

Watertown Town Council
Committee on Media and Public Outreach
Councilor Palomba-Chair, Councilor Feltner-Vice Chair, Councilor Bays-Secretary
Committee Report – May 17, 2019, 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Philip Paine Lower Conference Room
Read: June 11, 2019

The Committee met on May 17 at 5:00 PM to continue its discussion of a potential community engagement program. Attendees included Councilor Tony Palomba, Chair, Councilor Lisa Feltner, Vice-chair, Councilor Caroline Bays, Secretary, Ora Grodsky, Bill Madsen, and Larry Raskin from Watertown Community Connections (WCC), and residents Stephanie Venizelos and David Stokes. The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.

The purpose of the meeting was to finalize the plan for a community engagement program and to review the agenda for the Committee's June 23 meeting.

The group first reviewed the draft proposal for a community engagement program in Watertown fine-tuning the purpose, outcomes, and the three components of the program. Attached is the final version of the "*Plan for a Community Engagement Program in Watertown*". We then focused on the reviewing of the draft that outlined the desired outcomes, process, and agenda for the community engagement forum. The purpose of the forum is to recruit and orient the hosts and facilitators as well as elicit initial thoughts about community engagement in Town government. The group discussed how to recruit hosts using emails, a flyer, person-to-person contact, and social media. Recruiting hosts is the responsibility of the Committee members. WCC will provide refreshment and WCC member, Cecelia Lenk, will keep the master list of the hosts. Attached is the latest draft of the June 23 Committee Meeting/*Community Engagement Forum*. The Committee will finalize the draft at its June 17 meeting.

Watertown Community Conversations reported that Nancy Hammett has offered to collect the data from the forum and the Kitchen Table Conversations and report back to the Committee at a meeting tentatively planned for September.

The next meeting will be June 17 at 5:00.
The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.
Minutes submitted by Caroline Bays

Plan for a Community Engagement Program in Watertown

May 21, 2019

This plan is created in collaboration with the *Town Council Committee on Media and Public Outreach and Watertown Community Conversations*.

Purpose: To identify effective methods of communication, increase interest and participation in government, and strengthen local democracy.

Outcomes:

- *Town officials*
 - Identify what is currently working in the Town and in neighborhoods that can be built on
 - Learn about possible new approaches to community engagement
 - Identify appropriate next steps
- *Community members*
 - Become better informed about how town government works
 - Learn what's currently available and get energized to participate in town government

1. Meeting of the Committee on Media and Public Outreach: Public Engagement Forum

Purpose: Recruit and orient Kitchen Table Conversations hosts, organizers and facilitators

Desired Outcomes: Hosts and Facilitators

- Understand overall purpose, process and timeframe
- Learn structure and process for Kitchen Table Conversations
- Confirm participation by hosts; set up host/facilitator pairs where possible

Process:

- One 2 hour meeting at the Library, facilitated by WCC with Town Council introduction/participation
- Food and beverages
- Time: Sunday, June 23, 2019, 2:30-4:30 (social time starts at 2:15)

Preparation

- Host recruitment process and attendees for 6/23 forum; materials (Committee)
- Logistics (Committee)
- Outline of Kitchen Table Conversations process, with host and facilitator instructions (WCC)
- Host recruitment (Committee); Facilitator recruitment (WCC)

Questions for Committee:

- Who should be recruited as hosts? How?
- How can KTC process be made public?
- Key questions for small group dialogues?

2. Kitchen Table Conversations

Purpose: Gather input from a broad, diverse group of Watertown Community members

Desired Outcomes:

- Identify what is currently working in the Town and in neighborhoods that can be built on
- Understand currently available opportunities for public engagement in Watertown
- Recommend possible new approaches for public engagement

Process

- 10-12 small group conversations of about 1.5 hours hosted by neighborhood residents in their homes, each facilitated by a WCC facilitator and attended by one town councilor
- Timeframe: July and August, 2019

Preparation:

- List of current Watertown community engagement methods and opportunities; menu of public engagement methods from other communities (Committee)
- Time frame (Committee); Outreach/Invitations (Hosts)
- Script for facilitators (WCC)

3. Meeting for Committee on Media and Public Outreach: Public Engagement Report Back

Purpose: Share all KTC ideas with participants, members of the Committee and other attendees

Desired Outcomes:

- Attendees develop a shared understanding of ideas that emerged from KTCs
- Group prioritizes ideas
- Participants learn about options for their own continued involvement
- Committee reports to the TC and community on summary inputs and next steps

Process

- One 2 hour meeting hosted by Committee and facilitated by WCC
- Timeframe: by end of October, 2019

Preparation:

- Meeting design (WCC and Committee)
- Summary report of what was learned in KTCs (Committee)
- Food, logistics (WCC and Committee)
- Invitations (Committee)
- Communication to community (Committee)

Questions for Committee:

- Can this be live broadcast on cable?
- Who from the Town Council can determine and deliver next steps?
- How can the public be integrated into the event?
- How can we leverage Faire on the Square?

Committee on Media and Public Outreach Community Engagement Program in Watertown **Public Engagement Forum**

Sunday, June 23, 2019, 2:15-4:30, Watertown Public Library
Town Council Committee on Media and Public Outreach and
Watertown Community Conversations
as of May 24, 2019

Purpose: Recruit and orient Kitchen Table Conversations hosts and facilitators

Desired Outcomes

- *Understand overall purpose, process and timeframe*
- *Learn structure and process for Kitchen Table Conversations*
- *Confirm participation by hosts, where possible*
- *Partner hosts and facilitators, where possible*
- *Share initial thoughts about community engagement in Town government*

Preparation

- Recruitment of hosts and facilitators; logistics
- Kitchen Table Conversation guide for 6/23
- Facilitator Guide for KTC
- Host Guide
- Town Councilor Role Sheet

Agenda

2:15 Social Time

2:30 Welcome (Committee) (5-10 min.)

- o Committee charge
- o What is the problem we are trying to solve
- o Overall process—what we're doing
- **Intro to WCC and Agenda** for the afternoon (WCC) (10 min., 2:40-2:50) (Ora)
 - o WCF
 - o Our purpose
 - o What have we done so far—library, facilitator training, public meetings
 - o Today's agenda
- **Introductions** (whole group go-around) (10 min., 2:50-3:00) (Ora)

- o Your name, where you live
 - o One thing you love or value about Watertown
- **What is a Kitchen Table Conversation (WCC) (10 min., 3:00-3:10) (Larry)**
 - o How does it work
 - o Why do it
- **Practice KTC in small groups (WCC/facilitators) (30 min., 3:10 – 3:40) (Maya)**
 - o Go Arounds
 - *How have you engaged in the Town government?*
 - *What's a hope you have for what increased public engagement might do for Watertown?*
 - o People ask each other questions
 - *What did you hear that made you curious? What do you want to know more about, that other people said?*
 - o Summarize—*What themes did we hear?*
- **Debrief in Large Group (WCC) (15 min., 3:40-3:55) (Maya)**
 - o *What was your small group experience like?*
 - o *Did anything interesting about public engagement in Watertown emerge from your conversations?*
- **Hosting Kitchen Table Conversations, Q & A (WCC) (20 min., 3:55-4:15) (Ed)**
 - o What will happen at your KTC
 - o Flow of the process
 - o Facilitator and Town Councilor Roles
 - o Host roles and expectations
 - Recruitment and remind
 - Snacks
 - Welcome folks
 - o What happens with the data
 - Transcription
 - Facilitators—what themes emerged—common themes and outliers, rabbit holes
 - o Preview what will happen in the fall
- **Signing up to Host; Host/Facilitator pairs, where possible (Committee) (5 min., 4:15-4:20)**
- **Closing: One thing you are taking away (Ora). Thank you (Tony) (10 min., 4:20-4:30)**

