

**Council of the Village of Yellow Springs
Retreat Minutes**

Antioch University Midwest Room B102

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

President of Council Brian Housh called the meeting to order at 8:04am.

ROLL CALL

Present were Housh, Marianne MacQueen, Judith Hempfling, Kevin Stokes and Lisa Kreeger. Also present were Village Manager Patti Bates and Assistant Village Manager Melissa Dodd, Solicitor Chris Conard and Solicitor Jennifer Grewe.

COUNCIL RETREAT SESSION

The retreat followed the schedule provided, and included the following discussions:

Check-in with Council Members & Staff.

During the check-in, Dodd identified feeling overwhelmed with Council requests for follow up on proposed projects and with major projects now underway. She noted the list of projects she is responsible for as well as her full-time role as Finance Director. The suggestion was made that Council proposals be triaged following the meetings, with a careful eye to staff workload, and then placed on the agenda within an appropriate time frame.

A further suggestion was made that every project have an action plan associated with it which identifies who is responsible for completion of which steps, and with a clear timeline.

Conard concurred with the heavy workload comments, noting that every year brings at least one unexpected project which adds significantly to his work commitment, and that these eventualities need to be accommodated.

With an eye to helping the process, Conard suggested that he provide a Solicitor's Report at each meeting.

In the same vein, Housh noted his commitment as President to holding meetings which adhere to a predictable time frame, and suggested that Board and Commission reports be delivered in written form, with only highlights presented orally. This suggestion was met with mixed response.

Council Responsibilities to Citizens/Staff/Commissions.

Council members discussed their responsibilities with regard to representing citizens well and fully. The organizational chart was looked at and discussed briefly.

Staff noted that they interact with and respond to citizens daily, and that this comprises a significant part of their responsibilities.

Discussion of Council Roles & Interests vis-à-vis Boards & Commissions.

Council members talked about which boards and commissions might be a good fit for them, given interests and skills.

Project Management (e.g. relationships among staff, boards/commissions & consultants), Board/Commission Role in Accomplishing Council Goals (e.g. process to move board/commission work to staff & Council), Board/Commission Effectiveness.

This topic comprised the bulk of the meeting, addressing a number of aspects of Council relationships to boards and commissions.

Council discussed best practice with regard to Council members serving on or chairing a board which contains a close friend or family member, and while the topic was left open, MacQueen and Housh indicated that a review of the Guidelines for Commissions and Committees might be in order.

Council discussed how to address perceived breaches of ethical conduct by board or commission members.

MacQueen and Housh noted that they are continuing work on updating the Public Service

Values sheet for board and commission members, and that this can strengthen training and awareness of these issues.

A suggestion was made that a step by step process be put in place whereby board and commission members can express concerns or complaints about the board or about member behavior such that these can be more readily and effectively addressed.

The point was made that concrete actions or consequences for breaches have not been determined.

2017 Goals Review & 2018 Opportunities/Concerns.

MacQueen led a discussion of 2017 goals, with Council members, the Village Manager and Assistant Village Manager providing insight as to why they believed each had been successful or not.

It was identified that those goals with clearly defined steps, and which had strong leadership seemed to fare best.

It was noted that several goals were broad in scope and would likely proceed more efficiently if they were separated into two goals.

Council discussed how best to capture citizen input regarding priorities for 2018 goals.

Housh provided information regarding a survey tool and stated that he would develop this further.

The suggestion was made that each goal have a board or commission assigned to it to ensure a higher level citizen involvement and input.

Council determined that the first meeting in February will focus in part on 2018 goals.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:13pm, Stokes MOVED TO ADJOURN. MacQueen SECONDED and the MOTION PASSED 5-0 on a voice vote.

Brian Housh, President

Attest: Judy Kintner, Clerk of Council