

Item 2
11-18-03

Actions for "Leadership" Mayor



The Leadership Workshop provided an opportunity to reflect on the performance of the "Leadership Mayor" and to explore ways to enhance the effectiveness of the "Leadership Mayor." The City Commission identified eight actions.

ACTION 1: Regular Meetings of Mayor and City Manager

The Mayor should meet regularly with the City Manager. The purposes of these meetings are:

- To update the City Manager on issues that the Mayor is pursuing independently
- To inform the City Manager on his activities on behalf of the City and the City Commission
- To explore issues and opportunities on the horizon

This meeting will allow the City Manager to serve as a liaison between the Mayor and City Commission.

ACTION 2: Media Alerts

The City Commission recognized that the Mayor, as the representative of the City, will have more contact with the news media and as a result, he is likely to have knowledge of upcoming issues and potential coverage by the media. The Mayor was requested to let each Commissioner know what is likely to appear in the newspaper or on television. This Media Alert will help Commissioners to: 1) be able to respond to any media question or inquiry rather than saying "I don't know"; and 2) respond to citizen comments after the news coverage.

ACTION 3: Shared Issue Leadership with Commissioners

Each Commissioner has their own areas of interest and expertise and desire to be involved as much as practical in activities in that area. The City Commission suggested that the Mayor continue and expand the involvement of individual Commissioners by:

- a. Informing the individual Commissioner on topics of interest, including what is going on today and what is on the horizon.
- b. Inviting the individual commissioners to participate with the Mayor in activities associated with the issues.
- c. Requesting assistance in representing the city on this issue.

ACTION 4: Balancing Workload of the Aides

The Mayor and City Commission recognized that their effectiveness as the governing body is influenced by the performance of their aides. During the discussion, the City Commission explored the following opportunities for improvement:

- Need for teamwork among all aides
- Need to balance workload, recognizing that the Mayor and each Commissioner have differing demands and workload expectations.

The Mayor indicated that his aide can assist other aides as time is available; and that other aides can assist his aide when needed. The Mayor is to convey the need for teamwork and cooperation on workload to all aides.

ACTION 5: Intergovernmental Responsibility

A major new role for the "Leadership Mayor" is to be responsible for the city's intergovernmental activities. The desired outcomes are actively political leadership in representing the city at all levels: federal, state, county and other cities in the State of Florida. The primary responsibilities are:

- a. Track issues and activities – Be aware of the status on issues, how the issue is evolving, and how the City of Tallahassee will be affected.
- b. Meeting with Commissioners – Keep each Commissioner informed on the status of issues and obtain their input on ideas or suggestions regarding the issue, policy positions by the City, or actions to protect the interest of Tallahassee.
- c. Involve Commissioners in Intergovernmental Activities – Ask the Commission or individual Commissioners to join the Mayor in representing the City, or to represent the City on their own.

ACTION 6: Lobbyist for the City

The City Commission indicated to the Mayor that a lobbyist be hired for the City under the direct supervision of the Mayor. The role of the lobbyist will be:

- To monitor the activities of the state legislature, particularly bills that may directly or indirectly impact the City of Tallahassee
- To track regularly (in some cases daily) specific bills of interest to the City of Tallahassee
- To identify opportunities for the Mayor and individual commissioners to lobby directly with state legislators or to present testimony to a legislative committee
- To be an advocate for the City of Tallahassee by actively building relations with state legislators and lobbying on issues of interest, both generic and specific

The Mayor is to contract with a "stable" of firms which will allow the city to have the best firm in a specific topic area representing the city. The City Commission did not want just one firm to represent the city on all issues of interest and believe by having multiple firms that this would enhance the City of Tallahassee's presence at the state legislature.

ACTION 7: Commission and Commissioner Involvement

Each individual commissioner has their own area of interest and time available for city activities. The City Commission recognized the differences among individual commissioners and expresses the desire to build off each individual Commissioner's strengths. The City Commission believes that the Mayor can enhance his effectiveness by tapping each individual commissioner. The Mayor should:

- a. Ask each commissioner when and how to they want to be involved, particularly in an area of interest or expertise.
- b. Ask the City Commission as the governing body when and how do they want to be involved.

The overall feeling from the discussion was that this would enhance Mayor and City Commission teamwork and encourage individual Commission involvement.

ACTION 8: Chief Spokesperson for the City

A role of the "Leadership Mayor" is to serve as chief spokesperson for the City of Tallahassee. The City Commission expects the Mayor to take a leadership role in expressing city policies and positions on issues, and the consensus of the City Commission on issues. The City Commission also expects the Mayor to distinguish his personal opinions and positions from the City Commission opinions and positions. In addition, during the early discussion of an issue, the City Commission desires to have the Mayor point out that the City Commission has not addressed the issues and at the present time there is not official city policy or position.

Actions For City Commission

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The Mayor and City Commission identified the following actions which are aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the Commission as the governing body.

ACTION 1: Starting On Time

At times, there is a problem that not all Commissioners are present at the time that the meeting is to begin. The City Commission agreed to start the meeting on time even if not all members are present.

ACTION 2: Start with Public Hearing

The City Commission is concerned about making their meetings accessible and convenient for citizens to participate in the process. They wanted to avoid citizens waiting around for a public hearing. As a result, the City Commission suggested that the order of agenda items be modified by moving items that may directly involve the public be placed at the beginning of each meeting, if possible. Additionally, public hearings will be placed on the second meeting of the month, if possible.

ACTION 3: Information Sharing and Reporting by City Commissioners

Each Commissioner has a responsibility for assignments as lead commissioners on various committees in a variety of community activities. Many times, due to time restraints, Commissioners may not take the time to share information with their fellow commissioners. The objective here is to:

- a. Encourage each Commissioner to keep the Mayor and the other Commissioners informed on their activities.
- b. Share their observations and insights regarding how the committee activities, recommendations, and decisions may impact the City of Tallahassee. Commissioners are

expected to provide regular updates in writing or at a City Commission meeting on committee activities.

- c. Recognize that each individual Commissioner interacts with different parts of the Tallahassee community and, as a result, should inform the entire Commission on their insights or issues on the horizon.

The Commission agreed that each Commissioner has the responsibility to report on work and activities on assigned committees, and to report their activities and insights on their community activities, particularly in their areas of interest.

ACTION 4: Ground Rules for City Commission

The City Commission reinforced the following ground rules for their operations and personal conduct:

- Respect each individual commissioner's right to ask questions, to have a different opinion, to appreciate differences in operating styles
- Comments from individual commissioners should focus on the issues and not on the person
- If a Commissioner has a problem with another Commissioner, that Commissioner, as a common courtesy, should go to the other Commissioner first and not to the staff or the other Commissioners in the middle of the conflict.
- Respect the Council – Manager form of government, including respect for the City's chain of command
- Avoid staff involvement beyond information and routine matters without the involvement and knowledge of the City Manager or Assistant City Manager
- Maintain an open-mind by listening to all the background information and policy recommendations from the City Manager
- Remember that each Commissioner has a responsibility for the overall effectiveness and teamwork of the City Commission