

GOAL – SETTING WORKSHOP

TOWN OF PONCE INLET

APRIL 5, 2008

**Facilitated by
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INTRODUCTION

The Ponce Inlet Town Council held a Goal Setting Workshop on April 5, 2008. Ms. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida facilitated the session.

Dr. James Wright from the UCF Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences presented findings from the recent citizen satisfaction survey he conducted for the town.

The Mayor, Council Members, and senior staff then discussed the internal and external trends and issues that may impact the town in the next few years. The participants then assessed things that are currently working well in the town and things that need work.

The next part of the workshop consisted of a listing of strategic issues that are significant for the town. After reviewing the existing goals, the group added one new goal area, eliminated one goal area, and changed the title of another goal area resulting in seven goals.

The elected officials then identified objectives for each goal. The Council then designated the objectives they felt were most important for implementation in the next year. The objectives receiving the most support are identified as Tier One objectives; those of secondary importance are designated Tier Two; and all the rest of the objectives are designated as Other. This report is a summary of the discussions and conclusions of the workshop.

EXTERNAL ISSUES & TRENDS

The Council and staff discussed issues and trends that are occurring in the international, national, state, and regional environment that may have an impact on the Town of Ponce Inlet in the near future. The following external forces were identified as significant for the community:

Devaluation of dollar

Weather issues

 Natural disasters

Climate change- global warming

Fuel costs rising

All commodities- cost rising

Slow down in migration of people to Florida- boomers still move here, but slower

 Impact- tourism- more local

 Construction

More home buyers from foreign countries

Tax reform initiatives

Belt tightening

Increased competition for quality employees due to baby boomers retiring

Aging population

 More need for service

Continued water wars

More state and federal regulations- unfunded mandates

“Green” energy focus

 Costs more

Public perception of government is negative- people feel powerless

Loss of working waterfronts

Information travels more quickly

Alternate fuels

Florida legislature

 Term limited

 Knee jerk reactions

Change in presidency

Federal taxes will go up

Increase in public oversight

 More citizen involvement

 Difficult to educate and engage larger numbers (on facts)

INTERNAL ISSUES & TRENDS

The Council and staff discussed internal issues and trends that may have an impact on the town. The following items were identified:

- Continued lack of consensus on growth management issues
 - Redevelopment (rezoning) of commercial property (B2)
- Turnover in council due to 2 year terms
- Tightened funds
 - Difficult to maintain LOS
 - Temptation to balance budget on back of employees
 - Employee benefits
 - Competition
- Need to develop new revenue sources
- Strong land management and conservation plans in place- continued
- More young families
- Pressure to maintain historic preservation
- Buildout- predictable
 - More part-timers are going to become full timers
 - Population rising
- Open government
 - Lots of opportunities for citizen participation, education
- Use of internet
 - Lists
 - Misinformation
 - Over-reliance on informal communication
 - Time consuming to correct
- Challenge in maintaining good relationships with boards and committee
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Boundaries

WHAT'S WORKING WELL

The Council and staff then identified things they think are working well in the city:

Staff

Manager- balances well

Council

Respectful (of each other, staff), civil, professional, proactive, progressive

Good financial position

Live within means

Environmental protection and land acquisition program

Fruition of programs started years ago

Celebrate

Staff accessible to citizens

Good customer service

New facilities

Maintaining Level of Service (LOS)

Stormwater program

Community support for one area

Volunteerism

Active citizen participation

Community center

Positive relationship with media

Good relationship with other governments in region

Council and manager proactive

Special events

Community events

WHAT NEEDS WORK

The Council and staff then discussed areas that provide opportunities for improvement:

Divide in community regarding comprehensive plan

Reliance on ad valorem (70%)

Loss of revenue

Aging infrastructure

Equipment

Continue updating of codes and ordinances

Charter update

Districts?

Election of mayor- even year?

Building heights- rebuilds

Relationship with water and sewer provider- billing issues

Formalize IT function

Paperless agenda

Software package

Employee turnover

Aging workforce

Too many boards
 Consolidation
 Special Magistrate
Better education of citizens
Board training

STRATEGIC ISSUES

At this point, participants were asked to identify issues that are important to the future well-being of the town. The following items were listed:

Preservation of working waterfronts
Continued factual communication with citizens
Emergency management preparedness
Continue active involvement with legislature
Shore up revenue sources
Charter issues
Infrastructure needs
 Undergrounding
Volunteer participation
Sense of community
 Capturing it
 Special events
Personnel issues
 Retention
Continue land acquisition program
Continue recreation program
 Walking trails
Continue historic preservation efforts
Maintaining current levels of service
Technology

The Council reviewed the seven goal areas that had been determined in 2006 and decided to add an additional goal (public safety), eliminate a goal (long range strategic plan) and rename a goal (image to community outreach) . The Council then identified objectives under each goal. The final activity of the day was the selection of priorities. Any objective that received four or more “dots” (number of dots identified by number in parentheses in front of each objective) is considered a tier one priority. Objectives with three “dots” are tier two priorities. The rest of the objectives are listed as other. There is no significance to the order in which the goals are listed.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL - FISCAL

Objectives Tier One

(4) Continue to seek alternatives to Ad Valorem revenue sources including town assets

Other

(2) Assess and maintain reserve contingency plan

GOAL – PUBLIC SAFETY

Objectives Tier Two

(3) Assess and if feasible, augment marine component

Other

(1) Continue participation in county-wide emergency preparedness activities, report on them and makes sure all town staff are trained in their roles in an emergency

Maintain and if financially feasible, enhance level of service in police and fire departments based on citizen survey

GOAL – INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives Tier One

(4) Continue to fund replacement of aging infrastructure and equipment

Other

(1) Develop partnerships to provide beautification and streetscaping in town

(1) Advocate with Volusia County to include improvements to Atlantic Avenue in their 5 year work plan

Continue to explore the viability of undergrounding utilities

Continue to coordinate with Port Orange to reduce the number of septic tanks by extending sewer lines

GOAL – FORM AND STRUCTURE

Objectives Tier One

- (5) Review appropriate charter provisions for potential amending
- Districting
 - Building heights
 - Mayor's election (date, cycle)
 - Finance
 - Mandatory review period

Tier Two

- (3) Assess and if possible implement employee plan for recruitment and retention (salaries, benefits, staff, and training)

GOAL – COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Objectives Tier One

- (4) Review and evaluate advisory boards for effectiveness

Tier Two

- (3) Continue to enhance the image of the town and communication in collaboration with volunteer organizations and boards including special events
- (3) Continue participation with other government entities, associations (council and staff)

Other

(2) Develop policy regarding Council responses to citizen e-mails

Explore televising council meetings

GOAL – TECHNOLOGY

Objectives

Other

Explore opportunities to formulize IT functions in the town

Continue to explore additional software modules to upgrade efficiency- including paperless agendas

GOAL – GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Objectives

Tier One

(4) Continue to support historic preservation efforts

Tier Two

(3) Pursue preservation and enhancement of boat yards and working waterfronts

Other

(1) Continue funding land acquisition initiatives for conservation and public use

Update LUDC and code to match comp plan

Develop recreation master plan (sidewalks, bike path lighting and park signage)

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

Tier One

- (5) Review appropriate charter provisions for potential amending
 - Districting
 - Building heights
 - Mayor's election (date, cycle)
 - Finance
 - Mandatory review period
- (4) Continue to seek alternatives to Ad Valorem revenue sources including town assets
- (4) Continue to fund replacement of aging infrastructure and equip
- (4) Review and evaluate advisory boards for effectiveness
- (4) Continue to support historic preservation efforts

Tier Two

- (3) Assess and if feasible, augment marine component
- (3) Assess and if possible implement employee plan for recruitment and retention (salaries, benefits, staff, and training)
- (3) Continue to enhance the image of the town and communication in collaboration with volunteer organizations and boards including special events
- (3) Continue participation with other government entities, associations (council and staff)
- (3) Pursue preservation and enhancement of boat yards and working waterfronts