How We’ll Work Together:
Intro to Collaborative Governance

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Issues are complex
Multiple parties involved; buy-in needed
No one agency, organization or department has decision-making power
Issues are negotiable
Parties are willing to participate
To develop shared vision, comprehensive/integrated plans or resolve controversy

Conditions for Collaboration & Consensus Seeking
Collaboration is a process to reach goals that cannot be achieved by any one entity acting alone or, at a minimum, cannot be reached as efficiently. Collaboration is a means to end, not an end in itself.

- Shared Goals
- Accountability
- Transparency: Clear, understandable methods
- Participation: Diverse, inclusive, equitable
- Consensus-based decision making
## Elements of Collaborative Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear written agreements/shared expectations</th>
<th>Group structure/roles</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ground rules</td>
<td>• Co-chairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Member roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>• Executive/Steering Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Decision making rules</td>
<td>• Terms of service</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Policy/guidelines for advocacy, media relations, conflict of interest, and funding decisions</td>
<td>• Alternates</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)</td>
<td>• Subcommittees</td>
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<td>• Ad-hoc workgroups</td>
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Role of Facilitator

- Provide impartial consultation and leadership; remain neutral on content
- Manage meetings: Provide focus, structure and direction
- Encourage full, productive and respectful participation and dialogue; Promote creative thinking
- Help build consensus and move the group through decision-making processes
- Surface tension and help resolve conflict
- Record and summarize the group’s work
Purpose/Goals of Meeting Documentation

- Accountability: maintain public record of the meeting
- Help build collective memory and trust in the process
- Assist participants in recalling decisions, discussions, and processes; reduce the amount of revisiting issues
- Help those unable to attend keep up with the process
- Acknowledgment of participant contributions, though not necessarily by name
- Provide meeting planners with information to shape future meetings
Content Principles

- Accurate
- Brief with enough detail to meet goals (not minutes)
- Intent and meaning of discussion or decisions captured correctly
- Timely
- Over time, will focus more on product and decisions, less focus on discussion and process
- An asset for the group – not a source of conflict
Meeting Summary Process

- **Draft notes prepared by facilitation team and SHF staff**
- **Draft notes distributed to RPC**
  - Suggested revisions emailed by deadline; reviewed by facilitator and staff
  - Differing opinion on substantial issues will be brought to RPC for discussion and clarification
- **Final notes prepared by SHF staff and posted on web site**
  - Consensus: Can we live with it?
Ground Rules

- Create a foundation for respectful dialogue
- Provide guidelines for how the group will work together
- Agreed to by all meeting participants
- Tool facilitator and group members use to enlist people's best conduct in meetings
Group Decision-Making

- Process and skill needed for successful collaboration & community/strategic planning
- Frequently an underlying cause of group conflict
- Go slow to go fast – up front time investment “makes it easy” later on.
What happens if the decision-making process is unclear?

"Whew! That was close! We almost decided something!"
People hold on to rigid positions; stalemate.

Left hand does not know what right hand is doing.

Someone is assigned a vague idea.

Certain people always get their way.

New suggestion is made as time runs out.

C "Closed door" decisions after the meeting with small group.

Decision made, but not clearly summarized.

Discussion drags on...

Silence is assumed agreement

Put off until next agenda.

Person/entity with most at stake makes independent decision

"Decision-Making" Without a Rule
What is a Consensus Decision?

- “To think and feel together;” “Collective opinion or agreement;” “Group solidarity in sentiment and belief.”
- A collaborative process in which all group members contribute to a shared proposal and shape it into a decision that meets the concerns of all group members as much as possible.
- A decision that everyone can live with, reached by the group as a whole.
- Members may hold different levels of agreement.
- May not be everyone’s first or ideal choice, but there is common understanding and a commitment to move forward together.
# Levels of Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Agreement</td>
<td>Agreement with Minor Concern</td>
<td>Agreement with Reservations</td>
<td>Stand Aside</td>
<td>Disagreement with Major Concern</td>
<td>Strong Disagreement/Veto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **I support the proposal.**
- **I support the proposal.**
- **I can live with it.**
- **I don’t like this, but I don’t want to stop the proposal, but I have serious concerns.**
- **I don’t want to hold up the group.**
- **I do not support the proposal.**
“Consensus with Accountability” is a Fundamental Principle

Definition of “Consensus”: A decision that all group members can live with, reached by the group as a whole. Members may hold different levels of agreement.

Participation: Members must be in attendance at a meeting to participate in decisions made at that meeting.

Divergent Views/Unresolved Issues: A proposal may move forward if supported by 75% of the members present. Alternatively, members may delegate to an ad-hoc sub-committee if time allows.
Surfacing Priorities to Make Decisions

- A way to work toward consensus by narrowing options.
- Conducting a “pulse check” to see where people stand.

Possible Methods

- Straw Poll/Show of Hands
  - Levels of Agreement
  - Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down
- Dot Voting
- Develop Criteria, then Rank Options
Planning Activities Rating Scale

IDEAL  Valuable  Adequate  Undesirable  Unacceptable

Considerations
Reaching Agreement & Negotiating Solutions

- Clarify issue, define problem & constraints; identify missing information
  - Separate the people from the problem
  - Break decision down into smaller, more manageable parts
- Focus on **interests**, not positions
  - Identify the underlying concern, need, desire, or fear; the reason why or why not
  - Identify your “100%.” Remember: Asking does not guarantee getting
- Brainstorm options that satisfy as many members’ criteria as possible.
  - Ask: How can we develop a win-win? Clarify ideas as needed.
- Generate objective, fair criteria to evaluate options
  - Identify pros/cons
  - Reflect on which alternatives offer the best possibility of success
- Eliminate options that are not a priority or don’t meet criteria; evaluate/rank remaining options
- Be open to new possibilities that will result in your desired outcome – or something even better!
Positions are...

- Something one has decided as a way to settle a problem, conflict or a difference.
- A pre-determined solution.

EXAMPLE

“We need a new housing development!”

“We oppose a new housing development!”
Interests are...

- Desires, beliefs, needs and concerns/fears..
- Why something is important – the reason for the position

**EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Support development</td>
<td>Oppose development</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Increase tax revenue</td>
<td>• Preserve open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create jobs</td>
<td>• Maintain water quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce sprawl</td>
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Why Focus on Interests?

- Behind opposed positions lie shared and compatible interests.
- Gets to heart of issue.
- Sets stage for mutual understanding.
- Leads to group cooperation.
- Increases our ability to think about the issue differently – i.e., re-framing.
- Helps establish a climate where we can generate creative options.