Task Force on Community Engagement Meeting Notes: March 10, 2016

Created by Juli Fellows, Diane Miller

March 11, 2016

Contents

Executive Summary

The meeting convened on March 10, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of six members. This meeting was conducted at Leadership Austin. There was no citizen comment. The February 25, 2016 minutes were approved with no changes.

The task force **completed their recommendations on *Theme #5 – Ensure that City staff have the support, training, tools and resources to do engagement well.***

5A. Provide ongoing training to public-facing city staff who engage with the public so they can provide useful feedback and capture public input.

- There should be tiers of training by role, with the greatest depth of training being delivered to communications or community engagement-specific roles and project managers, planners and others who do Departmental community engagement. Training for these roles should include how to design and facilitate community engagement.

5B. Department heads and administrators should promote and encourage best practices in community engagement and should participate in trainings in order to lead by example.

5C. It should be equally important to every Department that the people they serve should BE meaningfully engaged and should FEEL meaningfully engaged in developing and implementing Department programs and services.

5D. Help staff reach deeper into communities and get the word out by having a database of local grassroots leaders that all staff can access. (See recommendation 1C.)

5E. All community engagement efforts should be evaluated on the basis of three factors – participant demographics mirror that of the city, all districts are equally represented and participants are satisfied with the engagement. The results of these evaluations should be part of the overall evaluation of each Department. *(Note: Communications and Public Information Office can help, as can independent third parties.)*

The group made decisions about how to organize the recommendations. They will continue to be organized by theme, with symbols that indicate the approach (technology, methods or culture), the RELATIVE cost, and perhaps something about time frames (e.g. quick to do, will take decades.) Doug will provide input on costs, Diane will do a preliminary categorization by approach.

The group will also have a separate section that lists the recommendations that they as a group feel merit special attention by Council and policy makers. Members will come to the March 24th meeting with a list of their "top three" recommendations and the group will seek consensus.

The group will also decide on March 24th if they need another face-to-face meeting. The expectation is that most of the work on the Final Report will happen electronically.

Member Attendance List

Andrea Hamilton	Koreena Malone	Navvab Taylor
Celso Baez	Mike Clark-Madison	
Chris Howe	Ken Rigsbee	

Action Items

Who	What	When
Diane	Add theme 5 recommendations to comprehensive list. Send to all members and post on Bloomfire.	3/16/16
Diane	Create a spreadsheet/worksheet with abbreviated recommendations , with a first cut at which of the three approaches (technology, methods, culture) best fits each recommendation.	3/16/16
Diane, Mike	State in the Executive Summary that focus of group wasn't just to bring in the underserved, but to broaden engagement from all people, all districts. Those who are not underserved may benefit most from the recommendations on technology and process improvements.	3/31/16
Diane, Mike	In the Executive Summary give the essential text for each recommendation, not all the details contained in sub-bullets. Put details in another section. Can the entire list of recommendations fit on a page?	3/31/16
Diane, Mike	Create a section of the report that describes, irrespective of theme, what the TF feels merits special attention – by virtue of the input received or other work of the TF.	3/31/16
TF	Hear from Doug about cost estimates for each recommendation	3/24/16
TF	Come to the 3/24 meeting with a list of the 3 recommendations (out of the entire 28) you feel merit the most special attention by policy makers. The group will seek consensus on top recommendations at the March 24th meeting.	3/24/16
TF	Decide whether you want to add a time frame descriptor to the "legend" for the recommendations, i.e. could be done quickly, very long term. If so, agree on the descriptors and how they apply to the recommendations.	3/24/16
TF	Decide whether an additional face-to-face meeting is required. Meanwhile, put a placeholder for 6-9 p.m. on Thursday, April 7th for a possible final face-to-face meeting.	3/24/16
TF	After the 3/24 meeting, feedback on the Final Report will be by email, electronic.	4/7/16

Detailed Meeting Notes

Citizen Input

There was no citizen input.

Discussion of Content for Executive Summary

- Remember that our charge is to help everyone who cares about an issue to participate, which includes not only the underserved but busy people of all types from all districts.
- Those who aren't underserved but don't find it easy to participate may benefit most from the recommendations dealing with technology and process improvements.

Discussion of Theme 5

- We want training and support to be **consistent** across all Departments.

- Training **shouldn't be limited** to those whose titles include communication or public engagement. For example, many planners and project managers do community engagement. They need to know how to design and facilitate best practices in public engagement. Staff also needs to know about ADA requirements and how to comply.

- Training should be more **systematic**.

- **Support for effective public engagement should come from the top** – Department heads and administrators and they should lead by example.

- **Culture change is the goal**. We want a city that is committed to making processes and programs accessible and transparent to the public for whom they exist.

Depth of community engagement training

City staff in specific communication and/or public engagement roles

City staff who do community engagement but have other roles, e.g. planners, project managers.

Other public-facing City staff who provide information and can gather input from the community.

Training should include how to design and facilitate best practice community engagement.

- **Consistency is a big issue**. We don't believe a "cookie cutter" approach is effective. Each Department has different community engagement needs.

- We do believe that each Department should **plan for, budget and conduct** effective community engagement.

- We want every person who engages with the City to be able to expect and receive **consistent outcomes and feedback loops** from their engagement (**consistent over time and across Departments**.)

Consensus Recommendations, Theme #5: Ensure that City staff have the support, training, tools and resources to do engagement well.

A. Provide ongoing training to public-facing city staff who engage with the public so they can provide useful feedback and capture public input.
   1. There should be tiers of training by role, with the greatest depth of training being delivered to communications or community engagement-specific roles and project managers, planners and others who do Departmental community engagement. Training for these roles should include how to design and facilitate community engagement.

B. Department heads and administrators should promote and encourage best practices in community engagement and should participate in trainings in order to lead by example.

C. It should be equally important to every Department that the people they serve should BE meaningfully engaged and should FEEL meaningfully engaged in developing and implementing Department programs and services.

D. Help staff reach deeper into communities and get the word out by having a database of local grassroots leaders that all staff can access. (See recommendation 1C.)All community engagement efforts should be evaluated on the basis of three factors – participant demographics mirror that of the city, all districts are equally represented and participants are satisfied with the engagement. The results of these evaluations should be part of the overall evaluation of each Department. *(Note: Communications and Public Information Office can help, as can independent third parties.)*

Meeting Evaluation

What we LIKED	What we would CHANGE
• This location • We made quorum! • We changed quorum. • General tone of the meeting • Ken was here. • Proud of the members for all the hours devoted to this exercise!	• Traffic was awful!