

City Manager's Report

November 15, 2019

These reports will be included in the City Council packet for regularly scheduled Council meetings, excluding Work Sessions. The reports are intended to be informational, covering miscellaneous events and topics involving the City organization.

This report will focus entirely upon the transition process that is currently underway for the City Manager's Office.

The First Three Months

Introductory Month

During the first part of the initial three-month period, much time was allocated to becoming acquainted with the organization and its many stakeholders. Focus was upon meeting the 'human element' of the organization while learning its culture. This included the City Council, the Leadership Team, and the Extended Leadership Team (upper-tier management). While largely introductory in scope, some philosophies regarding public service and personal management strategies were shared (i.e., collaboration, "open door policy").

During this introductory period, there were individual meetings with Leadership Team members, and of course the two Deputy City Managers, for more in-depth discussions. It was instructive to also have individual meetings with City Councilors to become more acquainted, while touching upon individual motivations for public office, personal goals and visions, issues, expectations, and so forth. These one-on-one meetings with the Leadership Team members and elected officials will continue through time.

Finally, emphasis was placed upon learning the "lay of the land" during this first month. A few tours were conducted, and much time has been allocated toward learning street names, neighborhoods, and geographical features (i.e., Grand Canyon!). More internal to City Hall, necessary changes have been pursued to accommodate an office environment that is more conducive to meetings and digital operations (less paper). Early efforts were taken to search for a permanent residence in the Flagstaff community.

Second Month

During the second month, some attention was given to streamlining the standing meeting schedule, with emphasis upon time allocation and efficiency. Considerably more focus was attributed toward preparation for City Council meetings, pending issues, and projects. Efforts were also taken to see other City offices and tour the various City facilities including Public Works, the Airport, Municipal Courts, and Police (this process will span a two-month period with many additional facilities to be toured). Meetings have been attended, in addition to standing meetings, involving the following internal teams:

- Budget Team
- Employee Advisory Committee
- Extended Leadership
- Property and Development Team
- Champions of Flagstaff
- Rio de Flag

Similarly, efforts were also taken to attend various community functions and events, with introductory meetings at the numerous entities and agencies, including but not limited to:

- Coconino County
- FUSD
- NAU
- FWPP
- NAIPTA
- Chamber of Commerce
- Indigenous Circle of Flagstaff
- FMPO
- Flagstaff Shelter Services
- Flagstaff Medical Center
- Coconino County Flood Control District
- ECONA
- CJCC
- DBA

The second month saw more interaction and discussion with the Leadership Team and Extended Leadership concerning salient issues, pending tasks and projects, organizational structures and systems. This in turn provided opportunity to share management styles and philosophies -- collaboration, information sharing, collective problem solving, empowerment, and efficiency.

Specific goals accomplished during the first two months included:

1. Introductions to the organization and to the Flagstaff community
2. Establishing a simplified and efficient meeting calendar for standing meetings
3. Becoming acquainted with community entities and agencies
4. Scheduling a fall retreat between Leadership and City Council
5. Becoming acquainted with Boards and Commissions (work in progress)
6. Developing a working knowledge of prominent issues and projects
7. Continuing to be familiarized with City strategic plans and comprehensive plans
8. Developing increased integration into problem solving and emerging issues
9. Enhancing outreach to organization (GCTV, blast emails, etc.)

Third Month

A continuation of all of the above is occurring during this third month, with an improved working knowledge and familiarity of City functions and structures, as well as a growing knowledge of our intergovernmental agencies, non-profits, business community, and various community groups. More time is being allocated to attend appointed Commission meetings when possible.

Efforts are underway to formulate potential enhancements to the organizational structure, with emphasis upon minimizing impact, maximizing efficiency, bolstering communication, and cultivating leadership development. Vertical hierarchy will be de-emphasized with more focus upon lateral collaboration between the divisions, and empowerment of the many leaders and managers within the organization. Again, efficiency will be an underlying premise.

Specific goals to be accomplished by the end of the first three months will include:

1. Orchestrating efficient and well-programmed agenda setting / Leadership Team meetings
2. Increasing assistance to the Mayor and City Council; increasing preparation for the meetings, and increasing participation during the meetings
3. Attending various Commission meetings when possible
4. Formulating organizational restructuring, with input from Leadership Team and City Council

5. Scheduling second retreat between Leadership and City Council, with focus upon relationship building, workflow, and organizational matters
6. Continuing attendance of community functions and community group meetings (focus upon service organizations, business groups, and ad hoc groups).
7. Continuing to enhance public outreach
8. Implementing quarterly check-ins with Section Heads and middle-tier management
9. Participating in staff events, celebrations, and functions
10. Becoming more personally acquainted with all levels of organizational functions, including but not limited to, scheduling ride-alongs with law enforcement, attending library functions, scheduling ride-alongs with street crews and transit, attending various parks functions and events, attending fire department functions, and the like.

The Next Three Months

A continuation of the above. Focus will shift to the upcoming 20-21 Budget, continued Priority Based Budgeting development, Rio de Flag project, hiring of new HR Director, intergovernmental workings and relationships, and the implementation of organizational restructuring.

After the first six months, the learning curve is largely complete, and the transition period is largely over. At this juncture, there should be a firm working knowledge of the community, the many issues that are being addressed, the projects, the programs, and most importantly, the people.