

CITY OF CORVALLIS
Public Participation Task Force
Minutes
March 27, 2014

Members Present:	Kent Daniels, Chair; Annette Mills, Vice Chair; Lee Eckroth; Richard Hervey; Penny York; Rocio Munoz; Emily Bowling; George Brown
Members Absent:	Brenda VanDevelder, Mary Beth Altmann-Hughes, Becki Goslow
Staff:	Mark Lindgren, Scribe
Visitors:	Stewart Wershow

<u><i>Agenda Item</i></u>	<u><i>Key Discussion Points</i></u>	<u><i>Action or Information Only</i></u>
1. Check in, introductions, review ground rules (Chair)		Daniels said future weekly work sessions would be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Madison Avenue Meeting Room; except for public meetings and the April 17 th meeting at the Parks Dept. Admin Building in Avery Park.
2. Review Agenda (Chair)		
3. Continue discussion; Plans for April 28 public meeting	<p>Daniels reported PPTF was still within its budget for 11 more meetings. He related that Altmann-Hughes found recorders for those meetings.</p> <p>The Neighborhoods USA conference is in Eugene on May 21-24, at a cost of \$225 per person; he and a Development staffer will attend, and he'll investigate the City subsidizing a couple more people to attend.</p> <p>Munoz said that there would be people at the April 28 meeting who didn't speak English, and suggested a bi-lingual presentation, with two languages on a single screen.</p>	

	<p>Daniels related that VanDevelder has a PowerPoint similar to what was used at the January meeting, which can be updated. Mills suggested using the same format. Mills suggested the agenda include “We will be presenting draft recommendations.”</p> <p>Bowling related VanDevelder was proposing “Connected Communities: Part II,” or “Continuing Our Conversation” as a name.</p> <p>Bowling said RSVP’s needs to go out very soon. York proposed posting it at the City website. Bowling noted the group had decided to send out notices more widely to more distribution lists. Eckroth said members posting to Facebook could provide additional exposure.</p>	
<p>4. Continuing discussion: review of TTF recommendations and plans to reformat into a draft document for distribution prior to the next April public meeting.</p>	<p>Hervey estimated that his work group needed two or three more meetings.</p> <p>Daniels said initial drafts from two work groups need to be formally accepted, except Boards and Commissions; there would be further refinements. The full PPTF needed to accept the Boards and Commissions draft before it is sent out to staff.</p> <p>Mills related she heard from the Council the need for rationales or explanations for any re-organization recommendations, and to acknowledge that there is already a good level of participation.</p> <p>Mills said the group needs to include</p>	<p>There was consensus to delete asking for a Council Goal to accomplish robust Registered Neighborhood Groups (RNG) programs for the city.</p>

	<p>findings on what other communities are doing beyond what Corvallis is doing.</p> <p>Daniels said if CCI is re-instituted, it will require staff support; he estimated that all the recommendations, if implemented, would take roughly a half-time position. York said changing the way minutes are done will reduce those costs by half, and standing committees' review of committee work plans will also reduce costs. Eckroth added that goal setting will also save time and money.</p> <p>Mills advocated using a consistent format throughout the report, and having it be readable, with main recommendations jumping out. Bowling cautioned that with different types of information, it probably won't be entirely consistent.</p> <p>Munoz suggested prioritizing guiding principles. There was discussion on the first recommendation, on ways to create a warmer, more welcoming environment for public testimony. Daniels suggested adding e) Public testimony guidelines for community members.</p> <p>Hervey suggested asking elected officials, key City staff, and appointed leaders to specify the best way to contact them that will ensure a response.</p> <p>Discussion occurred on re-ordering the Diversity section. Bowling highlighted improved outreach on advisory board position vacancies.</p>	
--	---	--

Munoz said the recommendation is for the Council to research how to make the website more user-friendly. Hervey said the website just got a major rework; PPTF needs to make specific recommendations, and give examples. York said the site was hard to search and retrieve documents. Daniels said there were no links on the home page about neighborhood groups or boards and commissions. Brown highlighted the West Linn site.

York said she'd heard a survey should be conducted to help improve gender balance on the Council and to learn obstacles to diverse representation in all levels of government. Daniels suggested outreach and publicity on the process for selecting boards and commissioners; Eugene has an online application form. He suggested looking at the City of Eugene's budgeting process.

Bowling noted "Public Participation 101" overlapped "Civics 101;" there was discussion on changing the name.

Mills said the list of acronyms needed to be added.

York suggested "A recommendation is to post the Guiding Principles on the City webpage, along with ways to implement the principles."

Bowling reported the current draft from her work group had incorporated most

	<p>comments but was similar to the last draft; members commented on it.</p> <p>In discussion on RNGs, Bowling stated the City should provide free meeting space; that should be part of the budget. York cautioned that there could be resistance to providing funding in the coming fiscal year, given how late it is in the process and how tight the budget is.</p> <p>Mills suggested clarifying to ensure that every part of the city be within a neighborhood association. She noted that some neighborhood associations had used Neighborhood Empowerment Grants (NEG) to fund their activities; Bowling added the hope was that every RNG would have access to a modest amount of funds. Mills said Neighborhood Empowerment Grants need to be more clearly differentiated from the proposed “small RNG budgets.”</p> <p>Brown related that West Linn provided umbrella non-profit status for neighborhood associations, thus allowing them to apply for grant funds. Daniels added that a separate (non-City) Eugene non-profit provided the same umbrella function. Mills said that that would be a huge benefit, but wasn’t sure if the City should have role in establishing that, and suggested contacting Eugene and West Linn. Wershow emphasized that liability insurance and records keeping were a big issue for non-profits.</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>Under the section Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors, Bowling noted having a website was one of the top three issues of neighborhood group participants on the recent survey. It is very common to have transitions where leadership leaves town and takes the expertise, leaving a group to flounder. Mills disputed that the City had the responsibility to help neighborhood groups to set up their websites, which are now cheap and easy.</p> <p>Mills expressed concern about not yet engaging boards and commissions whose groups would be sunsetted under recommendations. Daniels replied that something will be sent out to all boards and commissions next week asking for comments, so it can be re-drafted before April 18 and then taken to the public meeting. He added that the recommendations wouldn't affect most boards and commissions, and even with those, a larger, more productive group would be formed.</p>	
<p>5. Visitor's comments, ideas, suggestions</p>	<p>Stewart Wershow suggested including faith community contacts as a way of expanding noticing on openings on commissions. He suggested consulting the City Attorney about whether neighborhood groups, as they take on more with the City, would come under public records and public meeting law. He suggested having hard copies of PPTF drafts for the audience at future meetings.</p>	<p>Daniels will make hard copies of PPTF drafts for the audience at future meetings.</p>
<p>6. Continuing discussion #5 above</p>		

7. Timeline, responsibilities and roles for PPTF and others for critical path from May 5 to Dec. 31 2014.		
8. Check-out: Was time used efficiently? Was everyone prepared? Everyone heard? Meeting process okay? Can we do better? Agenda for next meeting?	Daniels said the April 3 meeting would focus mostly on boards and commissions. Mills asked if there was any way to quantify efficiencies; York replied that that was part of the next agenda. She suggested work groups consider phasing and prioritizing.	
9. Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.	