

**PLANO CITY COUNCIL RETREAT**  
**June 10, 2015**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Harry LaRosiliere, Mayor  
Lissa Smith, Mayor Pro Tem  
Ben Harris, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem – arrived at 6:05 p.m.  
Angela Miner  
Rick Grady  
Ron Kelley  
Tom Harrison  
David Downs

**STAFF PRESENT**

Bruce Glasscock, City Manager  
LaShon Ross, Deputy City Manager  
Jim Parrish, Deputy City Manager  
Mark Israelson, Assistant City Manager  
Victoria Huynh, Assistant City Attorney  
Lisa C. Henderson, City Secretary

Mayor LaRosiliere convened the Council into the City Council Retreat on Wednesday, June 10, 2015, at 3:31 p.m., in Building Inspections Training Room of the Plano Municipal Center, 1520 K Avenue. A quorum was present.

**Discussion and Direction regarding Council Governance, Roles and Responsibilities and may include Discussion of Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget, City of Plano Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan and Goals.**

Mayor LaRosiliere made a brief opening statement and introduced Ron Holifield from Strategic Government Resources. Mr. Holifield discussed governance and Systems Theory principles and how they apply to governance. He spoke to effective leadership and how love of community or love of power defines the role as governance or political. Mr. Holifield advised the Council that once elected, they surrendered individuality for the collective body and when they speak it can be construed as speaking for the entire Council. He discussed the characteristics of High-Performing Boards and the quality of governance and the function as a team has more impact than tax rate in economic development recruitment. Mr. Holifield stated effective governance is: more efficient; eliminates uncertainty; held to higher standards; responsible for its own actions; disagrees without being disagreeable; and enhances the quality of decisions. He encouraged the Council to look at a twenty-year time horizon during decision making and to be a good visionary, not a politician.

The Council took a brief recess at 4:20 p.m. and resumed discussions at 4:25 p.m.

Mr. Holifield spoke to the impact of social media on governance and how little of the information in social media outlets is thoughtful or complete. He advised the Council to know the difference between a statement containing some true facts and the truth. Mr. Holifield discussed that people with an agenda or are upset about an issue attend Council meetings and the importance of listening to the entire community not just those with the loudest voices. He stated the Council must ensure the integrity of the process, consider all citizens and the future of Plano.

Mr. Holifield spoke to challenges common to all boards. He provided information regarding governance challenges as identified by Board Chairs and as identified by CEO's.

**Top Ten Governance Challenges Identified by Board Chairs**

- Engaging board in its quality oversight responsibilities
- Effective use of good people
- Finding effective staff leaders
- Conflict in points of view among board, stakeholders and management
- Loss of control to external forces
- Planning in a rapidly changing environment
- Concern over service delivery costs
- Maintaining board commitment, education and efficiency
- Board understanding of complex issues, especially financial ones
- Staff relations and communication

**Top Ten Governance Challenges Identified by CEO's**

- Board members don't know who they represent
- Board reluctant to handle quality issues
- Board confused about roles
- Board too involved in details
- Need for better Board recruitment and lowered turnover
- Board confusion over loyalty to community or organization
- Lack of Board member time to prepare and work at governance
- Continuous Need for Board Education
- Boards don't understand economic and budget issues
- Complexity of issues facing Boards – need more big thinkers

He stated the Council must focus the integrity of the process, the whole citizenship, and future citizens and city.

The Council took a brief recess at 5:09 p.m. and resumed discussions at 5:20 p.m.

The Council read and reviewed a Lewis McLain article “Looking for the Good”.

Mr. Holifield spoke to the characteristics of good boards and what they do differently.

**Personal Characteristics of a Board Which Governs Effectively**

- Doesn't seek self-worth via put downs
- Doesn't judge motives prematurely
- Respects and communicates with each other and with staff, as well as with key constituencies
- Develops loyalty to the Council/Manager team as a cohesive group
- Doesn't play “gotcha” with each other or with staff

**Organizational Characteristics of a Board Which Governs Effectively**

- Takes a broad view of complex issues – doesn't seek perfection
- Helps keep the organization focused on it's mission, vision and core values
- Emphasizes strategic planning and priority setting as a foundation for decision making
- Constantly encourages board members education and self-evaluation
- Holds staff accountable
- Willing to lead despite opposition, but with a good evaluation of the cost of decisions

He spoke to the challenges of CAVE (Citizens Against Virtually Everything) Men and Articulate Incompetents, groups that will encourage to place a greater emphasis on problems than on solutions; agree on decisions as a group, that individually you know are dumb; and abandon all beliefs, principles, values and policies in search of something no one believes in, but to which no one objects; avoiding the very issues that have to be solved, merely because you cannot get agreement on the path ahead. Mr. Holifield stated when dealing with these groups, remember those who destroy will always outnumber those who build because building is so much more difficult; it is easier to be critical than correct; fear of criticism often assures failure; and particularly defend against the most dangerous person in the community, the articulate incompetent.

Mr. Holifield discussed effective governance practices allow boards to reach decisions with a broad consensus, and within an environment of teamwork and mutual respect, and which creates within the group a broad-based sense of ownership in the process, and ultimately in the decision. He stated effective governance requires a philosophy, knowing what you want to accomplish and why and policies, knowing what you want to accomplish and how.

Mr. Holifield added effective governance also requires healthy deliberation, setting expectations, earned trust, understanding, accountability, forgiveness, excellent communication, thoughtful deliberation, and sincere humility. He spoke to the Council's roles and responsibilities of formulating the organization's mission, vision and goals; ensuring the financial health of the organization; promoting efficient and effective management and systems; ensuring quality of services; and monitoring board and organizational effectiveness in advancing the mission and in making the vision a reality.

Mr. Holifield discussed the roles and responsibilities of the Council:

**Role 1 – External Communicators**

- Establish a vital link to the community as a whole
- Reassure and educate those who think the City is moving too fast or too far or too slow or not far enough
- Act as Ambassadors on behalf of the City to all stakeholders
- Set an example by your own personal demeanor regarding how decisions are made with positive and appropriate behaviors
- Explain unpopular decisions to critics
- Protect the integrity of the process more than the integrity of your position

**Role 2 – Internal Communicators**

- Provide “reality checks” to staff
- Provide insight into the attitudes, feelings and concerns expressed by the community and stakeholders
- Effectively “listen” to what the community is saying in words AND deeds
- Act as a “compass” for staff

**Role 3 – Fiduciary Overseers**

- Monitor all relevant trends, not just current cash flow
- Understand what is important in a financial statement
- Ensure compliance with regulatory rules
- Ensure all resources are properly accounted for and reported on
- Ensure all expenditures are for the purposes intended
- Ensure that resources are properly invested and/or managed
- Ensure that systems are in place which build trust in the community and among all stakeholders

**Role 4 – Policy Developer**

- Ensure that appropriate and effective policies are in place governing all aspects of the operation of the City
- Internalize your mission statement and vision
- Challenge everyone’s assumptions
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions
- Ensure the pursuit of the mission, not preservation of the status quo

**Role 5 – Information Systems Overseer**

- Understand the significance of good data
- Understand how to use good data
- Make your decision making evidence based
- Integrate your information system into everything you do
- Remember that information is power

**Role 6 – Priority Enforcer**

- Do things right AND
- Do the right things
- You can't do the wrong thing well enough to make it the right thing to do
- Ensure resources are effectively utilized

**Role 7 – Strategic Visionary**

- Identifying your core mission or purpose
- Articulating your core values
- Deciding what you want to become
- Defining what you want to achieve
- Understanding where you are
- Determining how to get where you're going
- Deciding the price you are willing to pay to get there

The Council took a brief recess at 6:37 p.m. and resumed discussions at 6:46 p.m.

Mr. Holifield had the Council read and review the existing governance policy. He suggested Council adopt the revised Governance Guide as a body. The Council suggested the following changes (additions are in *Italics*, deletions are in ~~striketrough~~):

Page 4 – 1. Focus on and use *Mission*, Vision, Goals and Priority

Page 5 – 7. Monitor Performance

- Obtain regular progress updates/status reports
- Meet ~~quarterly~~ *annually* to review and refine direction
- Evaluate the outcome and actions, and make modifications
- Take responsibility for the actions and be accountable for the results

Page 5 – 9. Act as a Board of Directors

- Know your community – ~~view it as the “marketplace”~~
- Focus on providing policy direction
- Delegate clear responsibility to the city manager as the CEO
- Avoid micromanaging and the daily operations

Page 5 – 11. Align the City Organization

- Appoint individuals to Boards and Commissions who share Council's passion for the city and vision for the future
- Define the core values to guide “how the city should operate and be managed”
- ~~Employ~~ *Appoint* “the” ~~right~~ city manager for your city
- Hold others accountable for their behaviors, actions and results

Page 5 – 12. Share Success and Celebrate

- Communicate “Our City Success” in terms that the average citizen understands
- Use celebrations that create positive memories; that celebrate the value the city has added to people’s lives
- Recognize others who have contributed to the city’s success
- Remember people want to be associated with “~~winners~~” *success*

Page 6 – THINK ABOUT . . .

- Is it consistent with OUR *MISSION* and VISION?
- Does it contribute to achieving OUR GOAL?
- Is it a RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CITY?
- Does it ADD VALUE TO CITIZEN’S LIVES?
- Is it BEST FOR OUR CITY?

Page 9 – **Protocol 3: Citizen Service Request**

A. First Contact

Advise City Manager of *the* Request  
Council Member Notified of City’s Action  
Inform Citizen the Request has been forwarded  
Information on the Response Goes to All Council

Page 10 – **Protocol 8: Emails**

- If you Respond, ~~Copy other Council Members~~ *Advise City Manager*
- If Directed to Mayor & Council, the Mayor will Respond “on behalf of” Mayor & Council
- Each Individual has their Choice on:
  - Whether or Not to Respond
  - Method of the Response

Page 13 – Council Liaison to Boards and Commissions

1. ~~Attend First Meeting~~ *Maintain Communications with Chair & Staff Liaison*
2. Know the Purpose of the Board/Commission
3. Communicate the role of the Board to its members
4. Review Agenda and Reports
5. Serve as a Trouble-Shooter
6. Interface between Commission and Council
7. Identify Policy Changes
8. ~~Attend Meetings Periodically~~
9. ~~Maintain Communications with Chair~~

In closing, Mr. Holifield encouraged the Council to focus on four points:

1. Protect integrity
2. Focus on the next generation, not the next election
3. Focus on 280,000
4. Consistently think about building trust

Nothing further was discussed. Mayor LaRosiliere adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

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**Harry LaRosiliere, MAYOR**

ATTEST

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Lisa C. Henderson, City Secretary