Lisbon Town Council
Goal Setting Workshop
Highlight Notes

Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 6pm to 9pm, Lisbon Town Hall

About the Meeting

Attendance

- Councilors
  - Fern Larochelle
  - Chris Camire
  - Mark Lunt
  - Jeremy Barnard
  - Nicholas Craig
  - JoJean Keller
  - Norm Albert
- Town Manager
  - Glenn Michalowski
- Facilitator
  - Craig Freshley
- Members of the public were also in attendance.

Objectives

- Discuss and identify the town's top 3-5 goals to be achieved in the next year.
- Discuss and clarify how we expect to work together.
- Get to know each other and strengthen our relationships for a productive term ahead.

Ground Rules

- This is a discussion among Town Councilors and the Town Manager
- Observers are welcome
- There will be no formal decisions
- We are looking for areas of agreement
- Let Craig manage the discussion
- Show what you think
- Forward focus
- Themes and conclusions now and later

Agenda

5:50 **Arrival**

6:00 **Opening**

- Town Council Chair Fern Larochelle will welcome everyone and open the Workshop.
- Facilitator Craig Freshley will explain the agenda and a few simple ground rules.
- We will do some quick introductions and a simple warm up activity.

6:20 **Goal Setting – Ideas and Discussion**

What are the 3-5 most important things – above and beyond business as usual – that the Town Council should achieve in the next year?

- Each Councilor will write down their top 3-5 answers to this question.
- We will put all the ideas on the wall, organize them, and discuss them.
- We will also do a visual multi-vote to help us get a sense or priority among the goals.

7:20 **Dinner**

8:00 **Goal Setting – Conclusion**

- Over dinner, Craig will prepare a draft statement of top priority goals.
- We will review discuss, and revise the statement however we see fit.

8:15 **How to Work Together**

- Best Practices from Other Municipalities
    - Before discussing how WE want to work together as a Council, Craig will briefly share some best practices from his experiences in working with municipalities across Maine.
- Our Expectations for Working Well Together
    - We will quickly identify what most needs improvement here in Lisbon, in terms of our governance processes.
    - We will discuss ways to make things better.
    - As time allows, we will come to conclusions about our expectations for working together productively.

8:50 **Closing Comments**

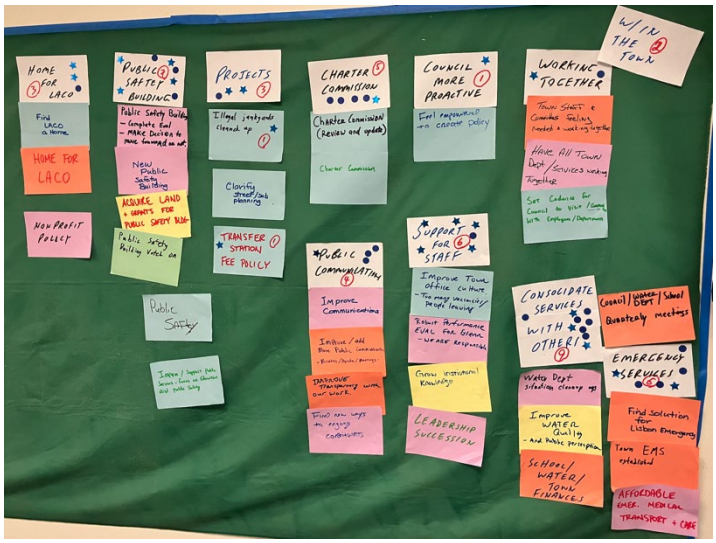
- This is a chance for each Councilor and the Town Manager to make a brief closing comment, perhaps a reflection about the workshop or a hope for the future.

9:00 **Adjourn**

What's great about Lisbon Town Government

- It's us. It's controlled by the Town.(local control)
- When people get involved and passionate, it makes a difference.
- The Departments are very cooperative. Communications here is very good.
- We come together to help each other when there's a crisis.
- Everyone is dedicated to their role.
- Our leaders are passionate about Lisbon.
- We are a service community.
- We have a lot of cultural assets.
- Never a dull moment.
- No shortage of civic engagement.
- Level of diversity among leaders – many types of diversity.
- Council form of government.

Goal-Setting



All Ideas

- Home for LACO
  - Find LACO a home
  - Home for LACO

- Public Safety Building
  - Public safety building
    - Complete evaluation
    - Make decision to move forward or not
  - New public safety building
  - Acquire land and grants for public safety building
  - Public safety building voted on

- Projects and Miscellaneous
  - Illegal junk yards cleaned up
  - Clarify Street/Sub planning
  - Transfer station fee policy
  - Improve and support public services
  - Focus on education and public safety
  - Nonprofit policy

- Charter Commission
  - Charter Commission review and update
  - Charter commission

- Public Communications
    - Improve communications
    - Improve and add more public communications
        - Minutes, agendas, meetings
    - Improve transparency with our work
    - Find new ways to engage constituents

- Support for Staff
    - Improve town office culture
        - Too many vacancies and people leaving
    - Robust performance evaluation for Glenn
        - We are responsible
    - Grow institutional knowledge
    - Leadership succession

- Working Together within the Town
    - Town staff and committees feeling needed and working together
    - Have all town departments and services working together
    - Set cadence for Council to visit with employees and departments

- Consolidate/Work Together with Others
    - Water Department situation cleanup
    - Improve water quality and public perception
    - Consolidate school/water/town finances
    - Council, Water Department, and School: Quarterly Meetings
    - Emergency services
        - Find a solution for Lisbon emergency
            - And town EMS
        - Establish affordable emergency medical transport and care

Top Goals

1. Work with Other Organizations to Consolidate Services

2. Take Steps Towards a New Public Safety Building, including Consolidation of Emergency Services

3. Support Staff Leadership Development

4. Establish a Charter Commission

5. Improve Public Communications

Specifics

- **Work with Other Organizations to Consolidate Services**
  - What
    - Get buy-in from all entities
    - Each organization understanding each other's goals
      - Perhaps an initial facilitated meeting of all members of all three boards
      - Perhaps via quarterly meeting among leaders
    - What we're headed towards: Consolidate services - such as finances/accounting – among the town, school district, and water commission
  - Who
    - Council in lead role
    - Manager in support role
    - Norm will serve as the lead coordinator

- **Take Steps Towards a New Public Safety Building, including consolidation of Emergency Services**
  - What
    - Acquisition of land – in progress – end of June
    - Study needs to be updated
      - Will cost $100k
      - Will get us to referendum
    - Get the partners together (perhaps with mediation)
      - Police – Fire – EMS
      - Perhaps a joint meeting
    - This will require clear benchmarks
    - Movement towards 24/7 paid fire fighters
    - Need to pursue grants
  - Who
    - Council set the goals for how to best serve residents with public safety and emergency services
    - Manager leads implementation
    - Manager apply for grants
    - Manager make recommendations for structural changes
    - Chris will serve as lead for the Council

- **Support Staff Leadership Development**
  - What
    - Define goals
    - Performance evaluation for the Town manager
    - Continue consistent evaluation of all employees
    - Consider incorporating a self-evaluation
    - Leadership succession planning and development
    - Training
    - Ask the employees how best they can be supported

- Who
  - Council define goals
  - Manager leads the effort
  - Jeremy will serve as the Council lead

- **Establish a Charter Commission to Amend the Charter to Make it Current and Accurate**
  - What
    - Full review with results to be determined
    - Update and align with state law
    - Perhaps include a nonprofit policy
  - Who
    - Norm wants to take the lead

- **Improve Public Communications**
  - What
    - Better public awareness of town activities
    - Better public engagement
    - New website
    - Internal public imaging team
    - Consolidate public information
    - Overall assessment of communications health, and recommendations for improvements
    - Develop a communications policy
    - Improve how we gather feedback from constituents
    - Idea: coffee with councilors
  - Who
    - Nick will serve as Council lead

How We Work Together

- It helps when we share information
  - For instance: getting agendas out in advance
  - Work through conflicts before a meeting
  - We need to have all data available for every decision

- Work with Glenn behind the scenes
  - It doesn't work well to challenge the manager IN a meeting

- When a Council member responds to a constituent by email, all Councilors should be made aware

- Works well when conversation is broadened beyond one—on-one dialogue and every Council member has a chance to speak
  - For instance, use a "round-robin" (everyone take a turn) technique
  - Each person should be recognized by the Chair before speaking

- Our Council meetings are well-run and present well on video
- It sometimes appears to the public that things are decided before discussion in a meeting

Closing Comments

- It very fun and rewarding to be a part of this group.
- The misspellings were comic relief.
- This whole process was really beneficial. Having this mediated was really beneficial.
- I learned a lot.
- Thanks to everyone for sharing.
- I hope we all feel empowered to change things.
- We got a great group here; all very committed.
- Thanks to everybody.
- This is a very unique council.
- This is all very rewarding. I never feel that this is a waste of time.
- Perhaps we should do this again mid-year. Seems to be widespread support for the idea.