently, as a Council, is _____.

Here is a summary of responses, organized by Craig.

- Stretch
 - Stretch and embraced new ideas and objectives, and have taken them seriously.
 - Have taken on hard challenges.
- Respect for the public
 - Listen to the public, more than just hear what they are saying. Have tried to really understand their needs.
 - Have been very mindful of our need to keep our Council conversations public.
 - Have done a good job involving a vocal public.
 - Addressed the needs of people.
- Respect for each other
 - Listen to each other. Very open to each other.
 - Cognizant of manners and politeness.
 - Came together and passed ordinances in spite of disagreement AND talked with each other after.

Comments

- The way some people perceive us is not in line with above.
- The public is both very informed AND misinformed.

Review of 2017 Three-Year Goals

Waterfront Master Plan/Climate adaptation

A waterfront Master plan including desired uses and climate modeling for adaptation, brown field assurance and an evacuation plan.

- Comments
 - Kate is now lead on this
- Successes
 - We dared to look at it
 - Have made progress
 - Councilors have learned new things
 - We now have sustainability coordinator
 - 80-50 challenge resolution
 - Sea level rise maps
 - The pier
- Challenges
 - Don't have a dedicated group that has focused on use patterns
 - Doesn't seem like we have succeeded on this
 - Still working on the clear skies ordinance
 - We get distracted with other issues
 - Got blocked by the Waterfront Alliance
- Lessons
 - More measurable goals
- Future Plans
 - Ideas
 - This should stay as an important goal
 - Have more specific goals under this
 - Mitigation of flooding
 - Establish a committee
 - Commercial and other property owners
 - Ask, "If a property becomes available, what would we want to do with it?"
 - Modeled like The Waterfront Alliance
 - Recognize that our waterfront is our great under-utilized asset
 - Recognize that different parts of the waterfront have different issues
 - Need to consider related issues such as development and traffic
 - Need to consider transportation

- We cannot afford to not have a master plan for our waterfront
 - The Council should let staff do what they do best
 - We, the Council, don't have to do the work ourselves. Let's delegate.
 - Perhaps this becomes a job of the new Economic Development Director
 - This could be done like the recent Comprehensive Plan process
 - Needs to involve all diverse interests on the waterfront
 - Consider what other communities are doing on their waterfronts
- Conclusion
 - Ask the City Manager to ask the new Economic Development Director to develop a proposal to Council for a process to develop a Waterfront Master Plan

Diversity in workforce and City Boards and Committees

Diversity (ethnic, gender, age) in the city council, boards, committees and workforce. The city has assessed the barriers and mitigated them and has an outreach plan.

- Comments
 - City Hall staff doesn't seem very diverse
- Successes
 - We have tried to encourage participation from diverse populations
 - Has increased desire to increase diversity
 - We are funding more ESL teachers in the schools
- Challenges
 - We don't have very much improved diversity on our boards and committees
 - A barrier to service is that people have to work nights and are unavailable to serve on a committee
- Future Plans
 - Ideas
 - Consider more proactive staff recruitment with a goal of increasing diversity
 - We have to proactively network and reach out
 - City could fund ESL classes – free to immigrants
 - Conclusion
 - Keep this as a goal

- Ask the City Manager to be more proactive about recruiting diverse staff
- City Councilors proactive network and encourage people to serve on committees and boards
- Ask the City Manager to consider establishing classes for free on topics such as:
 - ESL
 - Physical fitness
 - CDL

Economic resilience/marketing

A contingency plan for economic resilience, including the possibility of marketing

- Comments
 - Consider taking this off our plate, especially because we are about to hire an Economic Development Director
- Future Plans
 - Conclusion
 - Eliminate this as a goal and ask the City Manager to ask the Economic Development Director to take responsibility for this

Streets/sidewalks

Streets and continuous sidewalks that are in great condition so that no one notices it or complains. There are fewer vehicles, protected bike lanes, more pedestrians, effective public transportation and safe road crossings.

- Successes
 - We are talking a lot more about safety on our roads
 - Safer crosswalks with more crossing with flashing lights
 - We decided not to join METRO
 - We have a plan to “x-ray the roads”
- Future Plans
 - Have three goals that replace this goal
 - Make streets and sidewalks functional and safe
 - Rebuild streets and sidewalks where needed
 - Maintain infrastructure
 - Plow and clean
 - Improve pedestrian and bike safety
 - More and better Crosswalks, Bike lanes, and Buffers
 - Slower car speeds (more policing)

- Reduce traffic congestion
 - More transit – Increase bus service

Implement Comprehensive Plan and involve neighbors

Encouraged development that is compatible with the comprehensive plan, meets zoning and has engaged the public and the neighborhoods in the process.

- Successes
 - It's been done
- Future Plans
 - Comprehensive planning doesn't need to be an ongoing goal
- Comments
 - In the future let's consider having a goal about better neighborhood planning and about housing challenges but we would need to understand what these things mean and the implications

Senior "aging in place"

Seniors who are connected with neighbors and the community, which knows what seniors' needs are, and there are services to help seniors age in place.

- Successes
 - Has been successful
 - Went door-to-door and talked to a lot of people
 - We are in the process of pulling together focus groups
- Challenges
 - Not complete. Still a work in progress
 - Still waiting to analyze 1400 surveys
- Future Plans
 - Idea
 - Needs to remain a goal
 - Conclusion
 - Because it's working well, it doesn't need to be a "stated Council Goal"
 - Perhaps when a recommendation comes forward, the Council can consider a goal at that time

Access to detailed data to make informed decisions

Access to the detailed data that it needs to make well informed decisions on city policy.

- Comments
 - This was in response to a perceived need for more GIS software and that Council members did not have adequate information for good decision making
 - Indeed, sometimes Councilors have to reply on anecdotal information and estimates
- Future Plans
 - Drop this as goal

Open space plan with divers stakeholder buy in

(or has underway) an inventory of green assets and a 21st century green space plan (all green spaces, watersheds, urban forest, etc.

- Successes
 - Have completed an inventory of all open space parcels
 - Have hire a consultant to guide us through an open space plan
 - Expect to have a plan Winter/Spring 2019
- Challenges
 - Pressure of many living and working here – hard to maintain green space

Ideas for Additional Goals

- Transportation/traffic
- Have full boards and committees
 - Generally concluded that although this should be done, it need not be an actual goal
- More timely and thorough legal advice on issues we are addressing
 - Have written reports from corporation counsel and have them attend more of our meetings
 - Consider in-house counsel
- Ensure optimal use and maintenance of city buildings
 - Inventory the condition and utility of all City buildings

- Analyze how well city buildings are meeting the needs of residents and employees
- Make and implement a plan improvement, as need
- Explore how to encourage more housing availability
 - Take care of our people in terms of our people
 - The problem is that many people who work in our city can't live in our city
 - There is not enough housing of all types
 - The challenge with this is "where to actually put new housing" – not sure we can actually make this happen
 - Perhaps explore where affordable housing might be acceptable
 - Perhaps explore potential municipal-private partnerships

Summary of Three-Year Goals Going Forward

Specifics about each of these goals can be found in the notes above.

1. Waterfront Master Plan
2. Increase diversity
3. Make streets and sidewalks functional and safe
4. Improve pedestrian and bike safety
5. Reduce traffic congestion
6. Open space plan with diverse stakeholder buy in
7. Ensure optimal use and maintenance of city buildings
8. Explore how to encourage more housing availability

I was generally concluded that it would be good for Councilors to receive a progress report on each of these goals from the City Manager every quarter.

Closing Comments

- Angus King recently accepted an award and explained that, “Back in 1975 Senators lived and stayed in Washington over the weekend. The senators had relationships with each other. You can’t make a difficult decision with someone you don’t know or trust.”
 - Tonight was like that. We had a chance to talk with each other candidly over dinner.
 - Rather than do this once a year, let’s find a way to get together like this more often.
- Unfortunately we are locked into statutory requirements about how we hang together. Therefore the best we can do is the one-on-one stuff.
- This has been of the most comfortable Council meetings I have been to in a long time.
 - Thanks for the freedom to interact.
 - Thanks Craig. You did a great job.
- Thanks Craig for keep us moving.
- We have gotten a lot done here.
- Have a good feeling about 2018.
- I am enthusiastic about this stuff.
- I enjoyed this workshop.
- This has been a great evening.
- I have so much respect for everyone here.
- I know that everyone here wants what’s best for the City.
- Vote from your gut. Do what you think is right.
- Thanks Craig.
- Thanks Scott.



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

LINDA C. COHEN
Mayor

SCOTT T. MORELLI
City Manager

SALLY J. DAGGETT
Jensen Baird Gardner & Henry

EMILY F. SCULLY
City Clerk

District One
CLAUDE V.Z. MORGAN

District Two
KATHERINE W. LEWIS

District Three
EBEN ROSE

District Four
LINDA C. COHEN

District Five
ADRIAN T. DOWLING

At Large
Maxine R. Beecher

At Large
SUSAN J. HENDERSON

**IN CITY COUNCIL
ORDER #190-17/18**

ORDERED, that the City Council adopts the goals set at the March 28, 2018 Goal-Setting Workshop for 2018-2021, to include:

1. Waterfront master plan, including desired uses and climate modeling for adaptation, brownfield assurance, and an evacuation plan
2. Diversity (ethnic, gender, age) in the City Council, boards, committees, and workforce. The City has assessed the barriers and mitigated them and has an outreach plan
3. Make streets and sidewalks functional and safe
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Fiscal Note: Less than \$1,000

Dated: May 1, 2018