

City of Gaston Facilitated Retreat

JUNE 28, 2019

Jayne Hafner and Megan George
LEAGUE OF OREGON CITIES



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Introduction and Session Overview

The City of Gaston retained the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) to facilitate a day-long training session with LOC's trained facilitators. The session took place on June 28, 2019 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at Gaston City Hall.

The session focused on building consensus among city council members and teambuilding across the city council and city staff. In preparation for the session, LOC conducted an interview of the Mayor and City Attorney to discuss the session agenda and objectives. A copy of the final agenda is available in Appendix A. Prior to the session, LOC emailed each council and staff member requesting that they respond to the following questions:

1. In your opinion, what currently prohibits city staff from working effectively?
2. In your opinion, what currently prohibits the City council from working effectively?
3. In your opinion, what are things staff do well?
4. In your opinion, what are the things council does well?
5. Are there any barriers that are hindering the council and staff from working well together?
6. What would assist individual staff and councilors to help them work better together?
7. What would be your ideal takeaways from the session?
8. Is there anything else we should know prior to the session?

The facilitated session's purpose was to resolve differences, begin building trust and gain consensus in order to move forward toward a unified city government.

Retreat Summary

The retreat was attended by the following individuals: Mayor David Meeker, Councilor Sarah Branch, Councilor Susan Carver, Councilor Don Richter, Councilor Bill Martin, City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette, and City Clerk Sharon Bregante-Candau. Also in attendance was CIS Senior Risk Management Consultant John Zakariassen. The session began at 8:05 am.

Introductions and Session Overview and Objectives

LOC Operations Director Megan George kicked off the session by introducing herself and LOC Assistant General Counsel Jayme Hafner. Megan also introduced CIS Senior Risk Management Consultant John Zakariassen who provided a 10-minute overview of CIS and their work with the City of Gaston. Megan advised that Jayme and she would run through a series of exercises throughout the day that have been shown to break down barriers between council members, build trust in relationships, and develop processes for achieving consensus. She noted that upon completion of these exercises, everything that

had been learned throughout the day would be used to approve an employee complaint procedure to forward to CIS for approval.

Megan asked everyone to brainstorm and record their individual objectives for the session. These objectives were then read aloud and displayed on a flipchart in the room. Megan commented that common themes between individual's objectives included building trust, establishing clear policies, and transparency in decision-making.

Next, Megan introduced three parking boards that would be used to capture ideas throughout the day. Each board serves a different purpose. The "Issues" board captures items that are unresolved, the "Decisions" board captures any decisions that are made, and finally the "Actions" board captures any actions that must be taken following the meeting.

Defining Consensus

Megan asked everyone to brainstorm and report on their definition of consensus. Ultimately, consensus was summarized as "I can live with it and support it." The group discussed the importance of consensus including building trust with each other and the community's faith in their governing body.

Developing Ground Rules

Megan asked participants to develop ground rules for the session. Participants decided on the following ground rules:

- Let others speak
- Positive body language
- Keep an open mind
- Audience allowed to attend, but not participate
- Avoid sidebar conversations
- No spell checks
- Actively participate

Normalizing and Building Trust

Jayne displayed a list of previously provided responses to the question of what prohibited the staff and council from working effectively. Participants were then given 2 minutes to write down any additional barriers they believed prohibited the city from working effectively. After the 2 minutes elapsed, Jayne collected the responses and both prior and additional responses were recorded and discussed.

Responses in relation to staff barriers included:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| -Lack of accountability | -Disparagement |
| -Unwilling/unable to set aside difference | -Distrust |
| -Distracted | -Accomplishments |
| -Unprofessional | -Lack of Collaboration |
| -Misunderstood | -Helping others with duties |

- Threatened
- Bullied
- Lack of Support
- Lack of Leadership
- Willing to take the extra step

- Adaptability
- Not yet found common ground
- knowing roles
- Lack of procedures

Responses in relation to council barriers included:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| -Split council | -Interrupting |
| -Incorrect/incomplete information | -Lack of getting to know each other |
| -Staff/Council communications | -Disregarding communication |
| -Disregard to complaints | -Bias |
| -Coming to meeting unprepared | -Lack of respect |
| -Disagreement on staff management | -Uneducated councilors |
| -Lack of consensus | -Division |
| -Lack of boundaries | -Unwilling to change |

After barriers were identified, participants brainstormed possible solutions to the listed barriers. These solutions included:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| -Better communication | -Training |
| -Open mind | -Unified front |
| -Willing to work together | -Follow through |
| -Come prepared | -No disparagement |
| -Respect others | -Open discussion |
| -Listen | -Fact checking |
| -Decisive action | -Educate |
| -Patience | -Comradery |
| -Consensus | |

Jayne displayed a list of previously provided responses to the question of what the city was currently doing well. Participants were then given 2 minutes to write down any additional items that the city was doing well. After the 2 minutes elapsed, Jayne collected the responses and both prior and additional responses were recorded and discussed. Responses included:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <u>Staff</u> | <u>Council</u> |
| -Knowledgeable | -Trying to learn |
| -Hardworking | -Striving to serve |
| -Successful | -City's best interest at heart |
| -Trustworthy | -Attendance |
| -Helpful | -Can have good discussions and decisions |
| -Proficient | -Fiscally aware |
| -Thorough | -Don't want staff, council or citizens to suffer |
| -Contributions | -In agreement that we need change |
| -Tries to keep moving forward | -Willing to learn |
| -Carry a lot of weight | |
| -Learn others' duties and adjust timelines | |

-Help each other to accomplish goals

Jayne introduced Patrick Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team. The participants shared their comments and opinions regarding the various five dysfunctions with a focus on the element of trust.

Next, participants were asked to individually write down as many trust-destroying actions they have experienced. After 2 minutes elapsed, the participants' responses were collected, recorded on a flip chart, and a brief discussion occurred. Examples of actions that destroy trust were:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| -Perception of one self and others | -Lack of trust |
| -Inability to talk about issues to my face but openly talks behind my back | -Blatant lies |
| -stealing | -Lying |
| -Gossip | -Being setup for failure |
| -Someone has lied to me | -Not owning up to wrong doings |
| -Daily conflicts | -False information |
| -Not being accountable or taking responsibility | -Not seeing results from actions |
| | -Not following through |

Participants were next asked to write down as many trust-creating actions they have experienced. After 2 minutes elapsed, participants' responses were collected, recorded on the same flip chart and a brief discussion occurred. Actions discussed that the participants believed create trust included:

- | | |
|--|--|
| -Communication of required actions | -A person's actions |
| -Don't do what someone asks you not to do | -Attitude |
| -Serve others | -Being Responsible |
| -Clear boundaries | -Keeping their word |
| -Understanding other perspective | -Actions/doing what you say you will |
| -Time | -Being honest even when it hurts you |
| -Follow through | -Helping someone in need |
| -Doing an activity together | -Hardworking and tries to move forward |
| -Patience toward hostility | -Friendship and good decisions |
| -Supporting me without other motives | |
| -Trying to work together to achieve a goal | |

Participants were separated into two groups. Participants were instructed to tell a true story about something they were wearing or carrying with the other members of their group. After 4 minutes elapsed, participants discussed how sharing the stories made them feel, how the exercise changed how they viewed each other, and additional methods for developing and building trust.

Council Roles and Responsibilities

Megan described the different forms of city governments used across the United States. Cities are organized in four general categories: Council-Manager; Strong Mayor; Commission; and Town Hall. The Council-Manager form of government is the most common in Oregon and most closely describes the

form of government outlined in the Gaston charter. This section spend time outlining the roles and responsibilities of each of the key positions within the city. LOC reviewed the charter, position descriptions and the council rules to make sure nothing was left out. Megan asked everyone to spend a few minutes writing down each unique responsibility for each of the following positions:

- Councilor
- Mayor
- City Clerk
- City Recorder

Moving one-by-one, Megan collected the recorded responsibilities and added them to the chart paper for the position. Similar responsibilities were grouped together. Finally, reviewing the master list of responsibilities, Megan added any that were not already captured by the group. Once this had been completed for each position, Megan asked the group to reflect on any responsibilities that were held by multiple positions and any responsibilities that were exclusive to one position.

During the discussion on roles and responsibilities, participants requested that time be reserved during the remainder of the session to develop a tie breaking decision-making process and review the city supervisor position.

****Recessed for 60 minutes Lunch from 12:20 pm - 1:20 pm****

Facilitated Teambuilding Exercises

Participants reconvened and began with a review of the various roles and responsibilities found in city governance. Jayme presented a diagram showing how the various groups found in city governance were interdependent. The participants were asked to discuss why this interdependence was important and the interactions among roles. Discussion highlighted the importance of teamwork.

Participants were divided into four pairs. Each pair was provided with a jigsaw puzzle and given 10 minutes to complete it. During the exercise, participants discovered that their puzzles included additional pieces and were also missing pieces. Participants were required to work with the other pairs to find their missing puzzle pieces necessary to complete their individual puzzles. After 10 minutes elapsed, participants discussed their initial assumed purpose of the activity, their thought process once they discovered pieces were missing and how the exercise could apply to their role in city governance. Jayme facilitated discussions relating to how even though individuals have their own agendas, working with different teams serves a vital and important purpose.

Next, participants were asked to discuss their individual missions and reasons for working for the city, either as a staff member or as an elected official. Responses were recorded on a flipchart as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| -Having a part in decision making | -Volunteer |
| -Give back | -Public involvement |
| -Care about Gaston | -Project planning/improvement |
| -Volunteer | -Change |

-Recruited

It was noted that among the group shared common individual missions.

During the final teambuilding exercise, participants were asked to brainstorm and discuss the differences between a group and a team. Responses were recorded on a flip chart. Responses included the following ideas:

Group	Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Making same decision -Everyone working as a team -One part of a team -Common goals -Commonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Made up of groups -Common Goal -One leader, one coach -Individual roles -Fill in in the gaps to achieve common goals -Wants to win/be successful

Next, participants were asked to categorize a number of entities as either a group or a team and the reasons why. The responses were as follows:

Item	Group or Team	Why
Symphony orchestra	Team	Different parts, common goal
Box of pencils	Group	All the same
First responders performing a rescue	Team	Different roles together common goal
Cast of a play	Team	Cannot do it individually
Bus full of people	Group	All the same
Boy Scouts troop	Group	Pursuing individual goals
City of Gaston	Group of Teams	Group of individuals with common goal

After categorizing the entities, participants reviewed their responses to the individual differences between a group and a team as follows:

Group	Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Making same decision -Everyone working as a team -One part of a team -Common goals -Commonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Made up of groups -Common Goal -One leader, one coach -Individual roles -Fill in in the gaps to achieve common goals -Wants to win/be successful

Adopting a Tie-Breaking Process

Megan informed the group that in the case of a tie, the council may determine an alternative method for breaking the tie. As an example, some cities will choose to employ a coin flip when a tie vote occurs.

The council discussed the merits of having a process established in advance for breaking a tie and the consensus was to establish a process at this time. The group clearly expressed that this process was to be used as a last resort.

The agreed-upon parameters for the coin flip included:

- Thumb flick into the air with the coin landing on the ground
- The official coin will be a \$0.50
- The council must move to employ the coin flip each time it is employed
- In calendar year 2019, council position one will flip the coin and in calendar year 2020, council position two will flip the coin, etc.
- The Mayor shall assign heads and tails

Councilor Don Richter moved to establish a process to break tie votes wherein each member of the Gaston City Council flips a coin. Councilor Bill Martin seconded the motion. The motion failed (2 Yes [Martin and Richter], 4 No [Branch, Carver, DePiero and Meeker], 0 Abstain, 0 Absent, 1 Vacancy).

Councilor Mario DePiero moved to amend the council rules to include a provision that allows tie votes to be broken by a single coin flip. The motion was seconded by Suzy Carver. The motion passed (4 Yes [Carver, DePiero, Martin and Richter], 0 No, 2 Abstain [Branch and Meeker], 0 Absent, 1 Vacancy).

Developing a Complaint Process

Participants were provided with a draft employee complaint procedure for their review. The Complaint procedure was reviewed section by section with comments taken after each section. Jayme recorded all comments and desired amendments to the proposed draft. It was agreed that Jayme would make the requested amendments and provide an amended copy to all participants. The copy would then be provided to CIS for their approval and adoption by the City Council.

Appoint a City Supervisor

Participants sitting on the City Council were asked to first go around the room to either volunteer or nominate an existing council member to act as the City Supervisor. Mayor Meeker and Councilor DePiero each received three nominations resulting in a tie.

Due to the tie, participants were asked what qualities they would like to see in a city supervisor. The participants took turns listing out various qualities. After each participant provided a response, participants were asked to narrow all the qualities to their top five. The top five qualities were selected by receiving one point for each time a participant listed the quality as one of their top five choices. Of the initial list of ten desired qualities sought in a city supervisor, the top five qualities were:

- Impartial (11 total points)
- Good follow through (6 total points)
- Informed (5 total points)
- Good communicator (5 total points)
- Assertive (2 total points)

Next, the City Council was asked to rank each nominee on a scale of two to nine – with two scoring low and nine scoring high – on how well the nominee exuded each of the top five qualities. The mean of the received score for each quality was recorded for each nominee. Each mean quality score was then multiplied by the total points given to each quality to factor in the weight given to each identified quality. The multiplied quality scores for each nominee were added together to determine each nominees’ final score. The scoring rubric resulted in Mayor Meeker receiving a total of 177 points and Councilor DePiero receiving a total of 207.

Councilor Branch moved to appoint Councilor DePiero as the Gaston City Supervisor. The motion was seconded by Councilor Carver. The motion passed (3 Yes [Brach, Carver and DePiero], 2 No [Martin and Richter], 1 Abstain [Meeker], 0 Absent and 1 Vacancy).

Review and Closing

Participants reviewed the session’s agenda and discussed whether each item was completed. Participants reviewed each exercise and reviewed whether the session’s goals and objectives were accomplished. The parking boards were individually reviewed. Items on the “Issues” board were placed on the “Actions” board for assignment. The following actions were assigned:

Action	Who	When
Locate official coin for tie breaking process	Suzy	7/12
Coordinate with CIS on scheduling harassment training	Mario	6/28
Once “final” complaint process is received, send to CIS for comment before adoption	Mario	7/12
Add discussion of term length for city supervisor to council agenda	Wenonah	7/10
Add charter discussion to council agenda	Wenonah	7/10
Reach out to CIS for an update on revised employee job descriptions	Mario	7/19
Add adoption of complaint procedure to council agenda	Wenonah	8/14

Participants were reminded that they would be receiving an electronic evaluation and were requested to complete it. Finally, a discussion occurred regarding the overall session.

Megan and Jayme thanked the participants for their participation throughout the day and the session formally adjourned at approximately 4:50 p.m.

Appendices

City of Gaston Council and Staff Retreat

Date: Friday, June 28, 2019
Time: Begins at 8:00 a.m.
Location: Gaston City Hall
116 Front Street
Gaston, OR 97119

- A. Welcome and Introductions
- B. Session Overview
- C. Normalizing and Building Trust
- D. Roles and Responsibilities
- E. Teambuilding
- F. Develop a Complaint Process
- G. Apply the Complaint Process
- H. Review and Closing

** There will be a midday break for lunch **

City of Gaston Staff Complaint Procedure

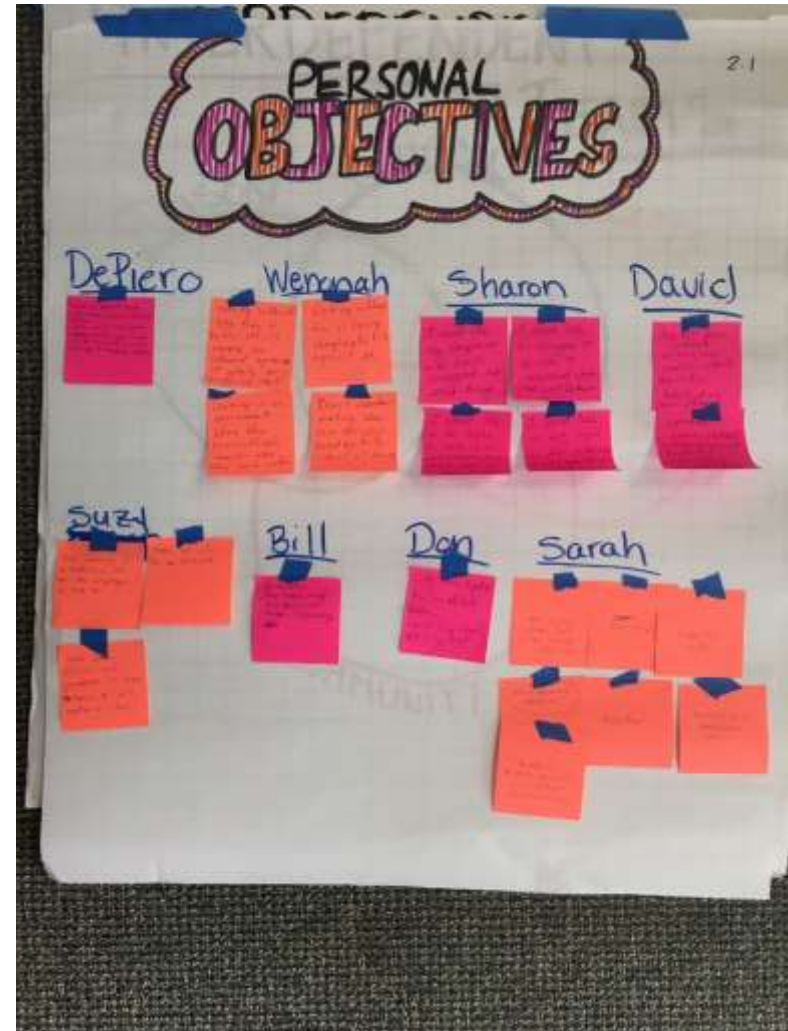
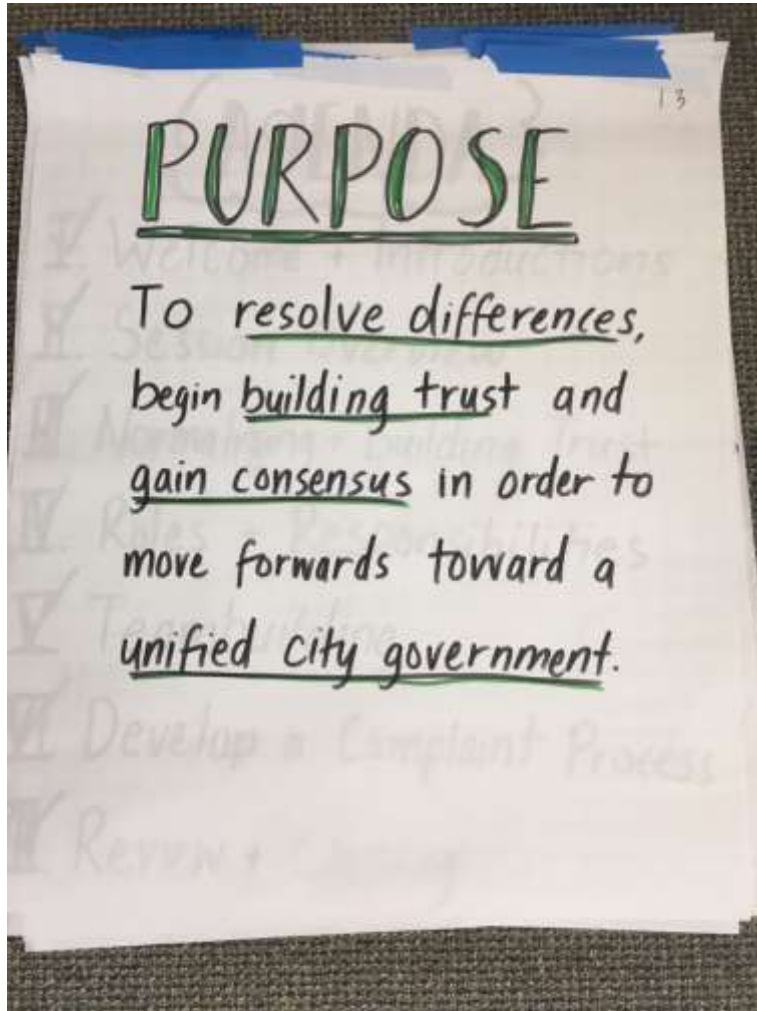
****To be approved by CIS and included in Personnel Manual****

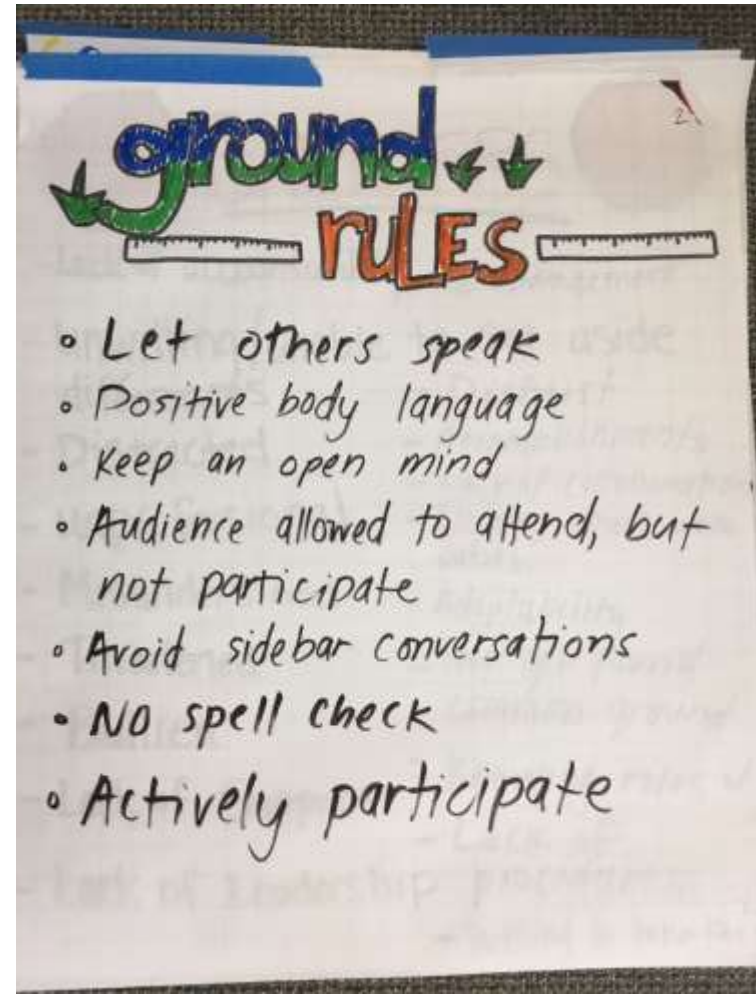
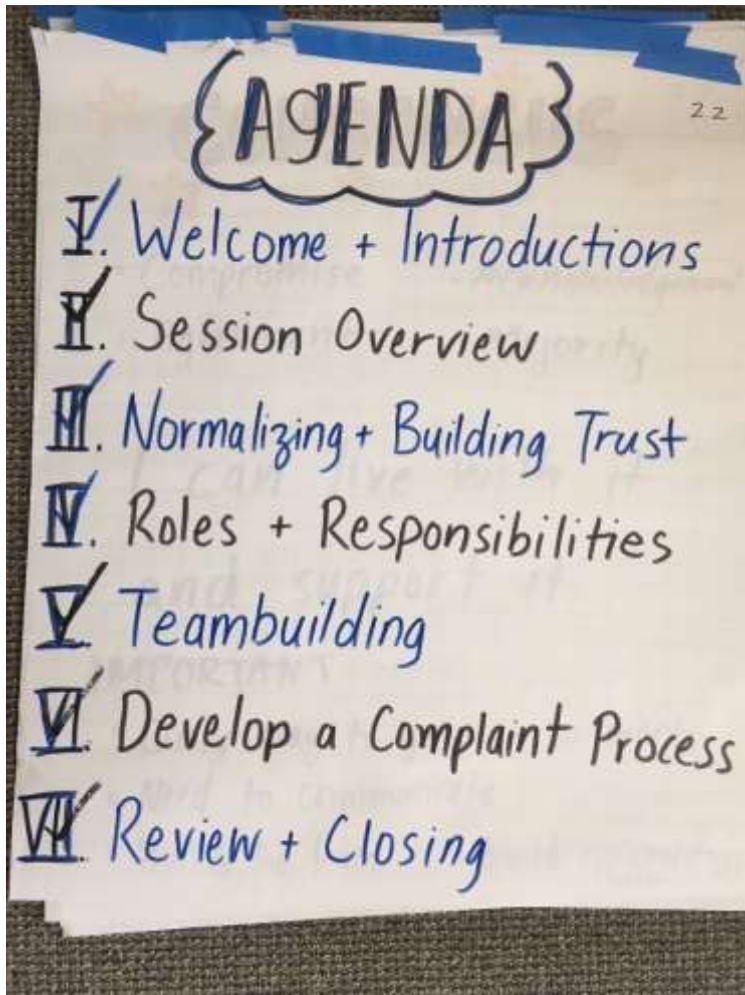
1. If an employee has a complaint, suggestion, or question about their job, working conditions, or the treatment they are receiving from anyone in the City, the employee must raise them with the City Supervisor in writing. An employee who experiences behavior that does not rise to the level of harassment, discrimination, or bullying shall first attempt to work out a solution with the other party prior to reporting to the Council Liaison.
2. Additionally, employees who have experienced any harassment, discrimination, or bullying, are expected and should bring the matter to the attention of the City Supervisor as soon as possible. Any employee or councilmember who observes any conduct that they believe constitutes harassment, discrimination, or bullying, or who receives information about these types of incidents that may have occurred, must immediately report the matter to the City Supervisor.
3. All complaints and reports will be promptly and impartially investigated and will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the City's need to investigate the complaint and address the situation.

Upon receipt of a request or report, the City Supervisor will promptly investigate the reported conduct. If the conduct is found to have occurred, the City Supervisor will consult with the city attorney and City County Insurance Services and promptly report their findings to the City Council for the Council to take prompt, appropriate corrective action. Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The Council Liaison will provide

weekly written status updates of the investigation and corrective action to the reporting party.

4. If the employee is not satisfied with the response from the City Supervisor, or if their concern involves the City Supervisor, the employee may request, in writing, to have the facts/situation reviewed by the City Council. The employee must provide their written request to all members of the City Council. Upon receipt of a written request, the City Council will investigate the reported conduct. If the conduct is found to have occurred, the City will consult with the city attorney and City County Insurance Services and take prompt, appropriate corrective action. Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The City Council will provide weekly written status updates of their investigation and corrective action to the reporting party.
5. The City prohibits retaliation in any way against an employee because the employee has made a report in good faith of improper, unlawful, harassing, discriminatory, or bullying conduct, or has participated in an investigation of such conduct. Any employee or city official who is found to have retaliated against an employee in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
6. This policy is not intended to protect an employee from the consequences of his or her own misconduct or inadequate performance simply by reporting the misconduct or inadequate performance. Furthermore, an employee is not entitled to protections under this policy if the City Council determines that the report was known to be false, or information was disclosed with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity. If such a determination is made, an employee may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.





27

★ CONSENSUS ★

- Compromise
- Agreement
- Acknowledgement
- Majority

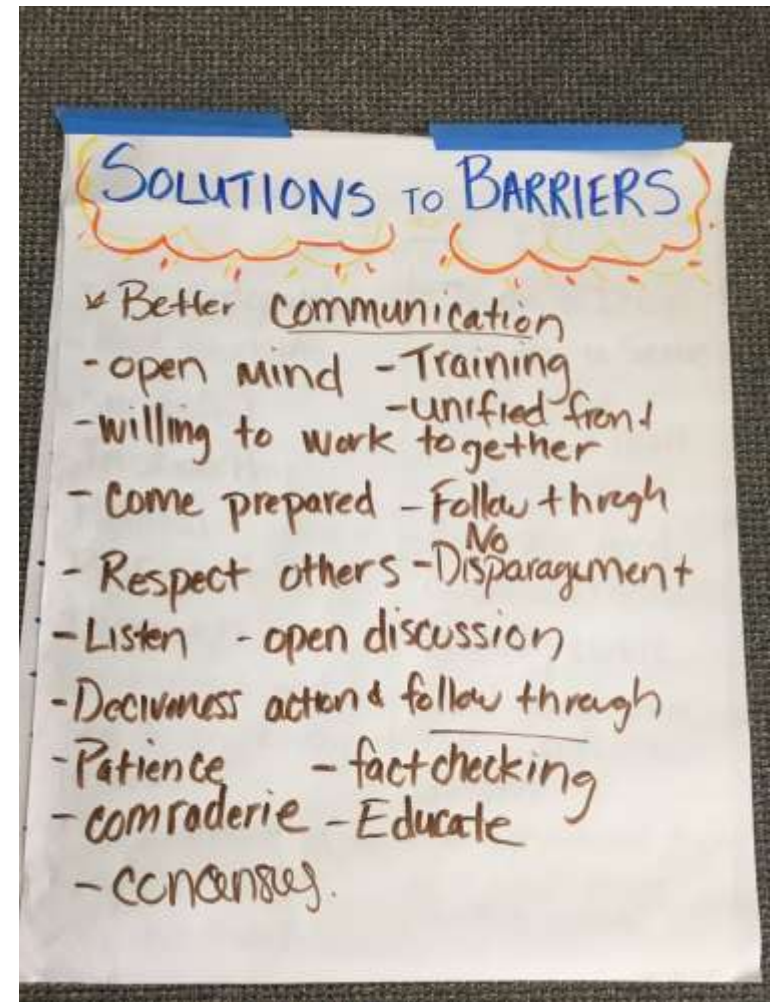
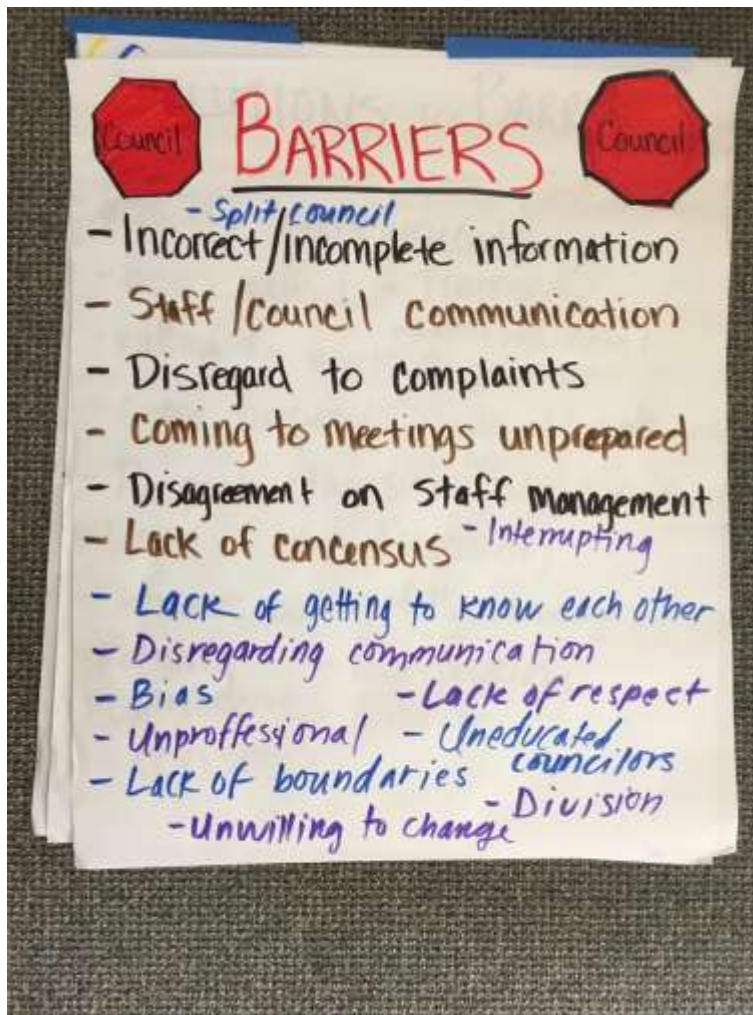
I can live with it
and support it

IMPORTANT

- Only way to get it to work
- Need to communicate
- Builds the team
- Build community as faith

STOP BARRIERS STOP

- Lack of accountability
- Disparagement
- unwilling/unable to set aside differences
- Distrust
- Distracted
- Accomplishments
- unprofessional
- Lack of collaboration
- Misunderstood
- Helping others with duties
- Threatened
- Adaptability
- Bullied
- Not yet found common ground
- Lack of Support
- Knowing roles ✓
- Lack of Leadership
- Lack of procedures
- willing to take the step ^{x-tn}



WHAT WE DO WELL

<u>STAFF</u>	<u>COUNCIL</u>
- Knowledgeable	- Trying to Learn
- Hard working	- Striving to Serve
- Successful	- City's Best Interest at heart
- Trustworthy	- Attendance
- Helpful	- Can have good discussions & decisions
- Proficient <small>- Carry a lot of weight</small>	- Fiscally aware
- Thorough	- Don't want staff, Council or citizens to suffer
- Contributions	- In agreement that we need change
- Tries to keep moving forward	- willing to learn
- Learn others duties + adjust timelines	- Help each other to accomplish goals





MISSION

- ✓* Having a part in decision-making
- ✓* Give back
- ✓✓* Care about Gaston
- * Volunteer
- ✓* Public involvement
- * Project planning/Improvement
- * Change
- ✓* Recruited

GROUP

vs

TEAM

- * ~~Making same decision~~
- * ~~Everyone working as a team~~
- * one part of a team
- * common goals
- * Commonality
- * made up of groups
- * Common goal
- * ~~one leader~~
- * ~~one coach~~
- * individual roles
- * Fill in the gaps to achieve common goal
- * wants to win/
be successful

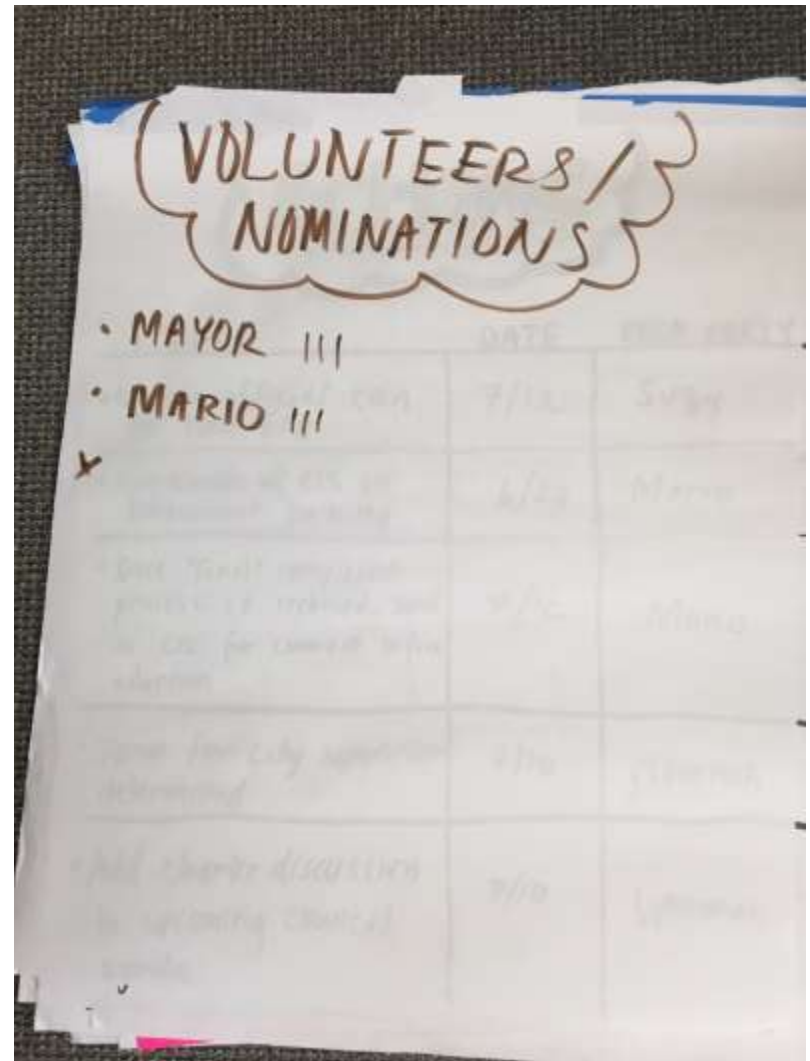
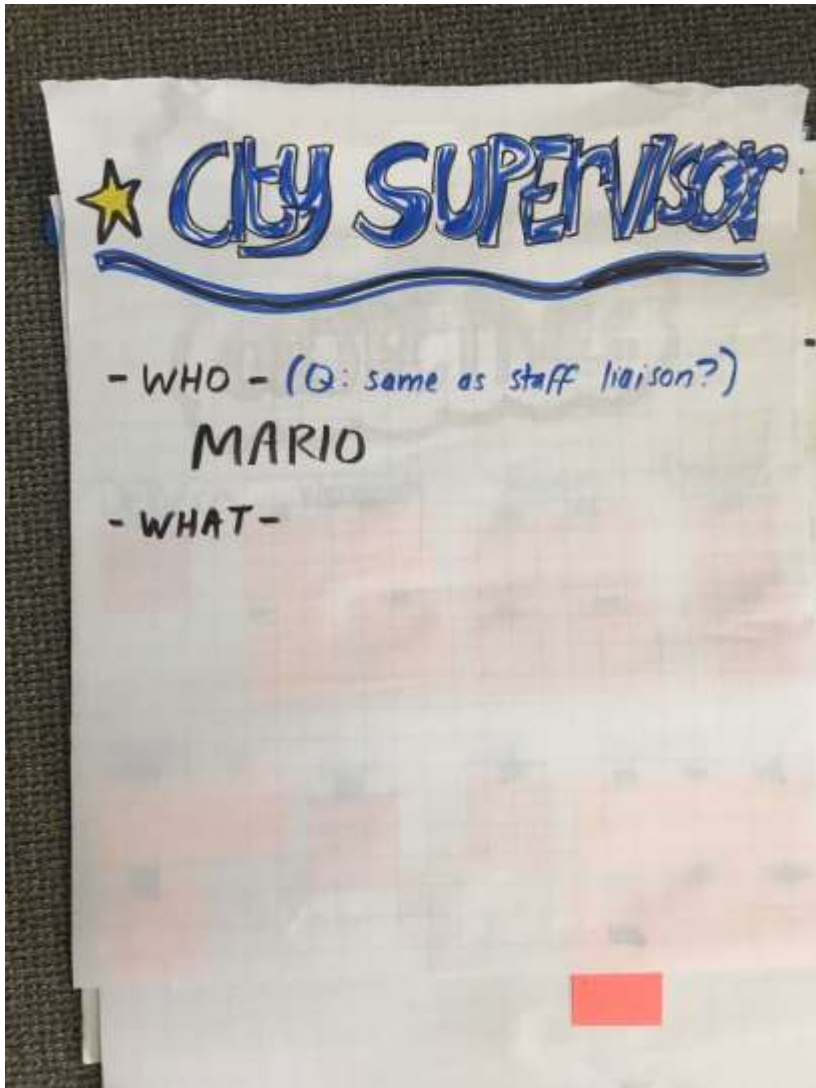
	GROUP or TEAM	WHY?
1. Symphony Orchestra	T	different parts common goal
2. Box of Pencils	G	All the same
3. 1 st Responders performing a Rescue	T	different roles together common goal
4. Cast of a Play	T	Cannot do it individually
5. Bus full of People	G	All the same
6. Boy Scouts Troop	G	Pursuing indiv. goals
7. City of Gaston	T	groups indiv w/ common goal

Tie Votes

- coin flip as a last resort

PARAMETERS

- ① Thumb flick into the air + coin on the ground.
- ② 50¢ piece will be used.
(official coin)
- ③ Council must pass a motion to use the coin flip.
- ④ In ^{calendar year} 2019, council position 1 does the flip and in 2020 position 2...
- ⑤ Mayor ^{assigns} ~~determines~~ heads + tail



CITY SUPERVISOR OPTIONS

[Parameters: Gaston elected official]

- ② Good follow through ⁴ ||||

 - Collaborative |
 - Present + Accessible

- ① Impartial ⁴ |||| ⁴ |||| Decisive
- ③ Informed ⁴ ||||

 - Experienced |
 - Comfortable w/ research |

- ④ Good communicator ⁵ ||||
- ⑤ Assertive ² ||

	"	6	5	5	2
CANDIDATE	1	2	3	4	5
DAVID MEEKER	6	6	7	6	5
	177	66	36	35	30
MARIO DEPIERO	7	8	7	7	6
	207	77	48	35	35
					207
					12

TOWN HALL

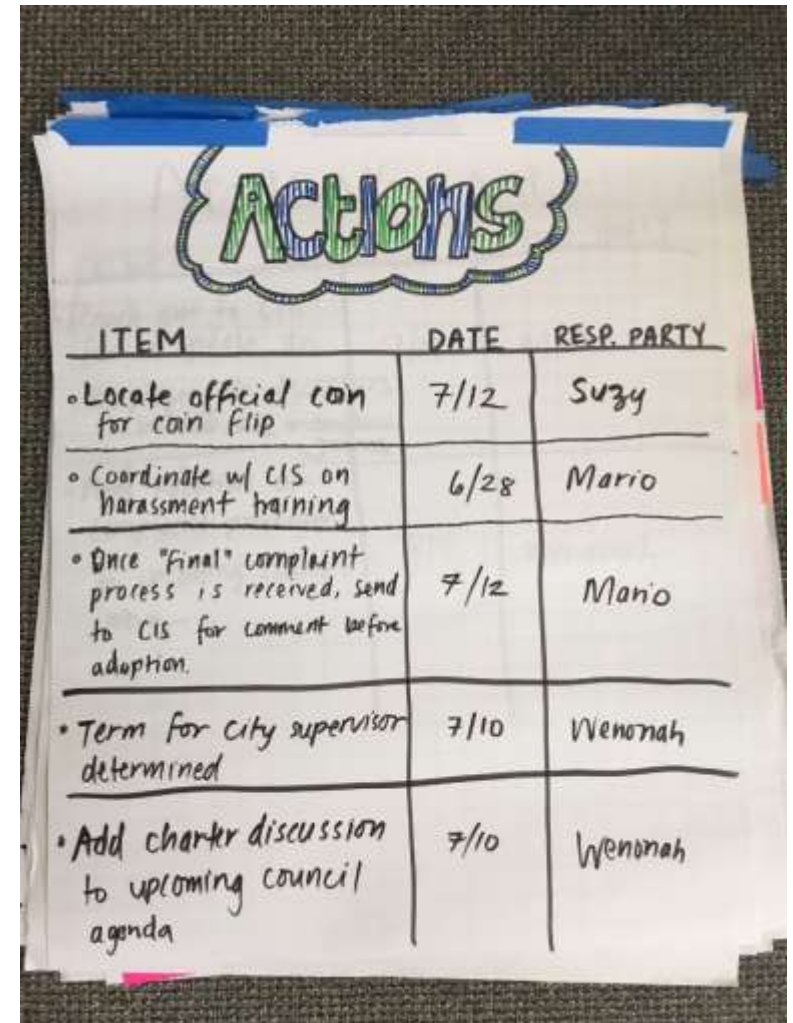
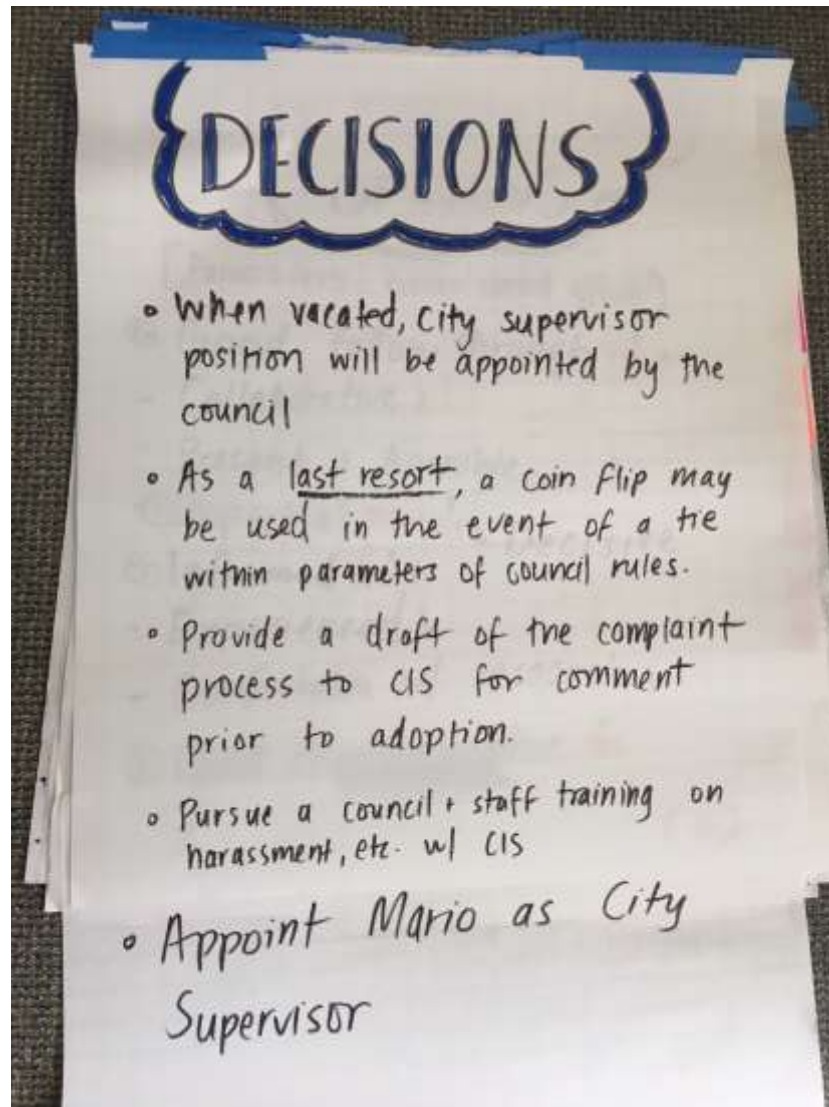
* COUNCIL-MANAGER
(most common)

STRONG MAYOR
(Beaverton)

COMMISSION
(Portland)

ISSUES...

- ✓ City Supervisor — Who is it? ✓
(historically been elected) + official ✓
+ appointment ✓
+ CLS liaison? ✓
- ✓ Clarity on recourse for unprofessional staff + Council member conduct
- ✓ Clarity on what constitutes unprofessional conduct
- ✓ Updating Gaston's Charter
- ✓ Updated position descriptions
- ✓ Appoint media rep. MAYOR
- ✓ Process for tie votes



ACTIONS cont. ...

ITEM	DATE	RESP. PARTY
• Reach out to CIS for an update on employee job descriptions + handbook <small>← complaint process</small>	7/19	Mario
• Add adoption of complaint procedure to upcoming council mtg	8/14	Wenonah