

May 16, 2013
10:00 A.M.
Newport, Oregon

The City of Newport City Manager Evaluation Process Sub-Group met on the above date in the City Manager's Conference Room of the Newport City Hall. In attendance were City Councilors David Allen, Mark Saelens, and Laura Swanson, City Manager, Jim Voetberg, and City Recorder/Special Projects Director, Peggy Hawker.

CALL TO ORDER

Allen called the meeting to order and noted that since the last meeting of this group, Voetberg has accepted another position and will be leaving the city on June 4, 2013.

REVIEW EVALUATION FORM DRAFTED BY SWANSON FROM VARIOUS MUNICIPALITIES' FORMS

Allen asked whether there were issues that should be rearranged due to Voetberg's resignation. Saelens suggested clearing some elements that were specifically related to Voetberg, and asked how these things should be done properly in the future.

Allen asked Voetberg for his thoughts on the process. Voetberg noted that the draft was a good framework. He suggested asking for feedback from the City Manager during the evaluation process. Voetberg also suggested that evaluations occur annually with a quarterly goals update.

Allen suggested that the annual evaluation be held in September as that would be a few months into the new fiscal year, and enough lapsed time since January, when new Councilors take office, for the new Councilors to gain an understanding of the city and its City Manager.

Swanson asked Voetberg whether there was anything that he would like share during an exit interview. Voetberg reported that the City Council is aware of issues and up to speed on everything. Voetberg recommended retaining the last page of the draft form which is the "City Manager's Self-Evaluation." Voetberg noted that City Councils are comprised of certain personalities, and asked how to get strong personalities to step back and determine how to give a good evaluation when the organization is successful.

Allen noted that he has observed that Council needs to develop a personality to put checks and balances on the process, and that each Councilor needs to be cognizant as a group. Swanson noted that the addition of the first page, "City Manager Performance Evaluation Overview," and changing the evaluation process could help toward this end. Saelens noted that the best outcome would be that the City Council acts as a unit. He suggested a review of the Council and the city could help mitigate the issues that degrade the system.

Allen noted that once the process is in place, and the evaluation takes place in executive session, it would be helpful to agree to what to say to the public in open session. He added that this statement should be a shared, agreed to narrative that lets the public know how the City Council and city is moving forward on behalf of the citizens. Saelens stated that it is important that the City Council goes through a process to lead to a unified message to the public.

Voetberg noted that his past evaluations have been verbally positive; written comments a bit less positive; and media reports are below standard. He suggested training the City Council on how to evaluate a City Manager.

Voetberg suggested a two-step evaluation process with the City Manager's self-evaluation first, followed by the verbal evaluation by the City Council, and then the written evaluation by the City Council.

Saelens noted that individual Councilors need to be aware of how to move forward to avoid being stuck in the middle and not moving either way. He asked how to engineer the process of getting the group's consensus and getting the appropriate message to the public.

Swanson suggested developing examples of what exceeds expectations; what is fully effective; what is developing; and what is needs improvement - the performance standard ratings.

Allen noted that everyone provides input, but what is important is that at the end, the group needs to develop a group consensus on what to release to the public. Saelens noted that it cannot be assumed that all Councilors have a background in evaluating employees. It was noted that Swanson would provide input on City Council training.

Allen asked whether there was anything that should be added to the front page of the evaluation document. Swanson suggested soliciting comments from the entire City Council. She also asked whether the front page was necessary. It was agreed that this draft document is a good starting point for City Council review.

PROCESS FOR QUARTERLY REVIEW

The preliminary quarterly review process is:

1. Develop City Council goals in January or February;
2. Quarterly review of goals in April, July, and September to recognize the role of the City Council, achievements of the City Manager, and course correction for both, if required;
3. In September, but after the quarterly goals review, the evaluation of the City Manager's performance would occur.
4. It was noted that there could be a goals check-in as needed if needed course corrections were observed.

It was agreed to take this draft document to the full Council for review and comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 P.M.