

**NEWLY ELECTED CITY OFFICIALS'  
ORIENTATION  
ROUND ROCK, TX  
JULY 18-19, 2019**

**COUNCIL-STAFF RELATIONS:  
BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP**

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&  
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City of Roanoke, Texas



**"If the government has the capability to kill  
everybody on earth five times over, how come it  
can't do anything about mosquitoes?"**

## Flow Jokes ...



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## City Council Relations

- Each Councilmember has been given a mandate.
- There are distinctions between a “statesman” and a “politician.”
- Leave the vote in the Council Chambers.
- Respect the political vulnerability of your fellow Councilmembers’ votes/positions.

## City Council Relations

- Handle personal disagreements privately.
- Councilmembers do not forfeit their rights as a resident.
- Political instability is not to be confused with public debate.
- Consensus-building is an art form.

## Council/Staff Relations

- City Councilmembers need to be sensitive to the balance between a casual and formal relationship with City Staff.
- The authority of an individual Councilmember only rests with the role of the City Council as a whole.
- Staff's organization and structure will be detailed in the City Charter and local ordinances.

## Why Develop Goals?

- **Goal Setting . . .**

- Gives you a basic framework for action.
- Helps you spend your time more wisely.
- Gets everyone on the same wavelength.
- Gives the City Manager clear guidelines to get the job done.
- Gives you some important budget guidelines.
- Gives you an evaluation tool.

## Council Interactions – Policy Making, Planning & Goals

- Establish a routine for ongoing City Council – City Manager communications directed at proactive policy and planning initiatives.
- City Council Retreats are important for both policy/administration discussions and social interactions.
- An annual workplan or goals statement is important in developing a Council and Staff focus.

## Council Interactions – Policy Making, Planning & Goals

- It is important to recognize the value of policy statements represented in such documents as land use master plan, zoning ordinances, and operating/capital budgets.
- Be sensitive to the impact of decision making from a standpoint of setting precedents for future actions.

## Goals Setting: Pitfalls

- Overly High Hopes
- Time Commitment
- Goal Setting in the Sunshine
- Vague, Ambiguous or Far-fetched Goals
- Forcing Consensus on Sharply Divided Issues
- Undefined Roles
- Egos
- Failure to Follow Through
- Hidden Agendas

## Conclusion

- **The art of government is conducting business in such a manner as to satisfy the irritated without irritating the satisfied.**