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MEMO - May 26, 2011

For Board Agenda – June 7 or 8, 2011

TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Stan Biles
RE: Goal-Setting Process recommendations

Introduction

A subcommittee of the Board consisting of Commissioners Leiken and Bozievich has met to develop a goal-setting process recommendation for consideration by the full Board of Commissioners. This report summarizes the recommendations of the sub-committee.

Sub-committee process

The sub-committee held two meetings on April 28th and May 19th. The sub-committee was assisted by consultant Stan Biles, and Jennifer Inman at both meetings. County Administrator Liane Richardson participated in the second meeting.

During the meetings committee members discussed and reached agreement on various process issues. Alternatives and their advantages and disadvantages were discussed before decisions were reached. At times Stan Biles raised questions and also offered recommendations. All discussions were focused solely on process rather than substance.

Recommendations

- Before initiating discussion on goals the Board of Commissioners should first discuss and decide:
 - A "Vision Statement" for Lane County
 - A "Mission Statement" for Lane County Government
 - The key guiding values/principals that will characterize Lane County Government

The committee believes a decision by the full Board of Commissioners on vision, mission, and values/principals is important to define the end results or conditions goals should seek to accomplish. Agreement on the end condition will facilitate decision-making on specific goals. Once an organization knows the destination it is easier to make good decisions on the best methods to arrive at the destination. Without a vision, mission and values/principals it is difficult to select the goals and strategies to move the organization in the right direction and at the right pace.

- Participants in the process should include the Board of Commissioners, County Administrator, critical department directors, selected staff from the Administrator's Office and a consultant.

Primary discussion and final decision-making will rest with the Commissioners. It was felt that the Sheriff, Assessor, District Attorney and appointed department directors could provide useful input into the deliberations and offer critical background information as well as respond to impromptu requests for information or questions from the Board of Commissioners. The Administrator's staff could also be helpful answering questions and the understanding they receive by witnessing the Board's decision-making could be useful as they work to eventually implement those decisions.

The sub-committee is not recommending broader public participation at this time. It was felt that members of the Board are well informed on public needs and expectations. The cost of a public participation process at this time would not be justified given the knowledge of Board members. The subcommittee believes the Board of Commissioners is fully prepared for decision-making at this time.

- Included within the goals or values should be an emphasis upon collaboration and partnerships with public and private entities

The subcommittee reviewed the past two sets of goals adopted by previous Boards of Commissioners. They felt that neither version adequately committed the county government to inter-organizational collaboration. In the context of continued resource reductions the subcommittee felt that no matter the substance of future goals the county should emphasize collaboration with public and private organizations.

- Meetings of the Board of Commissioners on these topics should be held in the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area and away from the Public Service Building. The meetings should not require overnight lodging for any participant.

The subcommittee believes the normal business associated with the Public Service Building would distract from the unique nature of the discussion needed for the planning meetings. Yet the sub-committee was sensitive to cost. Unlike previous years when offsite and overnight locations were sometimes used for such meetings, it was felt a nearby location was adequate and would save the cost of overnight lodging.

- The process should begin between mid-June and mid-July.

Throughout the discussions the committee possessed a sense of urgency. The most recent Lane County Strategic Plan is somewhat out of date and more importantly it does not appear to be widely used for decision-making. As time has passed the original commitment to the plan has waned. Tentative dates for the first two meetings of the Board of Commissioners have been set for June 21 and July 5.

Conclusion

The sub-committee recommends this process as an efficient way to develop a new strategic plan for Lane County Government. This is a phased recommendation. Each phase will build upon previous decisions by the Board of Commissioners. Each phase creates more specificity. Phase one consists of vision and mission statements and value/principals. Phase two consists of goal-setting. Phase three will select and highlight specific strategies to accomplish the approved goals. The strategic plan document will combine all of these products and add an explanatory narrative that provides context to the reader.