

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RETREAT

JANUARY 12, 2007

A Board Retreat was held at the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club in Port Charlotte, Florida. The following members were present: Chairman Loftus, Commissioner Duffy, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner D'Aprile, and Commissioner Moore. Also in attendance were Assistant County Administrator Shoemaker, Assistant County Administrator Baltz, County Attorney Knowlton, and Deputy Clerk Mitchell. The meeting was called to order at **9:10 A.M.**

The morning portion of the retreat did not include any directors or department management personnel. Facilitator Jerry Keenan explained the goal for the morning portion was improved communications, goals for 2007, and topics to discuss when staff personnel joined them later.

Recess for lunch: 12:10 PM - 1:15 PM

The following staff attended the luncheon and afternoon portion: Andrew Baker, Becky Boval, Victoria Carpenter, Jim Evetts, Laura Kleiss-Hoeft, Magali Kain, Tom O'Kane, Paul Payette, Jeff Pearson, Joyce Ross, Raymond Sandrock, Jim Thomson, and Linda Yarchenko. A summary of the discussion topics was prepared by Mr. Keenan and is attached for reference.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 4:30 P.M.

Signature on file in Commission Minutes
Chairman Loftus

ATTEST:

**BARBARA T. SCOTT, CLERK
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND
EX-OFFICIO TO THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**By: Signature on file in Commission Minutes
Deputy Clerk**

/ksm

Meeting Notes
Charlotte County Commissioners' Retreat
January 12, 2007

I. Initial Topics

Meeting Objectives

- Discuss BCC interactions and communication
- Agree upon goals for Charlotte County for 2007

Additional Objectives Added by BCC

- Work as a team
- Be honest with each other and speak up

Overview of Pre-Calls

The following was presented to the Commissioners as an overview of trends noticed in pre-session calls by the consultant:

- Improve efficiency in communication
 - Ensuring equal air time
 - Focused content in commentary
- How to deal with “ruffled feathers” when they get ruffled?
- Our communication patterns as seen by citizens
- Communication with staff
 - Level – what’s appropriate?
 - Perceived staff reticence to communicate with BCC

Stages of Team Development

The stages of team development were presented and discussed as a frame for some of the challenges that the BCC may be experiencing:

Forming: team comes together initially

Storming: interpersonal conflict as team is trying to coalesce

Norming: behavioral norms are established, either formally or informally

Performing: team functions cohesively

II. Communication

The communication discussion focused on communication three ways:

- Communication between BCC members
- Communication with staff
- Communication with citizens

Communication Challenges

The following challenges to easy communication were identified:

- Legal requirements (e.g. Sunshine Law)
- Frequency of opportunities
- Formal vs. informal
- Plain English and the use of acronyms
- Remembering that we are speaking with the Public (as relates to Plain English)
- Newspapers' slant

Dealing with BCC Differences in Opinion

The Commissioners identified the following behaviors to use when disagreeing with one another:

- Don't hold a grudge
 - Inhibits the work of the BCC
 - Creates a negative image to the public
- It's OK to disagree and be passionate, but...
- Need to be professional and respectful
- Use public interest as a focus and litmus test to come to a conclusion when we disagree
- After a binding vote, support the will of the BCC publicly. It's OK, though, to state a differing position if the issue has not been finalized
- It's OK to admit when you're wrong
- Let it go...
- Focus on the facts, not the person
- Manage air time effectively with focused commentary

Actions to Improve Communication

The following actions were agreed to:

- Improve communication with Staff
 - Create safety for the staff member – don't chastise anyone publicly and ensure that the individual is protected from retribution
 - Correct staff behavior through Bruce or Jeanette, not directly
- Route the draft minutes from committee meetings to Commissioners to ensure rapid dissemination of information
- Have meetings on topics (initial list of topics follows)
 - Meeting with BCC, administrators, and relevant staff for topic at hand (including all required levels within a department)
 - Information sharing is OK, providing direction to staff is not
 - Limit topics to a few of upcoming importance
 - Agenda is owned by the BCC
 - Individual meetings between BCC and department heads is still OK

Topics for New Meeting

- Comp plan
- Water supply and authority
- Interactive process with community
- Sales tax extension
- Funding for roads
- Sustainable affordable housing
- Corridor studies/manage growth
- Commission vision
- Homeless
- Taxes, budget
- Density and height restrictions

Morning Review for Directors

A review of the morning session on communication was conducted with the Directors upon their arrival. This review resulted in the following suggestions:

- Provide clarity to staff on what was voted on
 - What are the specific actions to be taken?
 - Was it a consensus?
 - What follow up is required
- Simplify the content and use plain English when presenting to the BCC – avoid acronyms
- Respect existing rules for use of PowerPoint presentations
- Post an updated agenda on the Web

III. 2007 Goal Development

Goals as Presented to BCC

1. To increase and enhance the organization's and Charlotte County's productivity and performance
2. To enhance and improve customer satisfaction
3. To positively change the image of government
4. To be recognized as a community leader in quality of life issues
5. To improve Charlotte County government's morale and employee Satisfaction

Goals as Revised by the BCC

(Revisions are noted in blue.)

1. To increase and enhance the organization's and Charlotte County's productivity and performance
2. To enhance and improve customer satisfaction
3. To positively change the image of government
4. **To be a community leader in quality of life issues**
5. To improve Charlotte County government's morale and employee Satisfaction
6. **To improve and enhance internal and external communication**

Group Discussion of Each Goal

1. To increase and enhance the organization's and Charlotte County's productivity and performance.
 - a. Reduction of taxes = increase in productivity
 - b. Build and maintain infrastructure
 - i. Permitting and information
 - ii. Hotel development
 - iii. Standardization
 - iv. Based on business processes, not technology capabilities
 - c. Smart growth
 - d. Citizen experience process mapping and improvements carried out by employees
 - i. Map end-to-end processes through the eyes of the citizen
 - ii. Work cross-functionally
 - iii. Eliminate stumbling blocks
 - iv. Train the BCC on the improvement process
 - v. Ensure that a balance is created between operations and improvement efforts so that all resources aren't drained by process improvement
 - vi. Create a learning organization
 - e. Talent development
 - i. Develop leadership competencies
 - ii. Create rewards and recognition programs with employee input
 - f. Ad hoc committees of citizens
 - g. Accelerate economic and tourism development
 - h. Public-private partnerships
 - i. Eliminate the disclosure of available budget in the bid process

2. To enhance and improve customer satisfaction
 - a. Analysis of what's happening using comprehensive and structured benchmarking
 - i. Identify metrics
 - ii. Methodology TBD – maybe Sterling
 - b. Consistency in processes
 - i. Accountability
 - ii. Interpretation of ordinances
 - c. More reasonable
 - d. Build awareness of who/what this government is all about
 - e. Capitalize on good
 - f. BCC consistent on decisions within a larger context
 - g. Define base level of services provided by county
 - h. Exceeding expectations, increase productivity and performance, increase communication to the public, be respected for competence, build BCC reputation
 - i. Create processes for citizen interactions

- i. “Charlotte Assembly” within the short term
 - ii. Town hall meetings (varying levels of agreement to this)
- 3. To positively change the image of government
 - a. Increase level of understanding and support from citizens
 - i. Market county
 - ii. Market services
 - b. Identify and implement best practices for town hall meetings
 - c. Education of citizens
 - i. Legal requirements
 - ii. Lowest bidder requirements
 - iii. Steps in getting buildings approved
 - iv. Close loop on suggestions from citizens
 - d. Eliminate a posture of blame
 - e. Demonstrate productivity
 - f. Improve communications
 - i. American/Charlotte Assembly
 - ii. Leverage TV-20
 - 1. have shows on departments
 - iii. Shows with individual Commissioners speaking about a particular hot topic
 - iv. Newspaper columns
 - g. Human face
 - h. Commissioners road show – appear at malls, etc.
 - i. Events at the stadium
 - j. Habitat for Humanity type events
 - k. Let community know what we’re going to do
- 4. To be a community leader in quality of life issues
 - a. Protecting the harbor
 - b. Safety = police, fire, EMS
 - c. Protect the “feel” of certain neighborhoods
 - d. Manage taxation so that people don’t leave the county
 - e. Health and human services
 - f. Proactive in planning
 - i. Increased density
 - ii. Mixed use community
 - g. Good growth management
 - i. Business and economic development
 - ii. Acquire a university campus
 - h. Mass transportation
 - i. Generate revenue
 - i. Raise fees for park use
 - j. Budget planning needs to include cost for maintaining operations, not just capital to build

5. To improve Charlotte County government's morale and employee satisfaction
 - a. Reward and recognition systems
 - b. Self-actualization for employees
 - i. Cutting edge programs
 - ii. "interesting work"
 - c. Raise desirability as employer
 - d. Comp plan impact
 - e. Prevent loss of institutional knowledge
 - f. Professional staff vs. frontline
 - g. Recent activities have increased morale
 - h. Supervisory and management development
 - i. Improved facilities

6. To improve and enhance internal and external communication
 - a. Improve inter-departmental communication
 - b. Provide status to the public on projects (e.g. the courthouse)
 - c. Celebrate departmental successes (e.g. Devil Rays and staff savings on infrastructure)
 - d. Create an employee challenge to find cost saving measures – have this publicized
 - e. Explain where money goes
 - f. Communicate changes and create outreach before something happens
 - g. Educate the news media
 - h. Explain loss of revenue and services from state and federal
 - i. Use the Chamber of Commerce
 - j. Participate in the Governor's common legislative lobby
 - i. BCC meets and agrees a common point of view
 - ii. Point of view communicated to Mike Grant
 - iii. Review the legislative agenda