

Report on the Greeneville Strategic Planning Retreat

Introduction

The Town of Greeneville Board of Mayor met in a strategic planning session on November 17th at the *Farmhouse Gallery and Gardens*. The retreat was facilitated by Pat Hardy of MTAS. The purpose of the retreat was as follows:

- Learn about organizational structure, including its importance, capacity for producing predictable outcomes (services), differences in public and private sector structures, etc.
- Learn about the basic forms of government (structures) available to Tennessee municipalities and the pros and cons of each.
- Identify Board of Mayor and aldermen goals for the Town's structure.
- Construct alternative structures for Greeneville based on these goals.
- Agree on a potential structure for Greeneville.
- Consider implementation approaches (if applicable).

Characteristics of a Structure for Greeneville

In order to construct a specific structure for Greeneville the Board was asked a series of questions. The questions and responses are as follows:

1. *Please list the three main goals or outcomes you would like to see from the Town's administrative apparatus.*

Responses:

- We want transparency and openness in the administration of our government.
- We want the administrative apparatus to meet the needs of our citizens.
- Politics should be removed from administration.
- A clear chain of command should be in place, and adhered to by employees and the Board.
- The administrative apparatus should be capable of supporting community and economic development efforts.

2. *In your view, what are the main characteristics which should undergird these outcomes?*

Responses:

- Teamwork – the Board and staff should operate as a team.
- Communication should be open and clear.
- Roles should be well-defined.

- Management positions should be appointed (as opposed to elected) and based on qualifications.
- Adequate supervision should be built into the structure.
- The structure should be clear, easy to understand, and well-organized.
- The structure should facilitate openness and accessibility.
- Fairness should be a main characteristic – both internally between departments and employees, and externally in terms of the relationship with citizens.

3. *What should the Board of Mayor and Aldermen be spending most of their time on?*

Responses:

- Being proactive – determining our future – planning from a strategic perspective.
- Developing a community-wide focus to problems and opportunities.
- Supporting our employees, motivating them, backing them up when necessary.
- Building a quality community environment.
- Conducting our affairs in a business-like manner.
- Sharing information among ourselves, staff, committees, and citizens.
- Being accessible and responsive to the needs of the community.

4. *What should be the main goals of the Town’s organizational structure?*

Responses:

- The system should function about the same (produce similar outcomes in basic services) regardless of changes in key administrative positions or regardless of changes on the Board.
- The structure should be capable of shaping the community’s future (i.e. being proactive rather than reactive).
- The structure should facilitate quality leadership from employees and at the Board level. It should attract and retain high-quality leaders.
- The structure should have a clear chain of command.
- It should provide for mechanisms of accountability.
- The structure should meet the operational and development-related needs of the community.

Retreat Outcomes

The Board made a few key decisions at the retreat. They are as follows:

1. Draft a “Council-Administrator” form of government for Greenville.
2. They want the Board to retain authority over the structure of the Town’s government (as opposed to the Mayor alone or staff being able to alter the structure).
3. They would like to move toward staggered, four-year terms of office for the Board.

4. They would like to move the date of Town elections to November so that elections are held in conjunction with the general election.
5. They directed Pat Hardy to examine the Town's Charter and draft whatever legislative document would be necessary to put these changes in place.
6. They decided the Board should come together again, sometime in January, to examine the draft and to make additional recommendations based on the draft.
7. They decided that a series of public presentations should be made regarding the proposed changes so that public input could be considered before a final decision is made.
8. The Board would like to consider a Resolution making changes (if so decided), during a regular Board meeting, sometime before the adjournment of the next State legislative session. In this way the changes, if any, can be implemented sometime during 2011.
9. Pat Hardy was also directed to examine the Town's civil service regulations and to make recommendations for improvements or changes. The Board would like to see this review made sometime during 2011.