

MILFORD CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 17, 2019

The Mayor and Members of Milford City Council met for a retreat beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 17, 2019 at the Rookery North Clubhouse, 6152 South Rehoboth Boulevard, Milford, Delaware.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Arthur Campbell
Councilmembers Daniele Marabello, Mike Boyle, Lisa Ingram Peel, Todd Culotta,
Owen Brooks Jr., Douglas Morrow, Jason James Sr. and Katrina Wilson

STAFF: City Clerk Terri Hudson

The City Council Retreat was a posted public meeting, facilitated by University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration Senior Staff Members CarolAnn Wicks and William McGowan. Both Ms. Wicks and Mr. McGowan have extensive experience in working with local governments.

The overall focus of the retreat was dedicated to aligning and strengthening the Council's organizational collaboration, leadership, and decision-making.

Agenda items were as follows:

- Introductions
- Overview of Retreat Format and Purpose
- Attributes of a Successful Council
- Efficiency and Effectiveness
- The Importance of Public Knowledge

The City Council Retreat concluded at 1:58 p.m.

A summary of the retreat, prepared by IPA Senior Staff Member CarolAnn Wicks, is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

Attachment:
Retreat Report

Milford City Council Retreat Report (Draft)

Saturday, August 17, 2019

Overview

The University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) facilitated a retreat for the City Council, Mayor and staff of Milford. In preparation for the retreat, IPA conducted interviews with the Mayor, City Manager, and City Clerk and surveyed members of City Council. The retreat format utilized discussion, decision-making and doing and produced six 90-day projects for them to implement in this timeframe. The participants identified these projects as critical issues to efficient and forward-thinking city councils.

Background

IPA staff recently worked with the City of Milford to develop a strategic plan. A status update to the plan is soon to be released. The successful nature of this work generated an request by the City Manager (on behalf of the Mayor) for IPA to submit a proposal for a retreat with the Mayor and City Council focused on improving their efficiency and effectiveness. The proposal was accepted and Carolann Wicks and Bill McGowan, IPA senior fellows staffed the project.

IPA staff reviewed the strategic plan, interviewed the Mayor, City Manager, and City Clerk. Surveys were sent to all City Councilmembers. Based upon interviews, survey results and experience the facilitator team developed a retreat format centered on dialogue, decision-making and doing.

Retreat

The retreat introduction set the stage that Milford is a thriving community as an attractive location to establish new businesses with corresponding population growth. This created an opportunity for participants to consider if what works now for governance of Milford will continue to work well as the workload demands continue and the issues become more complex. The following survey results were shared:

You are proud of – Open and constructive discussion for good of town and consensus decision-making

You value – Integrity, doing what is right, respect for each other, looking at the big picture

In two years – You'd like a City Council that works as a team and not for individual power and accomplishments; respect each other's viewpoints and always focus on the best interest of the town: a City Council that shows up at efficiently run meetings with their sleeves rolled up and prepared to go to work.

Three questions anchored the retreat:

#1 What attributes does the City Council, Mayor and administrative staff need to implement the strategic plan?

#2 Given what you know about how the City Council works, are there changes that should be made to make the City Council and Committee meetings more effective and efficient to make timely decisions?

#3 As Milford continues to grow, understanding the real needs and concerns (public knowledge) of the residential and business community will be critical to maintaining Milford's quality of life. How can the City Council effectively continue to engage/listen to the public to ensure the City Council is fully informed and how will City Council use this public knowledge to further the implementation of the strategic plan?

Results

The format for the first question was of a broad introductory nature to engage participants in the discussion format and set the foundation for further exploration. The second and third question were more specific and introduced a 90-day, small project plan development. This required each small group to develop a doable project with thirty-day benchmarks. Each team identified a “nudger” who has the responsibility to ensure 30-day meetings and progress check-ins.

Question One - What attributes does the City Council, Mayor and administrative staff need to implement the strategic plan?

Participants through discussion identified Transparency, Integrity, Open Communication, Forward Thinking, Change Agents, Professional Development, Knowledge of History and Preparation.

Question Two - Given what you know about how the City Council works, are there changes that should be made to make the City Council and Committee meetings more effective and efficient to make timely decisions?

The participants developed three projects in response to this question -

Project #1 Agenda Development

The development of the agenda will be a collaborative effort between the City Council, the Mayor, City Manager and the City Clerk. The Mayor will have approval of the final agenda.

- 30 Days –
 - Review city charter to determine who in city government is responsible for creating and finalizing the agenda. *Note: Archie has completed this review. City Clerk, City Manager and Mayor are responsible for creating the agenda. It does not include Councilmembers.*
 - Determine what changes could be made to improve efficiency of each meeting by modifying the type and number of agenda items per meeting

- 60 Days –
 - Based upon city charter requirements, develop streamlined process for creating the agenda
 - Create a schedule for finalizing the agenda in order to comply with FOIA requirements to post the agenda 7 days prior to City Council meetings
 - Discuss proposed changes to the agenda preparation process, review and finalization with full City Council

- 90 Days –
 - Implement new agenda process
 - Seek feedback from Councilmembers on effectiveness of changes

Responsible Team: Archie Campbell (Nudge), Dan Marabello and Mike Boyle

Project #2 Management of Meetings – Maintaining Momentum

- 30 Days –
 - Identify opportunities for professional development such as FOIA
 - Investigate how and when training can be provided
- 60 Days -
 - Mayor and City Council to visit other City Council meetings to observe structure
 - Based upon observations of these other Council meetings, determine if implementing Roberts Rules of Order are appropriate
 - Identification of roles/responsibilities of elected officials, city manager and clerk, etc.
 - Determine what additional training needs may be needed
- 90 Days –
 - Hold all accountable for better management of meetings
 - Take necessary intervention steps if necessary

Responsible Team: Terri Hudson (Nudge), Lisa Peel and Katrina Wilson

Project #3 Use of a Workshop Meeting Format

- 30 Days –
 - Discuss types of items that should be directed to a Workshop Meeting
 - Develop and present concept to full City Council
- 60 Days –
 - If acceptable to City Council, implement Workshop Meeting
- 90 Days –
 - Look back to assess the effectiveness of the Workshop Meeting format including the types of items chosen for discussion at these meetings

Responsible Team: Todd Culotta, the Nudge, Jason James and Owen Brooks

Question Three - As Milford continues to grow, understanding the real needs and concerns (public knowledge) of the residential and business communities will be critical to maintaining Milford's quality of life. How can City Council effectively continue to engage/listen to the public to ensure the City Council is fully informed and how will City Council use this public knowledge to further the implementation of the strategic plan?

The participants developed three projects in response to this question -

Project #4 Live Streaming of City Council Meetings

- 30 Days – Introduce the initiative and outline the idea; analyze and review technologies
- 60 Days – Present technology and policy for City Council approval
- 90 Days – Go live with first streamed City Council meeting

Responsible Team: Todd Culotta (Nudge), Mike Boyle, Doug Morrow and Archie Campbell

Project #5 Benchmark of Strategic Plan – publicly sharing accomplishments and areas to refocus

- 30 Days –
 - Revisit strategic plan and request benchmark reports from Department heads
 - Review results from recent public survey
- 60 Days –
 - Review benchmarking reports
 - Disseminate through social media and press packets the strategic plan accomplishments
 - Refocus energy on strategic plan by setting agenda priorities
- 90 Days –
 - Pilot a community newsletter as a new communications tool
 - Include in utility bill to save on postage cost

Responsible Team: Lisa Peel (Nudge) and Dan Marabello

Project #6 Town Hall Meetings

- 30 Days –
 - Clarify the requirements for holding town hall and ward meetings
- 60 Days –
 - If permitted, meet to discuss logistics of meetings
 - Discuss with full City Council
- 90 Days –
 - If supported, establish a schedule with Department representatives, topic leaders
 - Advertise meeting details to the public
 - Topic will dictate the venue

Responsible Team: Jason James, the Nudge, Terri Hudson, Katrina Wilson and Owen Brooks

Recommendation

Appoint a Chief Doing Officer. This individual will schedule a thirty-day session with the nudgers to compare progress. The meeting does not have to be long but serves as connective tissue and learning opportunity as each project proceeds through its 90-day milestones. A Thirty-day discussion format is attached.

Milford City Council 30/30 Meeting Form

Date			
Opportunity			
Project			
Attendees			
Previous 30 Days	What have we each learned (new information, insights, etc.) over the last 30 days while performing our action items?		
	Did anything that was to have been done over the last 30 days NOT get done? If not, does it STILL need to be done? If “yes,” how will it get done?		
	Does our proposed course forward still make sense? Any course corrections need to be made considering what we’ve learned over the last 30 days? Do our dates (guideposts, etc.) need adjusting?		
(Over)			
Next 30 days	Now...what will each of us do over the NEXT 30 days – who will do what, by when, and what is the deliverable?		
	Who	What	When

Next 30/30	When, where, and how will we get together the next time (in about 30 days)?		