



AGENDA
Nowthen City Council Work Session
February 18, 2021
@ 6:00 PM

1. Overview of the purpose of the planning process
2. Role of elected officials in effective city government (from LMC Elected Leaders Institute, foundational program, week 1, 2021)
3. Discuss key points for LMC handout, 10 Habits of Highly Effective Governing Bodies
4. Discuss and determine how to implement the recommendations made by Pam Whitmore (Consultant from the LMC) from our in-person meetings in October 2019 and February 2020.
5. What do you see as the top needs/goals for the city in 2021?
6. What As-Needed (Ad Hoc) Committees would you suggest for 2021?
7. Discuss key items to be put on a city calendar to help preparation and planning (such as budget planning, recycle days, road meetings, vendor contracts, insurance renewal dates, seasonal help).
8. Planning and Zoning Commission: policy update, candidate qualifications, and interview questions

10 HABITS OF HIGHLY-EFFECTIVE GOVERNING BODIES

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Local government operations directly affect our daily existence and experiences and the quality of life we perceive we have within our communities. No local government deserves, nor should its citizens tolerate, governing bodies and elected and appointed public officials who don't exhibit extraordinary effectiveness, integrity and competence in leading their community's public institutions.

Thomas Cronin, a recognized authority on public policy, defines leadership as, "making things happen that might not otherwise happen, and preventing things from happening that ordinarily might happen. It is a process of getting people together to achieve common goals and aspirations. Leadership is a process that helps people transform intentions into positive action, visions into reality." The quality of leadership effectiveness demonstrated by a governing body and its ability to be highly-effective are not attributes bestowed upon it by a swearing-in ceremony. They are the result of disciplined adherence to a set of fundamental principles and skills that characterize highly-effective governing bodies. Listed below are 10 "habits" of highly effective governing bodies based upon the author's observations of hundreds of city, county, special service district and school district governing bodies over the last twenty years.

1. Think and Act Strategically

A governing body's primary responsibility is not just to make policy or do its "Roman Emperor" routine (thumbs up or thumbs down) on agenda items at public meetings. It is to determine and achieve citizens' desires for the community's future. Governing bodies and their administrative teams must accept responsibility for shaping the future of the community by expanding their mental horizons to identify and meet the challenges that must be addressed through decisive leadership and goals for the attainment of that future.

A strategic leader always comes at you from the future and takes you "back to the future" from the present. This leadership adventure starts with vision, and evolves to defining the strategic issues that must be mastered to achieve the vision. The next step is the development of long-range goals that address these strategic issues and which provide decision-making and budgetary focus for the successful implementation of these goals. Living from one annual budget to another, and from one meeting to the next, condemns your community and its future to happenstance and the type of thinking that befuddles national governance and policy. For this reason, polls show an overwhelming majority of citizens want important issues affecting their lives to be decided at the local, "home town" level. Here, they expect leadership, sound thinking, decisive action, and accountability for results.

2. Respect "shared constituency": what do the *people* need?

No city, town, county, local government jurisdiction or non-governmental community entity is an island. The actions and decisions of any one affects all others. But, there is an even more profound reality: **most governmental jurisdictions and non-governmental entities overlap in representing and providing service to the same people**, i.e., **shared constituencies**. For example, any given citizen is represented and served simultaneously by the **federal, state, county, and city governments plus the school district, special purpose districts, neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce, newspaper publishers, non-profits, etc.**

These governments and community entities usually see themselves as separate institutions, often with conflicting and competing agendas rather than as components contributing in a coordinated and integrated manner to seamless service delivery meeting the citizens' needs. Frequently, local governments and community entities operate as special interests advocating their particular institutional needs and prerogatives. They fail to define how a public service category meeting the needs of a community of shared constituents (public safety, transportation, community development, human services, health care, education, etc.) is defined and functions in a seamless manner with each jurisdiction and entity ensuring its appropriate contribution to the effective and efficient performance of the whole service system.

An example of a service category system is roads. A citizen expects to be able to get from point a to point b on good quality roads that make this possible. That citizen does not want to think, nor cares about, "whose road am I on now; a federal, state, community or city road?" To that citizen "roads are roads" and it is up to all the government entities to make the system work! The same for public safety, and all services. When a sheriff's deputy can not communicate with a city police officer due to different radio systems and frequencies, it is a service system breakdown which doesn't meet the citizen's need for seamless effective service.

Effective governing bodies recognize they must *horizontally* (local government with local government with community entities) and *vertically* (local government to federal and state government) coordinate and integrate to ensure citizens' needs are met. They also recognize that collaboration and integration work best if it originates at the local government, city and county, level. It is at this level where needs are best defined and responded to by service providers. In reality, all government, as it touches peoples daily lives and existence, is local.

3. Understand and Demonstrate the Elements of Teams and Teamwork

Governing bodies by law, exist and have authority only when their members convene as a "body" to do business. Each member is a component of a corporate being which must speak, act, and fulfill its commitments with one voice, in a mature, effective and reliable manner. Governing bodies are collections of diverse individuals who come together to constitute and act as an entity, and only when operating as that entity do they exercise authority and perform in fulfillment of their purpose. This is a classic definition of team. Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto, two preeminent authorities on teams and teamwork, define team as an entity comprised of two or more people working together to accomplish a specific purpose that can be attained only through coordinated activity among the team members. In short, a team is an entity that exists to fulfill a specific function, or purpose, made up of disparate, interdependent parts (individuals) who collectively achieve a capacity that none of its members could demonstrate individually.

Teams always have two components that one might call their "S" components: *systemicness* and *synergy*. All teams are systemic, by definition, being made up of interdependent parts (people) who affect each other's performance and that of the team. Synergy is the ability to achieve an effect, when working together as a team, that is more than the sum of the team members' individual efforts. While all teams are systemic, relatively few are synergistic unless their members understand, master and demonstrate the fundamentals of teamwork which are:

- a clear sense of purpose and goals;
- clearly define roles and relationships that unite individual talents and capacities into team performance;
- integration of members who have basic technical, interpersonal, and rational decision making competence;
- a commitment to team success and quality performance;
- a climate of trust, openness, and mutual respect;
- clear standards of success and performance excellence;
- the support, resources and recognition to achieve success; and
- principled and disciplined leadership.

Highly-effective governing bodies spend time building their sense of being a team and their skills for productive teamwork.

4. Master Small Group Decision Making

Most local government governing bodies are classic small groups, with fewer than a dozen people. Small groups demonstrate certain skills and behaviors that “link” their members together. They also have clearly defined processes for making decisions in fulfillment of that group’s purpose. Figure 1 summarizes the “skill sets” essential to small group effectiveness.

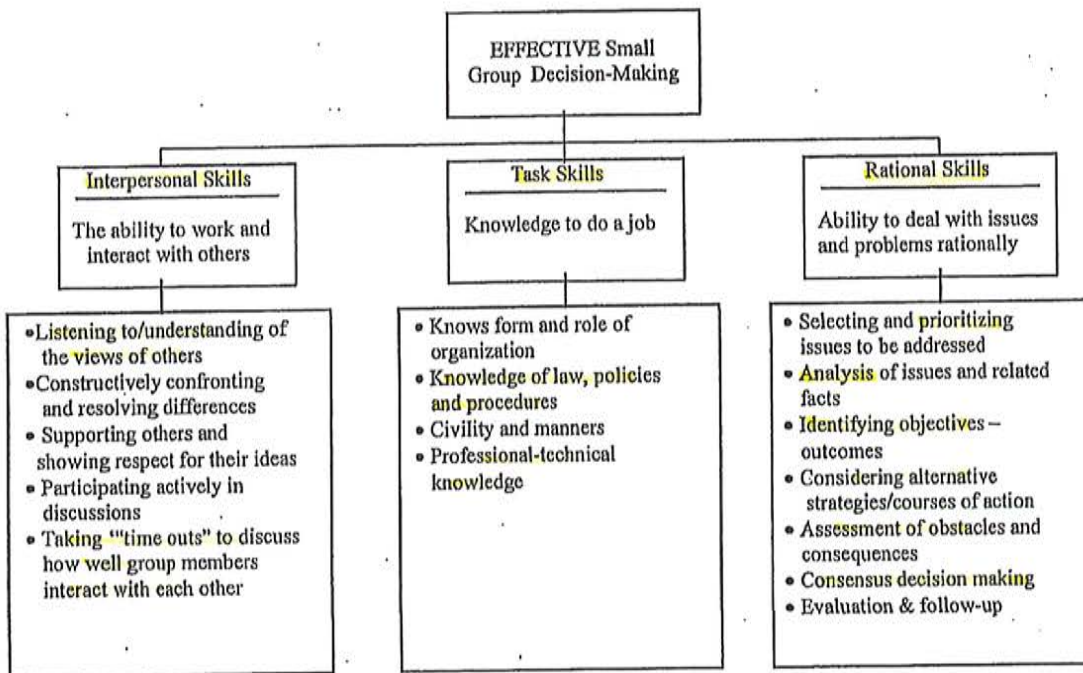


Figure 1: Effective Small Group Decision-Making

5. Have Clearly Defined Roles and Relationships

Each team member’s contribution to the team’s efforts and success must be defined in terms of **roles** to be assumed (**functions**) and how that role is to be **carried out through one’s behavior (performance)**.

Role has two elements: **function**, the specific responsibilities of that role irrespective of incumbency, and **performance**, how one occupying the role is expected to behave and fulfill his/her responsibilities. Most governing bodies, whether through charter, statute or ordinance, have clear definitions of their function. The performance component must be defined within the team through discussion and mutual definition of those behaviors and practices expected of the governing body’s members in the conduct of their duties and interactions.

Vince Lombardi when asked, what makes a winning team, replied, “start with the **fundamentals**. A player’s got to know the basics of the game and how to play his (her) position.

The players have to play as a team; not a bunch of individuals. The difference between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling the players have for each other," (relationships). Teams talk about and define expected roles and relationships and give constructive feedback to their members on the degree to which they are fulfilling these expectations.

6. Honor the Board-Staff Partnership

We have all heard the popular phrase, "the governing body makes policy, staff implements policy". This is a total misconception of reality. Policy making and policy implementation are not distinct and separate functions. Policy making-implementation is a continuum of thought and relationships that transforms ideas and abstractions (visions, policies, goals, and plans) into defined, observable ends or outcomes (results, programs, projects, deliverable services). Board members and staff share this continuum as partners ensuring each other's success. Each person plays an important role in creating sound policies and ensuring their effective implementation through reliable administrative practices and performance. Figure 2 depicts this partnership and continuum.

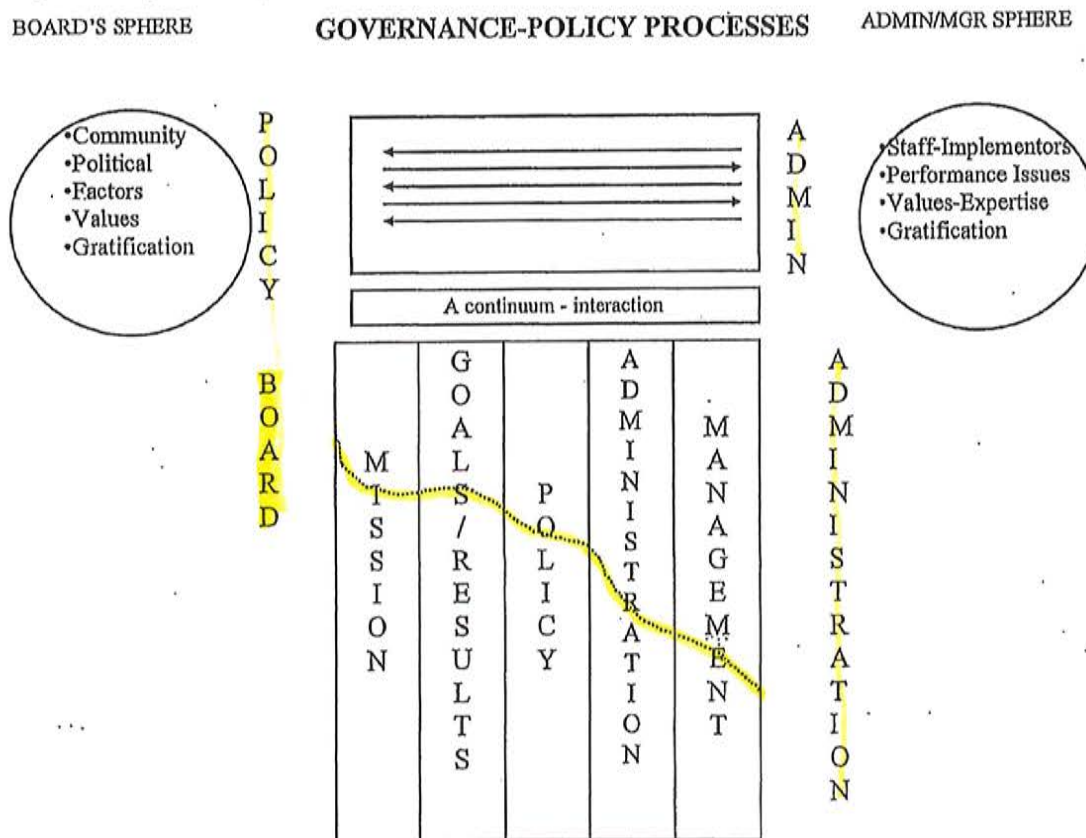


Figure 2: Board-Staff Partnership

To what degree is this partnership understood, discussed, and respected by board members?

John Carver, a widely acclaimed author who writes about boards that make a difference, describes this partnership as one in which boards define what needs are to be met and ends (outcomes) achieved. He believes that boards should allow staff, within board-established limits, to define the means for achieving these ends. He sees a board-staff linkage that empowers staff to do its tasks and be evaluated on the results produced.

The board-staff partnership functions best when it is vision-driven and goals based. Boards that accept and abide by this partnership focus their energy on establishing vision and goals, on good policy, and on empowering effective staff performance. Those that do not do this, frequently fall prey to micromanaging; that is, they will perceive a need to become involved in, or retain approval over, staff activity and plans.

A critical element and important board task in this partnership is the evaluation of the manager or administrator, based upon clearly defined goals, policies, and established guidelines on executive performance.

7. Allocating Governing Body Time and Energy Appropriately

Time, especially to elected officials, is a critically precious and limited commodity. The typical board or council operates as a *governing body*, providing governance, for relatively few hours; usually less than 200 hours annually, as compared to the typical 2400+ hours per work year for senior administrators. How boards allocate and use their time is vital to their leadership effectiveness and performance.

Boards, like teams, “play” in a number of settings or “arenas” to achieve overall, peak performance. There are four board-staff arenas, and each must be appreciated for its purpose and contribution to a board’s effectiveness.

- Goal-setting (retreats or “advances”)
- Exploration and analysis (study sessions)
- Disposition/legislation (regular public meetings)
- Community relations (interactions with constituencies and other jurisdictions and agencies)

Figure 3 identifies the purpose, typical setting, focus, and key characteristics of each arena. All four arenas are essential to highly-effective governing body’s fulfillment of its leadership, policy making, goal setting, and empowering responsibilities.

ARENA	GOAL-SETTING	EXPLORATION & ANALYSIS	DISPOSITION-LEGISLATION	COMMUNITY RELATIONS
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish vision Explore potentials Set goals Direction/Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community -Services -Staff action -Budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the issue(s) Problem identification Selecting "best options" Building commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official action Vote on items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resolutions -Ordinances Public input Mobilization of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction with constituency-citizens Building alliances Outreach-liaison Coordination with other entities
Typical Setting	Retreat/Advance - informal off-site workshop	Study Session - conference room	Public - formal board meeting in chambers	Numerous - diverse formats
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future of county, city/community Evaluation of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Needs -Trends -Strategic issues Community desires & values Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing knowledge for decision making Sorting of options Examine consequences Set strategies Ability to make competent & informed decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda - formality "Show" of authority Ratification/Adoption Political pressures Psychological needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Problem solving Collaboration - coordination Partnership Acting as a community
Key Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informality Sharing of options Open dialogue Creative thinking Humor - adventure Face-to-face/Group interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board-staff dialogue Questioning - testing of ideas Information exchange Negotiating - consensus building No voting Face-to-face/group interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal meetings Rules and procedures Public input/involvement High visibility Pressure/advocacy from groups Voting Group interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being "outside" city hall/court house Responding to requests Joint ventures Interagency activity Multiple interaction modes and communication techniques

Figure 3: Arenas for Governing Body-Staff Performance

Highly-effective governing bodies will hold at least one goal-setting retreat or "advance" annually. They also will hold two study sessions monthly, usually between regularly scheduled public hearings. Here they confer with staff and other experts on significant items under consideration requiring eventual official actions. While these study sessions are open to the public, as observers, the public should not participate in the board-staff dialogue. Many boards short-change this arena, pushing the opportunity for learning into the formal public hearing, which is not designed to promote much in-depth analysis of complex issues. The arena of disposition/legislation is designed to get to a vote, not promote careful analysis of complex issues.

The fourth arena, *community and interjurisdictional relations*, is becoming more important. It is rapidly transforming the role of the governing body and how it and its members spend their time. Communities today are more dependent upon sophisticated alliances and partnerships among groups, public and private entities. All jurisdictions are subject to multiple, profound changes in how public officials operate as they deal with complex multijurisdictional and regional issues and the growing popularity of citizen democracy and community building/renewal. Today, the community arena requires more time spent in interactions outside of city hall/courthouse and puts greater time pressure on elected officials.

8. Have Clear Rules and Procedures for Board Meetings

Board meetings exist for the purpose of doing the board's business. Literature on how to conduct effective and productive meetings specifies the need for, and adherence to, clearly defined rules and procedures. Many boards, however, drift from these rules and procedures in pursuit of informality, collegiality, and "just being nice." They let their meetings drone on with lack of focus, redundant comments and endless discussions. Rules and procedures do not preclude citizen input, courtesy or sensitivity to public concerns and viewpoints. They respect all these elements and the necessity to conduct business in an orderly, disciplined and productive manner.

9. Conduct Systematic and Valid Assessments of Policy Implementation and the Public's Concerns and Evaluation of the Boards/Council's Performance.

Governing bodies, like most legislative bodies, frequently fall into the Jean Luc Picard syndrome (Star Trek II) and simply tell their staffs: "Make it so." They assume that board action equates to policy and program implementation. The next time board hears about the policy is when a problem or crisis arises. Highly effective governing bodies expect periodic feedback on policy results and on possible policy amendments that may be required. This feedback can be provided through progress reports, status memos or newsletters, and "policy reviews."

Elections are contests among individuals vying to become a member of an elected governing body. They are not valid, objective assessments of the public's feeling about the quality of board's performance as a governing body and about whether or not it is addressing issues effectively. Highly effective boards seek feedback through a number of proven market research tools such as focus groups, surveys and questionnaires. Typically, the phone calls a board member receives, or the comments made in public hearings, are not valid or accurate reflections of the entire community's sentiments about issues and the board's performance. "Market research feedback" should be ongoing and included in the annual goal setting retreat or advance.

10. Practice Continuous Personal Learning and Development as a Leader

Leaders read, attend workshops, and constantly seek information, understanding and insight. Elizabeth Kautz, Mayor of Burnsville, Minnesota, giving advice to newly-elected municipal officials said: "Decide what your role is, identify the skills you need to be effective in

that role, and GET THEM! Highly-effective governing bodies are comprised of members who honestly know they don't know it all. They take advantage of the myriad of opportunities to learn and perfect their skills by reading, going to workshops, and forums that can expand their skills to lead and govern well.

Highly-effective governing bodies also learn as a group. They assess objectively their performance relative to each of the ten habits. They also decide where gains can be made and set up the opportunity through board workshops to learn the skills to make these gains.

The last, and probably most important, point: **Keep your sense of humor.** Governance is a serious and sometimes messy business dealing with vital issues affecting our communities and the quality of life we experience daily within them. **Humor reduces friction and stress, lets others know we and they are human, and is a pause that refreshes our insight and commitment.** It is essential to creating and maintaining relationships. **It also can open one's mind to new ideas.**

Every community deserves nothing less than highly effective governing bodies that accept accountability for the community's performance in creating its future and in effectively addressing, in the present, those challenges vital to attaining that future. That is what is at stake: our communities' future. With few exceptions, every board can be highly effective and can provide strong leadership. But to become effective requires a good governance model and disciplined adherence to the principles (habits) of effectiveness.

Carl Neu, Jr., is executive vice president of Neu & Company, Lakewood, Colorado. All rights reserved to Neu & Company and the Center for the Future of Local Governance, 1997.

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CARL NEU

Carl Neu

Carl Neu, author and consultant, is recognized nationally as an authority on, and an experienced practitioner of, the theory and application of governance and leadership to city councils and county boards, local government managers, and community leaders. Since 1971, he has been a consultant to private, non-profit, and local-government organizations on strategic leadership planning and performance.

In the public sector Carl has worked with over 600 local government entities, state and national municipal and county associations since 1976. Additionally, he is an experienced government official having served on the Lakewood, Colorado, city council and as chair of the city's charter commission. He also serves on the Lakewood Public Building Authority and was President of the Authority from 1983 until 2009.

Carl's teaching affiliations include having been a lecturer at the University of Colorado's Graduate School of Public Affairs, a faculty member at its Center for the Improvement of Public Management, and a faculty member for the Rocky Mountain Institute for Public Officials. He also served as a faculty member for the University of Arizona's Local Government Leadership Institute.

Carl's professional expertise focuses on development of those strategic leadership, policy development, long-range planning and teamwork skills required of elected and appointed local government officials and community leaders. These skills are necessary for effective performance in dealing with the forces and popular trends that are redefining government and governance, especially at the local level.

Starting in 2000, Carl also has concentrated his efforts on the future of local governments and preserving their authority within the local-state government relationship. During the last four years, he has presented keynote addresses and workshops on the future of county and municipal governments for the National Association of Counties (NACo), and city and county associations in the states of Florida, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Texas, Minnesota, North Carolina and Wisconsin.

He is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and has an M.B.A. from Harvard University.

Neu & Company

Neu & Company provides consultation services, workshops and conferences, and professional programs to improve the leadership and service delivery performance of local governments, and the professional skills of their policy-making boards, executives, and employees.

The Center for the Future of Local Governance™

This division of Neu and Company focuses on the development and dissemination of those strategic leadership, policy development, long-range planning and teamwork concepts and application techniques that can "awaken the best" in elected and appointed local government officials and community leaders. These insights and skills are necessary for effective performance in dealing with the forces and popular trends that are redefining government and governance, especially at the local level, during the 21st Century.

R: 9/22/10

City Council of Nowthen

Framework/Agenda for League Workshop

Background

The League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust ("LMCIT") offers a Collaboration Program to its member cities. This program offers customized onsite trainings and facilitated discussions for city councils. This program provides councils with an additional resource to gain insight into best practices for governance and to have tools to work more collaboratively together. Lori, the City Clerk, reached out to Pam Whitmore to learn more about this program as part of her transition back to the city of Nowthen.

The Collaboration Program is unique in that the focus is on offering onsite, customized session(s) specific to members, and not just a canned presentation. To enable customization, Pam meets with stakeholders in the weeks before the meeting to make sure that the topics discussed at the workshop are relevant to the Council. As part of this process, Pam met with some of the City Council members on Friday, September 13, 2019. Although Pam has not had an opportunity to meet yet with all the elected officials, it became clear that some confusion surrounds the timing and, even possibly, the desire to participate in this training. To be clear, this training is a service offered to members as a resource and will only be worthwhile to all involved if embraced by the council. Before taking any additional time meeting with additional stakeholders, the council should decide if this is a training in which they want to participate. To help with that decision, the below summary provides an overview of what the facilitator has discerned to date.

Readiness for Collaborative Problem Solving

The following factors indicate that a collaborative problem-solving process may be useful at this time:

- Individual Council Members, the entire City Council and Staff have common interests.
- The City Council Members have an ongoing relationship with each other and with Staff.
- The City has experienced changes in Staff and in Council in last year and wants to continue in the current positive direction.
- The Staff and City Council Members could all benefit from clarifying communication practices and collaboration best practices for Council Members and Staff in a blended Clerk/Administrator structure.
- Staff and some Council Members have expressed an interest in clarifying roles.
- All have agreed that it is necessary for Council Members to get good information to make informed decisions, while still respecting Staff duties.
- Both Staff and Council Members have expressed an interest in a refresher on parts of the Open Meeting Law.

Process Recommendations

Based on the brief assessment, LMCIT recommends the following collaborative problem-solving process:

1. Review this Framework and Process Agreement. This process and framework agreement sets the framework of the workshops and will help to ensure that the process meets the needs and goals of all participants.

2. Meet in joint sessions. LMCIT will facilitate conversation between the parties on the shared interests; including building common ground, clarifying roles and jointly generating ideas on additional policy, if found useful by the group. As part of this process, the facilitator is researching the possibility to bring in a city clerk from another city, who has served in a semi-administrator capacity, to answer any questions.

The city currently has this session scheduled for Thursday October 3, 2019. Based on the desire of LMCIT to further clarify the purpose of the workshop and wanting the Council to have time to again discuss this training, the facilitator recognizes that this date may be pushed back.

Proposed Agenda

- Introductions
- Check in & Mind Setting
- Discuss Roles
- Idea sharing for additional collaboration or policy
- Refresher of Open Meeting Law
- Engage in Reflection (I commit)

City Council of Nowthen Summary of the Good Governance/Roles Workshop

Background

The Nowthen City Council met at 6:00 pm on Thursday October 3rd, 2019 with the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT) to participate in a workshop about Good Governance and Roles. The workshop was facilitated by Pam Whitmore. The following summary is the facilitators' understanding of some of the goals and suggested next steps arising out of those discussions. Participants can call Pam at 612-816-7386 or 651-281-1224 directly with feedback.

Common Interest to Work Collaboratively

The Mayor, individual Councilmembers and Staff started off the meeting acknowledging their common interest to give back and to serve the City of Nowthen. The reasons for running for office included:

- Giving back to the City of Nowthen.
- Making changes for the betterment of Nowthen.
- Representing the citizens of the City of Nowthen and helping maintain the rural and community feel.
- Serving the Nowthen community, where many have been lifelong members.
- Helping with city government and uniting the Council.

All present also recognized that:

- Councilmembers have an ongoing relationship with each other, with Staff and with the public.
- Councilmembers and Staff could all benefit from addressing the process and communication barriers that currently exist.
- Council and Staff expressed a desire for more clarity regarding job duties and communication practices.
- Councilmembers have an interest in finding ways to stay informed and to learn how to more fully discuss information received about city business within the confines of the Open Meeting Law.

Key Points from Workshop Discussions

The following summary represents some key points that arose out of workshop discussions. This list does not necessarily represent an exhaustive list, but rather a summary of a few key action items.

1. Policies and Communication

The group showed an interest in clarifying current policies and, when necessary, developing new policy to help clarify roles and the manner of communication. The following arose out of the discussions:

- Revisit use of workshops to give the Council the opportunity to discuss policies or agenda items in more depth.
- Discuss and decide upon an accepted policy or practice (that works for both Council and Staff) on how Council can get information to and from Staff, and how Staff can then share this information with other Councilmembers.
- Develop a common practice for information sharing between Councilmembers and Staff, with Council streamlining requests and questions through the City Clerk.
- Refer the public directly to Staff, including through the City's *complaint process*, or, in the alternative, encourage the public to attend the meetings. In the alternative, if the public is not comfortable with doing either of those options, then Councilmembers communicating those resident concerns to one centralized Staff member.
- Clarify the city's existing policies, including reviewing the public comment policy and the agenda setting policy.
- Discuss the possibility of Staff getting the packets, with supporting information, out earlier, so that elected officials feel better prepared at meetings.
- Discuss the City Clerk adopting a standard practice of reaching out to individual Councilmembers for questions, after the packets go out, but before the meeting happens, so Staff can prepare for additional information requests and Councilmembers can know what everyone is asking.
- Discuss whether to incorporate a Staff report, Mayor report and Councilmembers' reports into the Agenda to report back on matters that previously were brought to the Council's attention, but on which no action was taken at the previous meetings. Basically, closing the loop on issues.
- Discuss how to better educate Council on the existing enforcement provisions of ordinances.
- Revisit learning more about committees and boards. Regarding committees, group discussed that the mayor has authority to make some appointments subject to Council approval. For the specifics of those particular committees, including the statutory citations granting the authority, see pages 25-26 of [Chapter 6, League Handbook](#). In the alternative, the facilitator discussed how state law dictates certain, statutorily created boards (different than committees). More information on boards can be found starting on page 29 of the same linked League Handbook chapter.

2. Priorities/Goal Setting

Council and Staff acknowledged the usefulness of taking Council and Staff time to set priorities, possibly at an annual workshop around first of the year. Doing so provides Staff with clear direction and Council with a roadmap. The participants discussed how this type of meeting also can be used by Staff to educate Council on Staff day-to-day duties, as well as provide newly-elected members with training and the chance to get an overview of how Nowthen functions.

3. Roles

In addition to the policies addressed above in #1, participants looked for clarity around Staff roles. The group spent time learning how other cities draft and use job descriptions to help provide clarity, as well as a baseline for reviews. Discussion of personnel committees, in general, ensued, as well as the importance of personnel policies to help provide clarity on roles of Staff and structure for organizational reporting. As mentioned in the meeting by the facilitator, the City would benefit by working with its City Attorney on drafting, adopting or revising any of its policies.

4. Open Meeting Law Reminders. The group did not get a chance spend a lot of time focusing on Open Meeting Law. The facilitator is happy to return at any time to overview the open meeting law more in depth, if Council so desires. In the meantime, Council should:

- Be mindful that state law intends for the public to receive notice when there is a quorum of the city's decision makers together discussing or receiving information about official city business. The law also intends that the public can be present, so meetings should occur in a publicly accessible place. The group discussed how the city has, on file, notice for regular meetings; but that the city must give three-day notice for special meetings.
- Remember the law doesn't define what qualifies as a meeting, so courts have determined that a meeting can include discussions of a quorum or more of decision makers, even in instances that happen through other means, such as pre-meeting meetings, post-meeting gatherings, email, texts, serial meetings, and serial phone calls. This list is not exhaustive and so the city attorney or the League are both good resources for Councilmembers or Staff who have questions about the Open Meeting law.
- Use Staff to disseminate information to fellow Councilmembers since the Open Meeting Law does not apply to Staff and Council should not use reply all to emails.
- Understand that, even though the Open Meeting Law includes exceptions for social gathering or League trainings (as long as elected officials are not discussing official city business), the Council still may find it beneficial to avoid the public scrutiny that often accompanies elected officials gathering together at social gatherings.
- Be mindful that, when holding a special meeting (which includes a workshop noticed as a special meeting), the meeting must stick to the topics included on the noticed agenda and not go beyond those topics.

- Understand that closed meetings are common, but the process on how to close a meeting and the reason to close a meeting are very specific under state law. As a result, the League encourages Councils to work with their city attorney.

Recommendations

- Listen to each other, and truly want to understand the underlying interests of the people with different opinions. This means “listening with curiosity” and includes asking clarifying questions without using accusatory language (avoid “you always” or “why do you”). One way to ask questions is “tell me more about...” or “help me understand” or “what information do you have that I am missing”.
- Staff and Council should work together to better understand each department’s roles and extent of duties. Consider having a workshop or goal setting meeting that provides time for Council to set priorities for the city.
- Adopt a common practice for communication between Council, individual Councilmembers and Staff.
- Distribute agenda to Councilmembers and Mayor several days prior to the packet due date for Councilmembers to have chance to review and work with Staff on desired Agenda changes or clarifications.
- Begin having City Clerk engage in a check-in with Council after the packet goes out to check for any questions Councilmembers may have for Staff or any information Councilmembers want to share with others on Council.
- Review the existing public comment policy and make it accessible to public (posted, on website, available at meetings). Enforce it uniformly.
- Discuss the use of workshops on a more common basis to be able to engage in more in-depth discussions of policy.
- Work to set priorities of the Council, whether at a workshop, a strategic planning meeting or a vision setting meeting. Understand that when new issues arise, the Council may need to revisit the list of priorities, so Staff knows which to focus on.
- Read *Difficult Conversations* by Stone, Patton and Heen and work on uncovering underlying interests in discussions so Council can reach better policy.
- Understand that the Council, as well as the Staff, likely learn and process information differently and plan accordingly. Remind yourself that everyone has their own style, do not assume the worst and educate yourself about your own triggers.
- your vote as your voice, and limit comments and debate to policy.
- Remember that even though Councilmembers have a relationship with their constituents, they should also encourage public to contact Staff directly, or use the city complaint process.
- Consider adding a “reports of” section to the agenda so public can have opportunity to hear follow through on issued raised during public meetings which Staff was asked to investigate more closely.



Thank you again for participating in the workshop. We appreciate everyone's willingness to listen and learn. Please let Pam know if LMCIT can be of further assistance.

City Council of Nowthen Summary of the Communications Workshop

Background

The Nowthen City Council met at 9:00 a.m. on February 18th with the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT) to participate in a workshop about Communications next steps. The workshop was facilitated by Pam Whitmore. The following summary is the facilitators' understanding of suggested next steps arising out of those discussions. Participants can call Pam at 612-816-7386 or 651-281-1224 directly with feedback.

Commitment

Both elected officials and staff should be commended on continuing their learning process to enhance their knowledge of how to make local government work more efficiently for Nowthen. All participants acknowledged their common interest in actively listening, building trust and working together collaboratively. As the Council moves forward together, be patient with each other and remember everyone shares a common pride in Nowthen.

The group acknowledged each individual offers the group different strengths, which allows for more creativity but, on occasion, can create some frustrations. The second workshop built on the first session, and the group arrived at the following next steps.

Next Steps

The following summary represents some key points that arose out of workshop discussions but does not necessarily represent an exhaustive list.

1. New Meeting Practices

- Begin holding a **Priority Setting Workshop** on the Thursday before the Tuesday regular meeting.
- Continue receiving the packets on Tuesday, with supporting information.
- Revisit use of standardized templates by both staff and Council for recommendations on agenda items (referred to in the meeting as "RCA").
- Email or call with questions regarding agenda items to the Clerk by Thursday morning. Council agrees to not expect immediate responses to those questions and will discuss and prioritize them, as a Council, during the Thursday Priority Setting Workshop. The Clerk will use discretion on whether to distribute questions and any answers to those questions before the Priority Setting Workshop.
- Post the packet on the website after the Thursday meeting.
- Consider including general updates from staff and/or Council on the regular meeting agenda, which would specifically provide the Clerk with an opportunity to update Council on contractors' work.
- Incorporate public kudos or time for appreciation during regular meetings.

2. Communication Reminders

- On the off bi-week (i.e., once a month), Clerk will provide an email update to Council. Mayor will email thoughts for updates to the Clerk by the Monday of the week in which

the update is going out. Clerk and Mayor will use their discretion to determine the effectiveness of this process and will jointly determine whether to replace the email practice with a one-on-one meeting.

- Continue to use a common practice of streamlining requests and questions through the Clerk. The Clerk will educate contractors about this agreed upon process.

3. Priorities/Goal Setting

Council and Staff acknowledged the usefulness of dedicating some Council and staff time to set priorities at an annual workshop. Doing so provides staff with clear direction and Council with a roadmap. The participants agreed to revisit an annual priority/goal setting meeting for current Council.

4. Roles

The group frequently discussed trust and time. As part of this, participants looked for clarity around Council roles and staff roles.

- The group spent time discussing the use of job descriptions to help provide clarity, as well as a way to define expectations.
- Council acknowledged the Clerk has discretion to delegate other duties to staff.
- All participants committed, at end of session, to the above next steps as a way to help them respect staff duties while avoiding surprises.
- Participants spent time discussing that the Council has an interest in receiving further education – possibly at a strategic planning meeting - about staff duties and projects.

Gentle Reminders:

- Listen to each other, and truly want to understand the underlying interests of the people with different opinions.
- Ask questions in a way to promote curiosity, such as, “Tell me more about...” or, “Help me understand...” or, “What information do you have that I might be missing?”
- Discuss the use of workshops on a more common basis to be able to engage in more in-depth discussions of policy.
- Understand that everyone learns and processes information differently and plan accordingly. Remind yourself and each other that everyone has their own style. Refrain from assuming the worst and educate yourself about your own triggers.
- Dialogue with clarity about policy rather than making general comments that may feel personal.
- Remember, that, even though Councilmembers have a relationship with their constituents, they should also encourage the public to contact staff directly or use the city complaint process.

Thank you again for participating in the workshop. We appreciate everyone’s willingness to listen and learn. Please let Pam know if LMCIT can be of further assistance.

CITY OF NOWTHEN

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION POLICY ON COMMISSION STRUCTURE, MEETING ORDER AND GENERAL PROCEDURE

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Planning and Zoning Commission policy is to provide a set of operating procedures for the Planning and Zoning Commission, and adhere to the established code of ethics and conduct as referenced in Section 20 of this policy.

SECTION 2. PLAN OF WORK

Upon the appointment and organization of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Commission, subject to council approval, shall exercise its powers and duties given by Minnesota Statutes 462.351 through 462.364 and conferred upon by Chapters 10 and 11 of the City Code and the performance of its duties. Subject to council approval, the plan may be revised from time to time.

SECTION 3. ANNUAL REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed annually and as needed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and any changes or amendments agreed to by a majority vote of the Commission shall be recommended to the City Council for adoption. In addition, the City Council may review this policy and adopt amendments as needed.

SECTION 4. ANNUAL MEETINGS

The annual meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be the first regular meeting ~~in the month of January~~ of each year. Such meeting shall be devoted to the election of officers for the ensuing year and such other business as shall be scheduled by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

SECTION 5. REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be held in the City Hall or other Officially Noticed location at 7:00 PM on the 4th Tuesday of each month or as publicly noted at the city offices or websites. At such meetings, the Commission may consider all matters properly brought before the Commission. A regular meeting may be cancelled or rescheduled by the Commission at a prior meeting, or by the Chairperson or the City Council. Any regular meeting falling upon a holiday shall be held on the following ~~business day~~ a date agreed upon by committee members at the same time and place.

SECTION 6. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission may be called by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson or City Council who shall designate the time, place and purpose of the meeting. Notice of special meetings must conform to the State Open Meeting Law. Written notice thereof shall be given to all members at the same time as notice of the special meeting except in the case of an emergency.

SECTION 7. QUORUM

In order for any meeting to be called to order, a quorum (one over half) of appointed members must be present. Quorum must be kept during the entire meeting in order for action to be taken on any matter before the Commission.

SECTION 8. MEETINGS AND THE OPEN MEETING LAW

In accordance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law (Minnesota Statute Chapter 13D), all official meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be open to the general public. An "official" Planning and Zoning Commission meeting is any gathering, or simultaneous communication (via email, telephone or otherwise), between a quorum of Commission members for the purpose of considering the public business of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Informal gatherings and communications such as site visits and conference telephone calls, therefore, may constitute an official meeting. The Planning and Zoning Commission may exclude the public from its meeting only in certain very limited cases identified in the Open Meeting Law.

SECTION 9. VOTING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At all meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission, each member attending, with the exception of the City Council non-voting ex official liaison member, shall be entitled to cast one vote on matters before the Planning and Zoning Commission. In the event that any member shall have a conflict of interest, as determined by the City Attorney, concerning a matter then before the Commission, he/she shall disclose his/her interest and be disqualified from voting upon the matter, and the secretary shall so record in the minutes that no vote was cast by such member. The affirmative vote of a majority of members in attendance shall be necessary for the adoption of any resolution or other voting matter. The results of any vote shall be recorded, listing the identity of the person who made and seconded the motion, and the record of the vote on the motion (identifying the vote count and, unless the vote was unanimous, the names of those voting for or against the motion).

All recommendations shall be sent to the City Council by means of written reports, minutes and Findings and Fact, and shall include the record of the division of votes on each recommendation.

SECTION 10. REGULAR PROCEEDINGS

(A) At any regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the following shall be the regular order of business:

1. The pledge of allegiance
2. Roll call
3. Meeting policy read
4. Approval/Amend Meeting Agenda
3. Approve/Amend Meeting Minutes of the Preceding Meeting(s)
4. Public Hearings
5. Other Business
- ~~6.~~ **Floor Items**
- ~~7.~~ 6. Old/New Business (if applicable)
- ~~8.~~ 7. Adjournment

The order of business may be varied by the City Staff or presiding officer, but no public hearings shall be held at an earlier time than specified in the notice of hearing.

(B) The following procedures will normally be observed for matters before the Planning and Zoning Commission, except for public hearings which follow the procedures detailed in Section 14; however, they may be rearranged by the City Staff or the Chairperson for individual items if necessary for the expeditious conduct of business:

1. Staff presents report and makes recommendation (if any).
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission may ask questions regarding the staff presentation and report (if any).
3. Proponents of the agenda item make a presentation (if any).
4. Any opponents make presentations (if any).
5. Applicant makes rebuttal of any points not previously covered (if any).
6. Planning and Zoning Commission asks any questions it may have of the proponents, opponents or staff (if any), and then takes a vote.

(C) Each formal action of the Planning and Zoning Commission required by law, rules, regulations or policy shall be embodied in a formal vote duly entered in full upon the Minute Book after an affirmative vote as provided in Section 5 hereof and need be accompanied by written findings of facts, whereas originals are filed at the City offices.

(D) Unless agreed to by a 2/3 vote of the Planning and Zoning Commission, no agenda items shall be taken up after 9:15 p.m.

SECTION 11. AGENDA AND DEADLINE FOR AGENDA

(A) **Purpose.** The agenda of a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting serves two important functions: it focuses Planning and Zoning Commission deliberations by determining what matters will be considered at the meeting,

when each matter will be considered, and the context in which each matter will be considered; and, it serves as the public's only guide to what will be considered at the meeting, how the matter be dealt with, who will participate in the discussion, and when public comment may be made. The agenda should be prepared so as to best achieve these functions.

(B) **Deadlines.** The agenda shall be prepared by City Staff and shall be closed by the end of the day on the first Tuesday of each month. The commission members will receive copies of the public hearing notice at the same time they are publicly noticed.

(C) **Submissions.** Any Planning and Zoning Commission member can place an item on the agenda by instructing the City Staff responsible for agenda preparation no later than the Tuesday prior to the meeting. No item shall be placed on the agenda unless the item is expressed in such a way as to clearly show the subject matter involved.

(D) **Agenda Additions During Regular Meetings.** Additional items may be added to the agenda at a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting subject to approval by a majority vote of the members present. The additional agenda items may be discussed, but no action may be taken if any member objects.

1. If a new item of business proposed to be added to the agenda requires staff review (such as rezonings, ordinance amendments, preliminary subdivision plans, and subdivision review procedures and guidelines), involves quasi-judicial procedures (such as a request for a hardship variance from Subdivision or Zoning Ordinance standards), or involves substantive matters of potential public interest (such as the Comprehensive Plan, or other major policies), the Commission may add the item to the agenda only for purposes of referring it to the staff or a Commission committee, or scheduling it for consideration at a later meeting (as appropriate). **The Commission may not discuss the substance of the matter or take any final action on the item except at a meeting where the item is included on the distributed agenda.**

(E) **Delivery of Agenda to Members.** At least six calendar **business** days before the meeting, the City Staff shall provide each Commission member a meeting agenda and all materials related to items on the agenda (e.g., petition, application, plans, staff report, written comments received).

(F) **Order and Form of the Agenda.** The agenda organization shall generally conform to Section 10 above. In addition, the agenda shall generally organize matters to be addressed at the meeting so as to best promote opportunities for effective public input and the timely and efficient performance of Planning and Zoning Commission responsibilities. Items of business likely to attract the attendance of many interested persons (such as those involving notice to adjoining property owners and those involving other public notice) should generally be placed early on the agenda, thereby, minimizing the time citizens must wait for consideration of the item that brought them to the meeting.

SECTION 12. MINUTES

- (A) **Purpose.** The minutes of the Planning and Zoning Commission's meetings represent the official record of the Commission's deliberations and actions. As such, they record the Planning and Zoning Commission's vote on actions and the reasons for the vote.

The minutes also communicate background on the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendations to the City Council, provide perspective on issues, and provide a historical record of Commission proceedings. Furthermore, state law requires the Commission to keep full and accurate minutes of all official meetings, and requires that those minutes be retained and be available for public inspection by any person subject to the state public records law and the city records retention schedule.

- (B) **Duties of Staff Preparing Minutes.** City Staff shall prepare minutes of all Planning and Zoning Commission meetings. The minutes shall state:

1. Which members were present and absent.
2. A summary of staff and committee reports and recommendations, applicants' presentations, public comments, and the Planning and Zoning Commission's discussion on each item.
3. The content of each principal motion before the Planning and Zoning Commission, the identity of the person who made and seconded the motion, and the record of the vote on the motion (identifying the vote count and, unless the vote was unanimous, the names of those voting for or against the motion). If the motion called for or recommended adoption of an ordinance or resolution, or the acceptance of a report, the official copies of such documents will be maintained in the files located at the City offices.

SECTION 13. RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETINGS

All meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be conducted in accordance with the Minnesota Mayors Association Rules of Order.

SECTION 14. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- (A) A public hearing is a noticed, official hearing, the express and limited purpose of which is to provide an equitable opportunity for the public to speak on matters before the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- (B) For certain matters considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission, a requirement that the Planning and Zoning Commission conduct a public hearing is prescribed by State Statute, the City's Municipal Code of Ordinances or by City

Policy. The Planning and Zoning Commission, however, may elect to conduct a public hearing, although not specifically required, if the Planning and Zoning Commission determines that due to the unique nature of the matter, it is advisable.

- (C) The Planning and Zoning Commission may neither deliberate nor take a substantive vote during a public hearing, but may ask questions for the sake of clarification of speakers.
- (D) The Planning and Zoning Commission, upon resuming their regular meeting after the close of the public hearing, may take action upon the matter discussed at the public hearing.

(E) Conduct of Persons Before the Planning and Zoning Commission

1. During all public hearings required by State law or ordinance, members of the public shall be given reasonable opportunity to speak. In order to promote meeting efficiency, the Chair may discourage duplicative testimony and may place reasonable time limits on the amount of time that individuals have to speak. Comments should be addressed to the item before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Where a comment is irrelevant, inflammatory, disruptive or prejudicial, the Chair may instruct the Planning and Zoning Commission to “disregard” the comment, which nevertheless remains in the public record.
2. During all regular and special meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the public may be present but shall remain silent unless specifically invited by the Chair to provide comment.
3. During all proceedings, members of the public have the obligation to remain in civil order. Any conduct which interferes with reasonable rights of another to provide comment or which interferes with the proper execution of Commission affairs may be ruled by the Chair as “out-of-order” and the offending person directed to remain silent. Once, having been so directed, if a person persists in disruptive conduct, the Chair may order the person to leave the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting or hearing. Where the person fails to comply with an order to leave, the Chair may then call upon civil authority to physically remove the individual from the chamber for the duration of the hearing or deliberation on that item.
4. The Chairperson of the Planning and Zoning Commission may impose additional limits or rules upon members of the public as permitted by Section 16.

(F) Additional Rules of Procedure for Public Hearings

1. **Public Hearing Format.** Public hearings shall be conducted in the following manner:
 - (a) The presiding officer calls the public hearing to order and declares the time of opening.

- (b) It is the intent of the Planning and Zoning Commission to open all public hearings at the predetermined and published time. From a practical standpoint, not all hearings can be opened at their designated time. The presiding officer may delay the start of a hearing until the business at hand is acted upon, in any manner, by the Planning and Zoning Commission. However, in no circumstances can a hearing be opened prior to the predetermined and published time.
- (c) The presiding officer shall read, from the hearing notice, the details on the hearing sufficient to provide the public a general understanding of the purpose and procedures for the hearing, and the fact that the hearing is their exclusive or primary opportunity to provide input to the city on the subject.
- (d) Staff and/or a consultant make a presentation or report on the subject matter for the hearing.
- (e) The applicant (if any) may make a presentation or report on the subject matter for the hearing.
- (f) The presiding officer asks Planning and Zoning Commission members if they have questions of the staff, consultant or applicant, if any.
- (g) The presiding officer announces that input will be received from the citizens, requesting that each speaker provide a name and address, noting any applicable time limits for comment from individual members of the public, any other applicable rules and explaining the procedure for enforcement of such rules.
- (h) After members of the public have spoken the presiding officer requests one of the following:
 - i. Close the public hearing, or
 - ii. Continue a public hearing. If the Planning and Zoning Commission votes to continue the hearing, the presiding officer shall, in consultation with City Staff, select and announce a time and date certain for the continued public hearing. No additional publication or notice requirements are needed if a hearing is continued to a later date. However, no public hearing may be continued more than once without renote and publishing the time, date and location of the hearing.
- (i) The Planning and Zoning Commission addresses the subject matter through deliberation, questions to citizens and staff, and reactions and statement of position on the subject.

- (j) If the public hearing is closed, the Planning and Zoning Commission may take action on the application before them. The Commission may formulate a recommendation which outlines the parameters under which an approval would be granted. The reasons and conditions shall be stated in the motion or resolution for approval or denial. Continuation of an action may occur in the event insufficient information is present to make a decision. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall delineate the missing information before continuing the item.

SECTION 15. OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

~~The officers of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the remaining members shall elect a Temporary Chair for that respective meeting.~~

1. The City Council shall appoint a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among the members for a one (1) year term at their first regular meeting of the year.

2. In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, the remaining members shall elect a Temporary Chairperson for that respective meeting.

3. Members shall serve three (3) year terms with one-third (1/3) being appointed each January.

4. Members shall be residents of the City throughout the term of their term.

SECTION 16. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The Chair is a voting member of the Planning and Zoning Commission and may make motions. In addition, the duties and powers of the officers of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be as follows:

- (A) Chairperson
1. To preside at all meetings of the Commission.
 2. To call special meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with these bylaws.
 3. To sign documents of the Commission.
 4. To see that all actions of the Commission are properly taken.
 5. To cancel or postpone any regularly scheduled meetings.
 6. To invoke a reasonable time limit for speakers during any public hearing in the interest of maintaining focus and the effective use of time.
 7. To provide for the selection of one or two spokespersons to represent groups

of persons with common interests during public meetings and hearings.

8. To order an end to disorderly conduct and direct law enforcement to remove disorderly persons from Planning and Zoning Commission meetings or hearings.
9. To schedule a second official public hearing meeting or other continued meeting in the event that a meeting or public hearing cannot be concluded by a reasonable hour in the judgment of the Chairperson.
10. The presiding officer has the responsibility to facilitate discussion by the Planning and Zoning Commission. This may occur in a variety of ways, including:
 - Interpret and apply rules of procedure.
 - Decide whether motions are properly made.
 - Decide whether motions are in order.
 - Decide whether questions of special privilege ought to be granted.
 - Decide when to recognize speakers.
 - Call for motions or recommend motions.
 - Expel disorderly persons from the meeting.
 - Enforce speaking procedures.

(B) Vice-Chairperson

During the absence, disability or disqualification of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall exercise or perform all the duties and be subject to all the responsibilities of the Chairperson.

(C) **Secretarial Administrative** duties to be delegated to City Staff.

1. To give or serve all notices required by law or by these Bylaws.
2. To prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Commission.
3. To be custodian of Commission records.
4. To inform the Commission of correspondence relating to business of the Commission and to attend to such correspondence.
5. To handle funds allocated to the Commission in accordance with its directives, the law and city regulations.
6. To take the minutes of all meetings of the Commission for typing and filing into the appropriate minute book by City Staff.
7. To sign official documents of the Commission and other duties as required.
- 8. To confirm member attendance for upcoming meeting and advise the City Clerk, Committee Chairperson and Consultant if quorum will be met.**

SECTION 17. VACANCIES

If a vacancy occurs among the members of this Planning and Zoning Commission by reason of death, resignation, disability or otherwise, notice shall be given to the City Clerk and Chairperson by the Secretary. City staff shall then advise City Council of the opening and upon Council approval, follow the guidelines for filling the vacancy.

SECTION 18. AMENDMENTS

This policy on rules of procedure may be amended at any meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission provided that notice of said proposed amendment is given to each member in writing at least six (6) calendar days prior to said meeting. All amendments are subject to City Council review and approval before they take effect.

SECTION 19. COMMITTEES

- A. The Chair may appoint ad hoc committees unless the Commission or City Council shall otherwise direct. The Chair shall be an additional voting member of all committees. The Chair may appoint a Planning and Zoning Commission member to chair each ad hoc committee.
- B. All committees shall consist of at least three members, except as otherwise ordered by the Commission.
- C. The majority of the members of any committee shall constitute a quorum of such committee. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, the members present may prepare reports and submit them to the Planning and Zoning Commission on behalf of the committee, in which case the report shall name the committee members who prepared it.
- D. Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed as waiving the ability of the Commission at any time to increase or curtail the duties of any committee and/or to direct or control its actions.

SECTION 20. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPENSATION

Each Commission member shall receive \$20.00 for each regularly scheduled or special meeting.

SECTION 20 21. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Planning Commission shall adhere to the Code of Conduct as follows:

Purpose

To establish a code of conduct and associated remedies that commission members agree to abide by in carrying out their duties as appointed officials. This code of conduct does not supersede any existing or future statutory or constitutional rights, but simply outlines appropriate commission expectations, behavior and interactions with each other, city staff, citizens and all other groups encountered as a result of city business, so as to efficiently and effectively develop and carry out the mission, vision, goals and established policies of the city.

Roles/Responsibilities

Meetings – The chairman presides over meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Speakers, including commission members, do not speak until recognized by the chairman.

Act in the Public Interest – Recognizing that service to our citizens must be our primary concern; commission members shall work for the common good of the people of Nowthen and not for any private or personal interest. Commission members will treat all persons, claims and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

Preparation – Commission members are expected to be prepared for commission meetings and work sessions.

Agenda Preparation – The city clerk directs preparation of draft meeting agendas. The final agenda is determined by the city clerk prior to the meeting. At the commission meeting, agenda items may be added or deleted by commission members through a majority vote.

Conduct of Members

Staff Direction – The commission is only a recommending body and shall only make a recommendation to the city council to direct staff, contract employees and consultants. The mayor and city council members then may direct city staff, contract employees and consultants only through the city clerk, as determined by majority vote.

Respect for Staff Time – If a commission member is utilizing an inordinate amount of staff time, the city clerk is required to bring this to the attention of the city council for resolution.

Interactions – Commission members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the city council, boards, commissions, committees, staff or the public.

Respect for Process – Commission member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the city council.

Use of Public Resources – Public resources not available to the general public (e.g., city staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities) shall not be used by commission members for private, personal or political purposes.

Advocacy – To the best of their ability, commission members shall speak with one voice in representing the official policies and positions of the commission. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, members shall explicitly state that they do not represent the commission or the city.

Improper Influence – Commission members shall refrain from using their position to improperly influence the deliberations or decisions of city staff, boards, commission or committees.

Positive Work Environment – Commission members shall support a positive, efficient and effective environment for residents, businesses and city employees.

Steward of City Funds – When the end of a commission member's service on the Planning and Zoning has been determined by means of not being reappointed or resignation, that commission member shall not subject the city to unnecessary trainings and mileage.

Communication

Sharing of Information – It is the responsibility of commission members to publicly share information with all other commission members that they have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process, which pertains to a topic under consideration. Whenever possible, new information or data obtained by commission members, pertinent to a topic being discussed, will be distributed through the city staff to the commission members. Upon reviewing the “new information” the commission may adopt a motion to postpone further consideration of the information until all members have had time to review and interpret this new information.

Focused Discussions – Commission members shall work to keep discussions and debates focused on the item under discussion without introducing extraneous or irrelevant information.

Request for Information- All commission members shall receive the same information at the same time when deemed ready for distribution by staff. If a commission member requests information in advance of others on the commission, the matter shall be resolved by a majority of the commission.

Coordination with City Staff – City staff should be involved when commission members meet with officials from other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure proper staff support as needed and to keep staff appropriately informed.

Citizen Questions – Commission members should refer questions and concerns from citizens to the city clerk or appropriate department director. City staff should report back to the city council on the resolution of the referral.

Confidential Information – Commission members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of non-public, protected non-public, private, and confidential information provided to them concerning matters of the city. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or private interests.

Notice of Attendance – If any commission member has knowledge or reason to believe that there will be a large or emotional attendance at an upcoming commission meeting or work session, they have an obligation to inform the city clerk as soon as they become aware of the potential situation.

Implementation

Orientation – This Code of Conduct shall be included in the regular orientations for new commission members.

Compliance and Enforcement – Commission members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that the code of conduct is understood and followed and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of the Nowthen city government.

Remedies

It is the responsibility of the commission members to police its members. When inappropriate behaviors are observed, any member of the commission or city council can intervene. If inappropriate behavior is observed, the city council will discuss the behavior at a council work session. By direction of the council, it will be determined whether:

- a. A letter is sent to the offending commission member stating that they have been found operating outside the established code of conduct, requesting them to correct the behavior identified as inappropriate; or
- b. The commission member is formally sanctioned by resolution at a council meeting.

ADOPTED this 8 day of December, 2020

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONER QUALIFICATIONS

Council Input –

They should be a resident for Nowthen for: more than a year; 3 years ??? time frame

Express an interest in why they want to serve on this committee

When selected view the training for planning and zoning videos

Be willing to attend meetings and come prepared

A plus if they've had previous experience volunteering or serving in some capacity or the city

Planning and zoning commission members should be a resident of Nowthen for at least 3 years

Must agree to training and to follow the guiding documents of city of Nowthen

Be knowledgeable of the city's Planning and Zoning regulations and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Good listening and decision making skills

Be willing to put in the time necessary to research the matters in front of the Commission

To come prepared for meetings

Planning Commissioners perform a vital role for their community. Training can increase the effectiveness of city planning commissioners and are essential for protecting the city's legal interest.

The following skills and traits are important to be a successful commissioner:

- ◆ Attention to detail, open mindedness, patience, and willingness to listen and learn.
 - ◆ Ability to work as a team and make fair decisions based on the best interest of the community.
 - ◆ An understanding of the planning process, land use issues or law, construction or development practices, and environmental or economic resources.
 - ◆ Ability to read maps and plans.
 - ◆ Ability to speak and write clearly.
-

Commitment to Community Service: Candidates must demonstrate a concern for serving the public interest. They must be willing to attend and come prepared for commission meetings as well as educational workshops, conferences, and other planning events. Look for those folks who have a good record of civic involvement and can sustain service throughout their term

Interpersonal and Decision Making Skills: Desirable candidates have strong interpersonal and decision-making skills. Commissioners that possess the following traits enhance the commission's productivity:

- ◆ Good communicator
 - ◆ Detail oriented
 - ◆ Willingness to learn
- ◆ Critical and objective thinker
 - ◆ Open minded

Planning Skills and Expertise: Planning involves numerous and complex topics, such as natural resource management and economic development. Choose commissioners that have skills and experiences that can broaden the commission's collective knowledge. Experiences with land use law, natural resources, policy development, local government, economic development, etc. Strong analytical skills (can read maps and plan proposals and can assess potential land use impacts)

Ethics: All who engage in planning must practice ethical conduct. Choose commissioners that will uphold ethical standards and do not or are not perceived to have conflicts of interest. Those involved in decision making must protect the public's interest and strive for honest and independent decision-making.

-
- Show up at meetings and arrive on time.
 - Keep an open mind and treat your fellow board/commission members, staff and everyone who comes before you with respect.
 - Listen.
 - Display good ethical behavior by avoiding the pursuit of special privileges.
 - Take advantage of training that is available (see box "Where can I go for help?")
 - Always seek to ascertain the public interest and how best to further the interests of the community as a whole.
-

Preparing for meetings – reading documents – site visits
Knowledge of the City's zoning ordinances
Good listener – keeps an open mind – see big picture
Good communicator –with the commissioners, staff and residents
Read and understand maps
Past experience

PLANNING AND ZONING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

All applicants should be prepared for a brief opening statement and be prepared to discuss the following questions at the interview meeting.

Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in serving on the Planning Commission

Do you have any particular areas of interest with regard to participating in the City (government or non-profit endeavors) other than those listed on your application?

How did you find out about this Planning Commission appointment opportunity?

As boards and commissions are public bodies, they are subject to the Open Meeting Laws; therefore, all meetings are open to the public and recorded. Do have any concerns with that?

Would you be willing to sign a Code of Conduct / Code of Ethics form?

What do you see as the vision for Nowthen?

How do you see the role of the Planning Commission?

What do you view as being the duties of the Planning Commission?

What do you think the single most important skill for a Planning Commissioner to have?

What is your knowledge of, or experience with the Nowthen 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Planning and Zoning Ordinances?

How do you view the role of internal staff, the Planner, the City attorney and City Council in terms of their interaction with the Planning Commission?

Are you able to listen to both sides of a matter with an open and fair mind, weigh the individual and make decisions even if it offends someone? Please elaborate.

How would you react if the City Council voted differently from the Commission recommendation?

Commissioners are expected to attend all Commission meetings and to arrive on time. There may be times when there is a large amount of material to read and become familiar with prior to the meetings. Are you able to commit the time necessary to attend meetings and be prepared, having read the materials provided to you?

The Council expects that all Commission meetings will be conducted in a manner that promotes civil discourse and respect among Commissioners, staff and the public. How can you contribute to this dynamic?

What do you feel is the most important contribution you can make as a member of the Commission?

Why should we select you over the other candidates?

Do you, as a candidate for the Planning Commission have a question of any of the members of the City Council?