



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Meeting Minutes - Draft COMMON COUNCIL - DISCUSSION

---

Saturday, January 28, 2012

10:00 AM

Madison Water Utility  
119 E. Olin Avenue

---

### COMMON COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL & STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

#### Attendees:

Ald. Lisa Subeck  
Ald. Bridget Maniaci  
Ald. Lauren Cnare  
Ald. Mike Verveer (arrived at 11:59 a.m.)  
Ald. Shiva Bidar-Sielaff  
Ald. Steve King  
Ald. Scott Resnick  
Ald. Paul Skidmore  
Ald. Chris Schmidt  
Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway  
Ald. Sue Ellingson  
Ald. Tim Bruer  
Ald. Larry Palm (left at 12:45 p.m.)  
Ald. Anita Weier  
Ald. Mark Clear  
Ald. Matt Phair  
Mayor Paul Soglin  
Anne Monks, Assistant to the Mayor  
Katie Crawley, Assistant to the Mayor  
Gun Van Rensselaer, City Organizational Training & Development, Facilitator  
Lisa Veldran, Common Council Office staff  
Brenda Konkell, citizen

### Meeting Notes from 1/28/12 Council Discussion

#### NOTES

Common Council Organizational & Strategic Planning Session  
January 28, 2012

#### Agenda Agreements

Use discussion format  
Basics: 2 year terms, elected by district  
Develop a way to move forward on issues identified

- CCOC
- Work Group
- Council discussion
- Leadership

#### Issues

Consensus amongst council  
Plan of execution - doing it  
Competing priorities

Leadership structure  
 Necessity to react to outside  
 Time (lack of availability)  
 Related: Number of committees that alders serve on (time commitment)  
 Alignment with Mayor's office  
 Limited resources compared with resources in Mayor's office  
 District focus vs. city-wide needs  
 Effective communications with each other  
 Meeting structure  
 Public meetings  
 "Is it our job" unified agenda  
 Money ----- Budget  
 How alders use information from committees  
 Number of committees interrelated with efficiency of decision-making  
 Department vs. council agendas vs. Mayor's agenda  
 Staff drives committees  
 Communication with committees  
 Email structure/system collection and aggregation  
 Alignment with citizen priorities  
 Council/other municipalities (alignment)  
 Ever-changing council (2 years)  
 Political nature  
 "How right" is an alder when representing district?  
 Other "voices" - How to balance  
 Does the citizenry believe the Council should have a unified agenda?

**Considerations:**

How many "eggs" in the basket?  
 What things can the Council let go of?  
 What happens if the Council disagrees?  
 Risk of failure  
 Just "checking it off" of the Council's list  
 Pressure to do something  
 Remembering frontline staff will have to be onboard  
 Implementation  
 City staff (realistic) input  
 •Managing the relationship with City Staff Fear of "politicization"  
 Agency Priorities (interaction with alders and mayor)  
 Meshing with agency priorities  
 Longevity of agenda  
 Agenda that excludes you from working on other issues  
 Caucus agenda vs. Legislative agenda  
 Committees (are they a + or -?)  
 •How, and if, to bring committee agendas forward  
 •Power dynamic between council and committees  
 Who really is in charge?  
 •Taxpayers  
 Who do we serve?  
 Collaboration on a council strategic/policy/legislative agenda  
 •Compelling message  
  
 Mayor Soglin: taxpayers, citizens, constituents, customers or comrades?

**DISCUSSION**

Strategic/policy/legislative agenda – Does the Council want to have one?  
 Collaborate on agenda  
 Compelling message (Ellingson)  
 Council should be professional (Rhodes-Conway)  
 How we do business (Cnare)  
 Gives council leadership a defined role (Bidar-Sielaff)  
 Word “agenda” is too restrictive – broader topic areas that need to be addressed (Schmidt)  
 2 year terms and district specific vs. mayor 4 year term and city wide (Resnick)  
 List of no more than 3 items that council agrees are city wide issues that affect all of our districts – work on (Rhodes-Conway)

There was a straw poll on whether the Council should develop an “Agenda” (strategic, policy and/or legislative): 10 “Yes” votes – enough desire to move forward

Approaches on developing a Council Agenda  
 Small group fleshing it out (Guy Van Rensselaer/Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway)  
 Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway saw it as a two step process  
 1. Discussion and formal vote on whether to pursue  
 2. Defining: What are the issues?  
 Free form discussion and more regularly (Ald. Bridget Maniaci)  
 Process on how council is going to reach unanimous agreement on those agenda items (Ald. Lisa Subeck)  
 Formal consensus process \* everyone can have a veto on items (Ald. Larry Palm)  
 Majority of alders but not where one alder who can “tank” the whole process (Ald. Bridget Maniaci)

Ald. Lauren Cnare thought there was enough consensus that the Council wanted an agenda but now need to decide how Council goes about developing the process:

- CCOC
- 1-2 people work on an agenda proposal
- Work group develops the agenda
- All Council discussion
- Council Leadership

Vote on who should be charged with creating a proposal on how to establish an agenda to come back to the Council for a vote:

Clear	CCOC	Work Group	
Weier	CCOC		Council Discussion
King		Work Group	Council Discussion
Subeck	No Preference		
Schmidt	CCOC	Work Group	
Rhodes-Conway	CCOC		Council Leadership
Palm	CCOC	Work Group	
Bruer	CCOC	Work Group	
Skidmore	CCOC	Work Group	
Maniaci	CCOC		Council Discussion
Phair	CCOC	Work Group	
Resident	CCOC	Work Group	
Ellingson	CCOC		Council Leadership

Bidar-Sielaff    CCOC                    Work Group  
Cnare            CCOC

**ACTION:** CCOC is charged with creating a proposal on how to establish a Council agenda (strategic, policy, legislative) for the full Council to vote on.

**Method for CCOC and Alder Appointments**

Cnare: Alders would like to appoint themselves to committees – manage own destinations

Rhodes-Conway: the answer to the Council job description question ties into this issue

Maniaci: Table this issue

Ellingson: should further expand on job description before discussing this issue

Rhodes-Conway: there are three big pieces: constituent service, city policy and committee service

Everyone agreed to table discussion on who appoints until the discussion on alder “job description” occurred.

Cnare: this is a simple question of “yes” or “no” - Do alders want council to appoint alders to committees?

Rhodes-Conway: Before addressing council appointments first deal with job description – before she can answer “yes” or “no” she wanted to the alternatives were to the status quo

Palm – no matter the process the appointments would still be political  
Bidar-Sielaff – skills, etc...go into it blind, ability to have a better discussion among alders about balancing it out – who wants what and then make a recommendation to mayor

Weier – supported mayor still making appointments but develop ground rules – number of appointments

Resnick – ability to switch committees was helpful, watched senior alder on committee to develop his role on committee

Soglin – Mayor makes appointments, 2nd recognize that for himself there is a lot of balancing that takes place – different geographic areas, tenure, knowledge vs. giving new people an opportunity to serve on committee, diversity, gender.

Cnare – Noted that any of those balancing processes could be followed by the council if they were appointing. Likes the thought of alders appointing at the committee level – have the ability and enrich relationships. Council forwards a slate to the mayor, possibly eliminate the “horse trading”

Subeck – She found alders appointing unappealing as a new alder – unrealistic that council could make those appointments with new alder

Rhodes-Conway – agrees with mayor on balance, learned things on committees that she was appointed vs. her picks, question of better training on role, more important things to talk about committee structure in general and better functioning alders on those committees – not going to make a difference on who makes appointments

Phair – politics go into appointments

Maniaci – likes Cnare’s idea of making recommendations to mayor give new mayors a working baseline.

Bruer – create a work group to come back to CCOC with alternatives

**Alder Appointments**

- Ranking
- Process
- Mayor (ground rules)
- Balance
- Politics
- Create list to forward to mayor

**Areas of Discussion**

Job Description Ties into Code of Conduct

Ties into Leadership Structure

Internal Knowledge

External Knowledge

Ties into Orientation & Training

Analyst Role

Appointments

**DISCUSSION: JOB DESCRIPTION**

**1. Constituent services**

Rhodes-Conway - Catalyst for capacity building:

- Information from city to constituents
- Information from constituents to city
- Advocate for our constituent (ombudsman)
- Facilitate between organizations (neighborhood associations) and city (mayor, staff)
- Opening the door to government

Resnick

- Best practices
- Perception as a “representative” in a democracy

Phair

- Training

Cnare

- Community organizer role

**2. City-wide policy**

- Budget
- Large issues/City-wide
- Ordinances
- Relationships - inter-governmental
- Recognize that you are representing the council in different environments (committees, conferences, etc.)
- Information sharing
- Structure
- Personnel role (approve managerial contracts)
- Advocacy

**3. Committee service**

- Liaison between committee and council

- Knowledge of procedures: Roberts Rules, Legistar, how decisions get made
- Bring information to the table \* seek out information (empower chair/vice-chair and connect them to resources)
- Sponsor ordinances or resolutions that a committee wants to move forward
- Participate in discussion and work of committee
- Setting legislative policy agenda for committee (or facilitate)
- Take back educational component from committee members to the council
- Attendance/be prepared
- Advocates for committee
- Assist committee in achieving goals

**4. Representing Government**

- Intergovernmental communication and action
- Representing the city to other non-governmental organizations (professional organizations)
- Media relations
- Recognize that your “Nametag” is on – modeling behavior

**5 District Service**

- o Move district things through process – informal and formal processes
- o When appropriate that the entire council has the information
- o Know your district, know your neighborhood, neighborhood leaders
- o Knowing the process: regulatory, city, etc...
- o Knowing the public work projects going on in your district
- o Cross district/border issues
- o Planning issues: neighborhood, parks, allocation, etc...
- o Intergovernmental communication

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED/ACTION STEPS:**

**1. What is knowledge base necessary to do your job well?**

Cnare: Survey alders on knowledge base, compile the responses and send out results before next Council discussion (research best practices of what other communities do)

**2. What resources are needed to do your job well?**

Focus next discussion on this question. Lisa Veldran survey alders on another meeting date for a Council discussion (dates over a two week peri