

Meeting Report: League of California Cities (LOCC)

Advance Leadership Workshop

Exceptional Council for Exceptional Times: Creating a Governance Culture of Civility and Purpose

June 29, 2018

Monterey Marriott

Reporting: Bill Kampe, Mayor

We heard some presentations and spent other time in small group conversations to share experiences. These notes are brief, because the format encouraged active participation throughout. You can find the presentation materials at:

<https://www.cacities.org/Resources-Documents/Education-and-Events-Section/MCMALW/2018-Session-Materials/Exceptional-Council-for-Exceptional-Times-Creating>

The overall framework for the Governance Mindset includes:

- Systems Thinking
- Strategic Focus
- Preparation
- Manner

We were urged to establish respect for each other in our city governments, and to maintain respect for the public. A standard of civility makes the whole process of government more productive. It also makes it a better experience for those involved.

We heard examples from attendees of difficult challenges with members of the public and maintaining decorum and order, in the spirit of seeking advice so that the business of the council could continue without interruption. We also heard several participants describe cases of unruly fellow council members who are routinely disruptive to their councils. Here the remedies are more difficult, if any work at all. The advice was to tolerate and ignore as much as possible. These disruptive members typically isolate themselves and ultimately are not effective in influencing results.

On the topic of public engagement, there is a spectrum:

- Inform
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Empower

There was a poll of attendees on how they would rate their public engagement, a scale from 1 – 5. The presenter asked a few who rated themselves tops to describe what they do. Ironically, each person described activities that were entirely at the Inform level only, nothing higher. Conclusion, it's really hard to be good.

Words on wisdom on convening groups of citizens for engagement: "Food Helps!"

"Be engaged...not entrenched."

One attendee described a local Citizen's Leadership Academy, noting that it really helped the spirit and quality of engagement in their community.