Establishing Effective City Council and City Management Relationships
Welcome to Your New Role

- Congratulations!!
- An Honor and a Responsibility
- Not Necessarily an Easy Adjustment
- It Takes Time and Effort
Session Overview

- Welcome and Introductions
- Establishing appropriate roles, purpose, communication and mutual respect build a foundation for effective governance
- Elements of successful City Council/City Manager relationships
- Strategies and best practices to strengthen communication, relationships and a cohesive Council/Manager team
- The Mayor and City Manager’s Perspectives- Panel Discussion
- Audience Q & A
Panelists:

- Hon. Ed Waage, Mayor, Pismo Beach
- Jim Lewis, City Manager, Pismo Beach
- Moderator: Pat Martel, ICMA West Coast Regional Director, Retired City Manager
Good Governance is About...
Governance Requires Building Relationships Through:

- Effective leadership by the Mayor and City Council
- Responsive management and leadership by the City Manager
- Meaningful communication: honest, direct, respectful, proactive
- Understanding roles and fulfilling expectations
- Fostering mutual respect and building trust
- Ethics
Attributes of High Performing Councils

- True partnership between Members, City Manager and staff
- Clarity and respect for roles and responsibilities
- Civility and respect for all
- Conduct effective meetings
- Hold each other and City Manager accountable
- Practice continuous learning
Elements of Successful Council/Manager Relationships

- Mayor, councilmembers and city manager develop a sense of team, working together in furtherance of common purpose.
- The team values diversity of leadership style and perspective.
- Clear and mutual understanding of respective roles, responsibilities and stated expectations.
- **Develop and sustain effective communication** between the chief executive and governing board.
- Trust is a crucial characteristic in a successful relationship and **communication is essential for fostering trust**.
# It’s All About Communication

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<tr>
<td>![People Icon]</td>
<td>Make time for council/manager conversations and meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>![Message Icon]</td>
<td>Clearly define communication expectations</td>
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<td>![Checkmark Icon]</td>
<td>Communicate consistently and equitably</td>
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<td>![Graph Icon]</td>
<td>Baseline information provided to all</td>
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<td>Clear guidelines for council/staff communications</td>
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Final Thoughts on Communication

- Delivering “bad news”
- Reestablishing communication expectations whenever the council changes
- Poor communication often cited as cause of city council dissatisfaction with city managers

- **Effective Communication = Trust**

  Trust = A Successful Relationship
Mayor’s Role

Councilmembers should meet with the Mayor routinely to discuss your ideas or concerns.

The Mayor works closely with the city manager to move council goals forward, anticipate issues on the horizon, and manage the action of the council meetings.

All of this works most effectively if the Mayor understands council concerns and shares this feedback with the city manager.
Councilmembers Should

• Meet routinely with the City Manager to establish a close working relationship

• Understand that the City Manager can be your greatest asset in reaching your goals

• Ask the Manager, not staff, when you want to get things done (it’s about accountability)
Councilmembers Remember

• The Mayor and Council hold the city manager accountable for achieving Council goals and implementing directives
• The Governing Board provides direction to the city manager and he/she directs staff- simple chain of command
• You cross the line when you start to direct staff to work on projects
• Refrain from public criticism of the city manager or staff- discuss your concerns privately
# City Manager Commitments

<table>
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<th>Support</th>
<th>Support the entire governing board to be productive and successful</th>
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<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Help each councilmember to succeed as an effective elected official</td>
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<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>Work collaboratively to keep the council focused on priorities and make progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guide and Develop</td>
<td>Guide and develop staff and organizational culture</td>
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<td>Engage</td>
<td>Engage the community to build trust and confidence in local government</td>
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Successful Council/Manager Relations Delivers Positive Results

- Organizational effectiveness
- Mutual success and fulfillment
- Positive staff morale
- Heightened accountability
- Enhanced community confidence
- Successful community outcomes
Contacts

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- Jim Lewis, City Manager, Pismo Beach
  JLewis@pismobeach.org
- Pat Martel, ICMA West Coast Regional Dir.
  pmartel@icma.org
Organizational Resources:

- Cal Cities: cacities.org
- ICMA (International City/County Management Association): icma.org
- ILG (Institute for Local Government): ca-ilg.org
RESOURCES


Additional Resources


