

TRAINING: Councilors advised on best practices

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Prineville City Manager Steve Forrester all concurred that it is almost impossible to govern successfully without a stable mayor and council. They also agreed that despite the fact that everyone may have different management styles, the key point to remember is that city council sets policy and city staff implements the policy. It doesn't work, they agreed, if the city manager is setting policy or council gets involved in implementation.

Councilors and staff had ample opportunity to ask questions and get good everyday examples. They explored the difference of a procedure or action being legal and/or best-practice. They also received some very helpful tools already being utilized by other cities to assist in goal-setting and the budget process.

Forrester discussed the difference between council goals and staff goals.

"I like to keep the city council at about 10,000 feet when they are setting long-term goals. Then the department goals include the specifics necessary to meet those long-term goals," Forrester said.

He believes that goals should be reviewed quarterly with the financial report. That way, the goals and the budget are aligned. If adjustments need to be made, it can happen in a much more timely fashion than only revisiting the goals once a year.

"The budget is a living document," Forrester shared. "The staff and department head goals are the foundation of the budget each year."

Council goals are strategic; department goals are operational, according to Forrester. He also warned against complacency. Even if everything is going well, he encouraged the council and staff to continue to challenge themselves so they are always working toward continuous improvement.

Redmond's Witcosky suggested that every action taken by council should be based on an established goal. Every staff report should say what goal is being addressed. If a goal doesn't underlie the action, then either the goals are lacking and need to be reviewed, or the action shouldn't be taken.

Endicott emphasized the importance of fostering a respectful atmosphere.

"We maintain respect always. We can disagree without being disagreeable," he said.

The recommendation for Sisters by the panelists, given a new council and a soon-to-be-hired new city manager, is to set just a few high-level foundational goals this year. Sisters is in a rebuilding stance, and Endicott suggested to council their goals should go "an inch wide and a mile deep."

The council was encouraged to determine the fundamentals through extensive outreach to the community. Ask the citizens what THEY want Sisters to be and do. Do they want a push for strong economic growth? Should we focus on maintenance of what we have or go after new construction? Do the citizens want high- or low-density housing? Are they interested in seeing Sisters grow or do they want to sustain the small-village feeling that attracted them in the first place?

The visitors had a number of suggestions for increasing public outreach, from a City Academy where citizens learn how the City works, to "What's Brewing" events to share information and get feedback.

Witcosky stressed the importance of a solid relationship built on mutual trust between the city manager and the mayor. All employees are the city manager's employees and he is responsible for their actions and their management. The city manager is paid to have his/her political antennae up regarding everything that is occurring in the city. It is the manager's duty to keep the mayor informed.

Forrester believes it is the city manager's job to keep the council informed. White papers are prepared for the council containing information they need to stay informed and educated on issues.

"It's the city manager's job to keep the employees in line. And it's the mayor's job to keep the city council in line," said Forrester.

When the subject of city manager evaluations came up, Forrester said he thinks there should be two evaluations a year so that any necessary mid-course corrections can be made, rather than having a year elapse. Two evaluations a year help keep everyone focused on their tasks and responsibilities.

The overall consensus of the Council was that the two afternoons of training and discussion were time well spent. Nothing like this had ever been done before in Sisters. New councilors were generally just tossed into the fray and they had to learn, or not, on the job while being asked to make important decisions that had great impact on the City and the citizens.

Stocking stuffer hits the jackpot

On a whim, a Salem couple used their winnings from Scratch-it tickets they received for Christmas to buy a Megabucks ticket. Thanks to that spur-of-the-moment purchase, Susan Gasperini and Chris Erion won the \$4.2 million Oregon's Game Megabucks jackpot.

Gasperini and Erion usually only buy Oregon Lottery tickets for birthdays and holidays, and almost always Scratch-its. So after getting Scratch-its for Christmas, Gasperini took the winnings from those Scratch-Its and broke with their normal tradition; he bought an Oregon's Game Megabucks

ticket for three drawings instead.

By winning the \$4.2 million jackpot, Gasperini became Oregon's 258th Megabucks millionaire. The couple split the prize.

The winning numbers were 4-31-40-41-45-48 for the Wednesday, January 4 drawing. Gasperini matched all six numbers with her quick-pick ticket.

Oregon's Game Megabucks numbers are drawn every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

The couple purchased the ticket at the Safeway on South Commercial Street in Salem. The store will now receive a one-percent sales

bonus of \$42,000 for selling the winning ticket.

Lottery officials recommend that you always sign the back of your tickets with each Oregon Lottery game you play, to ensure you can claim any prize you may win. The Oregon Lottery reminds players to always sign the back of their Lottery tickets, regardless of the game. In the event of winning a jackpot, they should consult with a trusted financial planner or similar professional to develop a plan for their winnings. Prize winners of more than \$50,000 should contact the Lottery office to schedule an appointment to claim their prize.

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