

# Gardiner City Council

## Draft Workshop Report of January 28, 2009

Gardiner City Hall, Gardiner, Maine



**Good Group Decisions**

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# About the Workshop

## ***Background***

The Gardiner City Council has been in the practice of holding workshops every two or three years with a professional facilitator in order to affirm and refine roles and responsibilities and establish shared goals. While recent workshops of this type have been facilitated by Pam Plumb of Portland, this year the Council engaged Craig Freshley of Good Group Decisions from Brunswick to conduct two workshops, the first on January 21, 2009 and the second on January 28, 2009. This report is all about the second workshop that was held on January 28, 2009.

The workshops were designed to provide a nice opportunity for members of the new Council to get to know each other and also to develop a shared understanding of how the Council will work together (focus of the first workshop) and what the Council hopes to achieve (focus of the second workshop).

The workshops are specifically for Council members and the City Manager although, as whenever the Council meets, the public are welcome to attend.

## ***Attendance***

Andrew MacLean, Mayor  
Michael Giberson, City Councilor  
Phil Hart, City Councilor  
Kendall Holmes, City Councilor  
Robert Johnston, City Councilor  
Richard Rambo, City Councilor

Jeff Kobrock, City Manager

Craig Freshley, Good Group Decisions Facilitator  
Alison Harris, Good Group Decisions Assistant

## **Agenda**

- 7:00           **Opening**
- Welcome – Andrew MacLean, Mayor
  - About the Workshop – Craig Freshley, Facilitator
- 7:10           **Review First Workshop Results**  
Before discussing our shared goals, we will first review and affirm the work we did on January 21, 2009.
- 7:25           **Shared Goals**  
For the rest of the workshop we will establish shared goals for what we want to achieve together. We will begin by reviewing the goals established last year, amend them as appropriate, and discuss adding new goals. The result of our conversation will be a revised Statement of Goals.
- 8:50           **Closing Comments**  
This will be an opportunity for each Council member to make a closing comment, perhaps a reflection about the workshops or perhaps a specific hope or concern going forward.
- 9:00           **Adjourn**

## ***Opening Remarks***

Mayor Andrew MacLean welcomed the members of City Council and thanked everyone for coming out in the foul weather. He explained that he and City Manager Jeff Kobrock had decided not to cancel the meeting after polling all Council members because they wanted to keep the two workshops close together and still avoid scheduling two meetings in a single week, which could have occurred given the Council's regular meeting schedule. Further, Craig Freshley and Alison Harris from Good Group Decisions, who had the greatest distance to travel, were available and willing to come out in the snow storm.

Mayor MacLean summarized the Council meeting schedule going forward, acknowledging that it was front-loaded:

- First business meeting the following week on February 4<sup>th</sup>
- February meetings on the 11<sup>th</sup> and possibly the 25<sup>th</sup> but not on the 18<sup>th</sup> (school vacation week)
- Complete routine business by end of March
- Work on the budget from April until it is passed in May or June, trying to avoid meeting every week.

Craig Freshley introduced his assistant, Alison Harris, who had helped prepare the report of the previous workshop. He then reviewed the agenda for the evening explaining that there were two broad topics:

- Review and revise the Best Practices that resulted from the previous workshop: how the City Council and Manager work together.
- Development of goals for FY 2010. The City Manager had prepared a draft for discussion. The Council would have the opportunity to add new goals, revise the City Manager's draft and prioritize all the goals.

## ***Objectives***

Craig reviewed the objectives of the workshop which were identical to the objectives of the workshop the previous week:

- Get to know each other
- Shared understanding of how we're going to work together
- Shared understanding of what we hope to achieve

## **Ground Rules**

Craig called attention to the posted list of Ground Rules which also were identical to the ones employed at the workshop the previous week:

- One person talks at a time; no side conversations
- Disagree without being disagreeable
- Stick to the subject
- Recap and summarize as needed to make sure we are all on the same page
- Agreements and disagreements identified
- Be clear about the facts before starting the discussion
- Council members first
- Neutral facilitation and report

## **Best Practices**

### ***Introduction***

Craig brought the participants' attention to the Appendix in the report of the January 21<sup>st</sup> workshop in which he had proposed revisions to the document "Practices for Successful Governance" which had been adopted in June 1997 and last revised and reaffirmed in March 2007. (Attached herewith as Appendix A.)

His significant changes included

- Recognizing that "we" is actually the City Council and Manager, not just the Council, that there needed to be more balance with distinct responsibilities for the Manager.
- Placing everything is in the present tense, affirming that Council and Manager work under these terms now, not in the future.
- Reorganizing into four broad areas:
  - What it means to work as a team
  - Role of the City Manager
  - Role of the Councilors
  - Transparency and input
- Adding:
  - Increased public input and scrutiny, including gathering information pro-actively at the start of a process
  - Pro-active solicitation of employee input
  - More responsibilities for the Manager based on language in the City Charter

## Conclusions

It was agreed that Craig would make the following revisions to “Best Practices”:

- Add diagram with some explanation
- Take out clause 1.d. about understanding different roles of each group
- Take out clauses 3.a. & 3.b about interactions between citizens, Councilors, and Department Heads and substitute language reaffirming that Councilors work through the City Manager in matters related to Department Heads and City employees
- Add a new clause 3.c.: “We agree that it is Council’s responsibility to enforce the rules” (not up to the Manager to enforce).

Here is the revised version:

### Consensus Draft of January 27, 2009

This diagram represents the framework for our roles and interactions

<b>Council</b>		<b>Manager</b>
Purpose Scope of Services Tax Level	<b>MISSION</b>	Advice Administration
Ordinances New Projects, Programs Ratify Budget	<b>POLICY</b>	Recommendations Formulate Budget
Large Implementing Decisions Complaints, Oversight	<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	Establish Practices & Procedures Make Decisions for Implementation
Suggestions Review, Hire, Fire City Manager	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	Control Resources to Support Policy

These notes represent details of our agreement about our roles and interactions

1. We (the Council and City Manager) agree that we work as a team, which means that we:
  - a. communicate with each other respectfully in an open, appropriate forum
  - b. have a good flow of information back and forth
  - c. make decisions based on identified common goal(s)
  - d. work as a team on the implementation of long term plans/issues
  
2. We agree that the City Manager is the administrator for all operational activities, Department Heads and personnel, and that this is not an appropriate role for Councilors.
  - a. We agree that Department Heads take to the Manager any complaints or issues which may generate publicity or legal problems; other simpler matters they will deal with directly.
  - b. We agree that the City Manager has a responsibility to keep Councilors well-informed regarding all business of the City.
  - c. We agree that the City Manager treats employees with an ethic of respect and empowerment, inviting their input and providing rationale for decisions.
  
3. We agree that Councilors have a responsibility to uphold the City Charter, represent the residents of Gardiner, and oversee the City Manager
  - a. We agree to work directly with the City Manager rather than Department Heads or City employees
  - b. We agree that Councilors have a responsibility to establish clear performance expectations for the City Manager, regularly evaluate the City Manager in light of the established expectations, and provide clear feedback regarding things well done and things needing improvement.
  - c. We agree that it is the Council's responsibility to enforce these rules.
  
4. We agree that our professionalism and efficiency is improved when we invite public comment and scrutiny early and often, and when we invite employees to provide input.
  - a. We agree to provide the public (via the press and other means) with as much advance notice as possible regarding upcoming budgeting and policy decisions, and we agree to be pro-active about encouraging advance public input and scrutiny.
  - b. We agree that the City Manager invites input from employees on how to improve effectiveness and efficiency of City Government.

It was further agreed to take formal action on the proposed revised “Best Practices” when all Councilors can participate, after they have had a chance to review the proposed changes.

A recommendation was made that “Best Practices” be reviewed at the first Council meeting after swearing-in to refresh memories of returning Councilors and train new Councilors.

## ***Discussion***

- What does “understand the different roles of each group mean?” (1.d.)
  - During the Pam Plumb workshops, three groups were identified (Council, Manager, Department Heads) and the groups met separately
    - Confusing to include Department Heads here
    - Management team is Council and Manager
    - Department Heads are part of administrative team that reports through the Manager
  - Entire clause 1.d. should be deleted
  - Disinclined to call out staff below the Manager
- Language of “Best Practices” reflects unpleasantness of ten years ago
  - Don’t want to be a part of it
  - Must remind ourselves not to revisit that bad history
- While Section 3 may be appropriate from a functional standpoint, it seems defensive
- Council is “it” – City Charter has vested all power in Council
  - However, Mayor and Council are part-time, so need City Manager
  - In past, some Councilors forgot they were part-time
  - Now using a lot of words to address simple concepts:
    - Must maintain good communication
    - Discuss issues at the table
    - Alert the Manager when a situation arises
- Imperative that there be a contractual relationship with the Manager
  - In the event of a contract dispute, can’t rely on “Best Practices”
  - However, don’t mind certain amount of process, including writing it down
  - Diagram says it all:
- Perhaps institution has matured to where we only need chart
  - Craig’s revision of “Best Practices” is an improvement but not interested in wordsmithing

- Include chart in “Best Practices,” if we retain them at all
- Craig’s revision of “Best Practices” focused issue but isn’t this how we all expected to behave?
- “Best Practices” are unnecessary
  - Manager should raise the issue if ever being “pecked together to death by ducks”
    - Whether or not we have “Best Practices,” they’re just words on a page
- Good to have “Best Practices” defined
  - Helpful to have something in writing
  - We are team, but not co-equals
  - Good not to have reinvent rules every time we disagree
  - They can’t hurt
  - They will be helpful to future Councils
  - Without these definitions, hard to explain how Charter really works
- Manager always will provide advice & expertise
  - However, there will be times Managers needs to take direction
  - Need guidelines on whether direction is appropriate
  - Understand that “Lucy pulls football every year” – there have been difficulties in the past
- Framework helps to figure things out
  - If we don’t achieve consensus, need rules on how to deal with dissenters
    - Breach of Executive Session, for example
    - During recent snowstorm, it was not in keeping with “Best Practices” for Councilors to direct Public Works Department Head
      - Council established rest rules for Public Works Department; responsibility of Manager to see that staff follows them
- I like the rules because when citizens complain, I refer their complaints to the Manager
- When issues of jurisdiction arise, need mechanism that every Councilor understands, such as sanctioning a Councilor
  - Council must have contract with Manager
    - Not fair to Manger to rely on nice words in “Best Practices”
- Proposal from Craig for revisions to “Best Practices”:
  - Add diagram with some explanation

- Take out clause 1.d.
  - Take out clauses 3.a. & 3.b
  - Add clause 3.c. :“We agree that it is Council’s responsibility to enforce the rules” (not up to the Manager).
- “Good listening, Craig” – summarizes consensus of the meeting
  - Take formal action on revised “Best Practices”
    - Not permissible during workshop
    - Wait until absent members of Council can participate
    - Give everyone another chance to review proposed changes
  - It would be good to review “Best Practices” at first meeting after swearing-in to refresh memories of returning Councilors and train new Councilors
  - It was noted that City Charter states that Council can assign responsibilities to the Mayor

## Shared Goals

### *Introduction*

Craig said that now that the Council and Manager have agreed how to work together, it was time to turn to the agenda item addressing what they would work on.

The City Manager had provided an update on progress toward achieving FY 2008 goals. Craig commented that it was important to refer back to goals once they are developed, as the Gardiner City Council and Manager were doing.

Craig referred the group to proposed Goals for FY 2010, drafted by the City Manager, that Craig had amended with numbers and titles to facilitate discussion (See Appendix B) and posted on the wall.

He outlined the steps of this part of the meeting with a chart entitled Goals Steps:

- Understand
- Revise
- Add
- Prioritize

and said that the Council would be determining where it wanted to spend its energy over the coming term.

Jeff explained that generally Bundled Projects (Goal # 19) and Goals #1 through #16, except for Goal #7, reflected further implementation of past goals. The rest of the proposed goals, including Goal #7, were new initiatives.



## Conclusions

- **Goals that the City Council, working with the City Manager, will focus time on in FY 2010**
  - Commitment to Fiscal Prudence
    - A general long-term goal
    - More realistic in current economic climate than Tax Relief
    - Includes examination of the TIFF Program
  - Alternative Revenue Streams
    - WiFi
    - Cable TV
    - Energy production
  - Strengthen Finance Department
  - Recycling Committee
  - Sidewalk Rehabilitation
  
- **Goals that are important to the City Council that will be undertaken by the City Manager**
  - Public Works Best Management Practices
  - Improve Tax Assessing
  - Technology Plan
  - Federal Stimulus Opportunities
  - O.A.T.F. Recommendations
  - Water District Joint Administration
    - Including monthly billing
  - Life Safety Inspection
  - Bundled Projects
    - Sidewalk Rehabilitation (*also a Council priority*)
    - Waterfront Phase 2
    - Common Master Plan
      - Includes Playground on the Common
    - Harrison Avenue Project
    - Libby Hill Actions

- Cobbossee Master Plan
    - Johnson Hall Renovation
    - Gardiner Main Street
    - Upper Story Access
  - Library
  - Upgrade Cold Storage
    - Including restoration of documents
  - Enhance Policing
  - Support Energy Committee
    - To be formalized?
  - Internal Safety Awareness
    - To be formalized?
- **Council will organize a workshop to review all the bundled projects**
  - **Budget process will establish priorities among all the goals**

## ***Discussion***

First, the Councilors asked questions about goals that were being carried over.

- Which goals are included in the Bundled Projects (Goal #19)?
  - #5 – Update Housing Action Plan
  - #6 – Sidewalk Rehabilitation
  - #8 – Waterfront Phase 2
  - #11 – Begin Common Master Plan
  - #12 – Harrison Avenue Project
  - #13 – Libby Hill Actions
  - #14 – Cobbossee Master Plan
  - #15 – Johnson Hall Renovation
  - #16 – Gardiner Main Street
- What does bundled mean?
  - Bundling allowed City to go out with single Request for Proposal to consultants, allowing more bang for the buck
  - Multi-disciplinary teams responded to RFPs (engineering, marketing, planning, business planning)
- What is the Harrison Street Project (Goal #12)?
  - Plan to rebuild all infrastructure at once to avoid re-do's
    - Water, sewage, storm drainage
    - Mostly Harrison & Fountain Streets

- Improved ability to get grants
- Where do the elevators appear in the goals?
  - Upper-story access was inadvertently omitted from list
- “Data Access” (Goal #3) is confusing
  - Correct typo: should be “assessing”, not “accessing”
  - Change title to “Improve Tax Assessing”
- Tax Relief (Goal #1) is not realistic in this economy
  - Change to fiscal prudence?
  - Can’t retain current level of services and reduce mil rate
  - Commitment to tax relief is misleading
    - Can still be a goal, nevertheless
  - In past, tax relief was direction to Manager for building budget
  - On February 12, Manager will provide general budget numbers to Council
    - Will want very specific direction from Council on how to proceed
- We need to look at revenue sources other than taxes
  - Set up a task force to pursue O.A.T.F recommendations (Goal #9)
    - Wiring the City was pushed through quickly
    - WiFi is getting buried
      - Should be broken off as separate revenue stream
    - Should also look into cable TV
- What is monthly billing (in Goal #9)?
  - Improves cash flow, better than semi-annual or quarterly
  - Should be in Goal #10 – Water District Joint Administration
- Technology Plan (Goal #4) already in place
  - Web portal needs to be implemented for:
    - Online payments
    - Providing data online to community
  - Will there be a significant cost with implementation?
    - Flat funding over 7 years; won’t need more than that
    - Upgrading website will require extra funding
    - Streaming Council meetings will require additional funding
  - Tremendous momentum with funding already available for several; focus on them
- Safety Awareness is new goal (Goal #7)
  - Internal Safety Committee got lazy – lost way for about a year
  - Now paying elevated Workers’ Compensation as a result
    - Wake-up call

- Important for Council to provide formalized support for Safety Committee
  - Symbolic, but important
- Can we do safety check every month and provide a report to get rate reduction?
  - We do get rebates based on Safety Committee activity
- Someone needs to take ownership
  - Safety now written into Fire Chief's job description
    - Accountability is critical
    - Will be part of Fire Chief's evaluation
  - Make sure clear goal relates to internal safety
- Can any of the goals being carried over be stopped?
  - Have invested so many resources already, would be a shame to stop
  - Are some so far along that they no longer need to be Council priorities?
    - Important to have reaffirmation of Council support
    - Some will appear in capital plan

Next, the City Manager described the new goals and took questions from Councilors.

- Strengthen Finance Department (Goal #17)
  - Was not a goal before, but is ongoing
  - Have already put a lot of effort into Finance Department
- Life Safety Inspection (Goal #18)
  - Was not a formal Council goal, but Council encouraged it
  - Will include systematic inspection by Fire Department for life safety codes
    - Now Fire Department only responds to complaints
    - Spotty enforcement causes bad feelings
    - Assist people in understanding, awareness
    - Final phase is enforcement
    - Converted overtime to daytime positions to have excess capacity for life safety inspections
- Library (Goal #20)
  - Renovation
  - Online digital
  - Preserve America initiative
- Upgrade Cold Storage (Goal #21)
  - Brand new goal
  - Records currently stored in garage
  - Need to improve storage facilities
    - Space problem

- Documents beginning to deteriorate
  - Storage area is not always dry
  - Include restoration of documents in program
- Who does archival storage – Library staff?
  - City Hall staff
- Enhance Policing (Goal #22)
  - Using overtime to enhance investigations & community policing by creating permanent positions
  - Help Detective & Community Liaison Officer to do better job
- Support Energy Committee (Goal #23)
  - Internal committee – staff at all levels in all departments
  - Who does committee report to?
    - Committee reports to City Manager
  - Evolved from budget process directive to find savings
  - Maybe committee should be formalized
    - City paying \$4.37/gal for oil, based on July decision
    - Committee could look at ways to improve revenue stream
      - Hydropower, for instance, given that Gardiner formed because of 7 dams on Kennebec

Craig asked for suggestions of additional goals, which were made as follows.

- Recycling
  - Citizen committee, appointed by Council
- Focus on economic development
  - City Manager & Economic Development Director must take advantage of any Federal Economic Stimulus opportunities that arise
  - Need to examine TIFF program
    - Evaluation-enhanced funding for TIFF at cost of local property owners
    - Are we getting our money's worth?
  - TIFF workshop scheduled for 6:00 PM on next meeting day
- Alternative revenue sources

The Council turned its attention to prioritization and categorization:

- What does Council want to spend time on? (*marked with "C" on wall*)
  - Examine TIFF Program

- Tax relief
- WiFi & cable TV alternative revenue
- Finance Department
- Recycling Committee
  - To provide general guidance
- Council needs workshop on Bundled Projects with overview at each of the projects
- Rest of goals list important to City Council, to be run by Manager
  - Manager will keep Council informed
- Several goals could contribute to economic stimulus
  - TIF -- especially downtown and at Libby Hill
  - Don't know how they relate as whole
- Can't prioritize goals
  - Putting them in goals statements bundled them
  - Liked grouping into 3 priorities
  - Do a few things well (now at 23+ goals)
  - Could categorize, or multi-vote
  - Set big picture priorities (i.e. alternative revenue, economic development)
- Once in budget, Manager needs to keep initiatives moving along
  - Some things won't fit in City Manager's budget
  - Would be basis for Manager's evaluation
  - Shows that Manager has a lot on his plate
    - Should be able to delegate
  - Manager will interact all along with Council
  - Goals are Manager's and Council's chessboard
  - "Council Goals" in misnomer
    - Really just a way of guiding City Mgr
- Is Council doing all we can and should be doing in Economic Development?
  - Implied in Gardiner Main Street, Libby Hill & Johnson Hall goals
  - Decision was made to plan Libby Hill & Downtown together
    - That's what Council should be focusing on
    - Best bang for our buck – will enhance business climate
- We all have priorities
  - Two principle goals (outside of budget):
    - Waterfront
      - Public expects something
      - Could be third season of mudpit

- Currently vandalism
    - Destroying through neglect
  - Playground on the Common
    - Community crying out for it
- Several things could be bundled as “good government” to be managed by City Manager
- Third category is “quality of life”
  - Johnson Hall
  - Playground
  - Library
- Must tackle all three comprehensively:
  - Good Government (driven by City Manager)
  - Business Development to reverse:
    - Empty stores
    - Empty upstairs
    - Police incidents
  - Quality of life
  - Focus on why people want to come here, and want to stay here
  - That’s why green wall is so big
    - Everything is important
    - City Manager can juggle everything; keep the important things moving forward
- Let green wall stay as is
  - Priorities will be established through budget development
  - Have determined what Council will spend time on
  - Send message to public & staff about what is important

## Closing Comments

- Like to see Council work really hard and produce specific things
  - Sense of accomplishment & reward
  - Not one of these nights, but accomplished a lot
  - Extraordinarily useful & important
- Builds relationship between Council & City Manager
  - More relaxing, no tension
  - Not business meeting
  - Excellent job on last report – good for reference

- Interesting to me as newcomer, how will unfold given extraordinary mess of finances
  - Interesting year
- Interesting process
  - Good conversation, reflecting on green wall
  - Don't expect document like past
  - Workshop should include work of OATF
- Like seeing big picture
  - Worked well as group
- Process is incomplete
  - Must find way in press of business to continue conversation
  - Learned new things (i.e. alternative revenue proposals, which may or may not rise to top)
  - Need other colleagues to join in
  - Important to find common ground
- Does Council do other workshops?
  - Not typically
    - Depends on appetite of Council
    - Though not conclusive, better than past work perhaps
    - City Manager & Mayor will look for more opportunities for strategic thinking
- Prefer workshops at 6:00 prior to Council meetings to scheduling extra night for workshop

Craig invited the participants to complete written evaluations and the workshop and noted that any evaluations would be seen by Craig, the Mayor and the City Manager.

# Appendices

## ***Appendix A: Best Practices Proposed Revision (1/21/09)***

### **City of Gardiner Best Practices for Successful Governance**

Adopted June 1997, Revised and Reaffirmed March 2007

#### **Proposed Revision**

*prepared by Craig Freshley based on the discussion of January 21, 2009*

1. We (the Council and City Manager) agree that we work as a team, which means that we:
  - a. communicate with each other respectfully in an open, appropriate forum
  - b. have a good flow of information back and forth
  - c. make decisions based on identified common goal(s)
  - d. make every effort to understand the different roles of each group
  - e. work as a team on the implementation of long term plans/issues
  
2. We agree that the City Manager is the administrator for all operational activities, Department Heads and personnel, and that this is not an appropriate role for Councilors.
  - a. We agree that Department Heads take to the Manager any complaints or issues which may generate publicity or legal problems; other simpler matters they will deal with directly.
  - b. We agree that the City Manager has a responsibility to keep Councilors well-informed regarding all business of the City.
  - c. We agree that the City Manager treats employees with an ethic of respect and empowerment, inviting their input and providing rationale for decisions.
  
3. We agree that Councilors have a responsibility to uphold the City Charter, represent the residents of Gardiner, and oversee the City Manager
  - a. We agree that Councilors pass citizen or personal complaints through the Manager rather than taking them directly to Department Heads.
  - b. We agree that in situations where any citizen could get an answer to a question from a Department Head, it is OK for a Councilor to ask it directly to a Department Head; otherwise questions go to the Manager; Department Heads will respond only as they would to a private citizen.
  - c. We agree that Councilors have a responsibility to establish clear performance expectations for the City Manager, regularly evaluate the City Manager in

light of the established expectations, and provide clear feedback regarding things well done and things needing improvement.

4. We agree that our professionalism and efficiency is improved when we invite public comment and scrutiny early and often, and when we invite employees to provide input.
  - a. We agree to provide the public (via the press and other means) with as much advance notice as possible regarding upcoming budgeting and policy decisions, and we agree to be pro-active about encouraging advance public input and scrutiny.
  - b. We agree that the City Manager invites input from employees on how to improve effectiveness and efficiency of City Government.

## **Appendix B: Proposed FY 2010 Goals**

### **Goal Statement FY 2010 DRAFT January 23, 2009**

The Gardiner City Council adopts a statement each spring to establish its goals for the next fiscal year. The statement for fiscal year 2008, which begins on July 1, 2007, includes a set of related goals that are designed to foster a vibrant and growing community – a community that people want to stay in or move to and where businesses want to grow.

City government is a service organization, and the efficient, effective delivery of those services is our highest priority. Our human resources are key for success and it is vital that all city officials and staff think creatively to analyze current and future needs, and act imaginatively to meet those needs.

It is important that projects, initiatives, priorities and operations be fully integrated to strengthen the community and to improve the lives of residents. Local government is very diverse in its activities, yet a high level of coordination will create significant added value to the community. Council will initiate quarterly reviews of budget and financial data and correlate this review with the adopted fiscal year goals.

For FY 10, the Council has adopted the following goals which are designed to make living and conducting business in Gardiner affordable, to preserve the city's sense of community and neighborliness, to promote economic development, and to improve the city's streets, sidewalks, and other public infrastructure.

### **Governance Principles**

- We consider it our responsibility to achieve equity and fairness in the assessment of property taxes.
- We are determined to provide efficiencies in government operations, in the delivery of services and in meeting future demands for services:
- Recognizing that fully half of our mil rate is attributable to the MSAD 11 contribution, we are committed to fostering quality education in our public schools.
- As a service organization we appreciate that one of our greatest assets is our human resources and the constant vigilance to create and maintain a healthy organizational culture is an important fiduciary responsibility.

- The measure of our effectiveness as local government is gauged in relation to this goal statement and our recently revised Best Practices for Successful Governance and Mission Statement.
- The City has successfully created a culture of fiscal constraint and frugality. Very significant savings have been realized through this consistent effort and can be a source of containing costs in the future as we continue to embrace this principle.
- City government has developed a strong history of reinventing the delivery of services. Asking both fundamental and routine questions has become the norm, not the exception. Future pressure on organizational capacity can successfully build upon this experience.

## **FY 2010 Goals (not prioritized)**

*Note: To facilitate discussion, Craig added titles and numbers to the goals below that were proposed by the City Manager.*

### **1. Tax Relief**

- The City Council is strongly committed to tax relief. Our goal for the coming year is retain a flat mil rate while maintaining current service levels.

### **2. Public Works Best Management Practices**

- Continue to implement best management practices in the public works department with the support of the Maine Department of Transportation Local Roads Program.
  - Complete rotation of inventory by funding final sand truck replacement, allowing the grader to be moved from frontline snow removal operations, primary use of two loaders rather than three, and staff capacity directed at sidewalks earlier and more effectively.
  - Continue to examine practices to assure most effective deployment of staff, safety and efficient use of resources. Some of this may require changes in the employment contract.

### **3. Improve Tax Assessing**

- Capitalize upon investments in the assessing area. Provide the necessary resources to maximize potential of new software and maintain the accuracy of accessing data as far as practical into the future.

### **4. Technology Plan**

- Continue aggressive implementation of the Technology Plan to fully leverage these investments.
  - Implementation of the Unifund Web Portal module creating user-friendly online access to City data and payment options.

- Council Room - digitalizing council room recording of meetings and audio streaming on web site.
- Web Site - enhancing [www.gardinermaine.com](http://www.gardinermaine.com) for user-friendliness including ADA compliancy.

#### **5. Update Housing Action Plan**

- Complete updating of the Housing Action Plan, including development of new funding for the housing rehabilitation program.

#### **6. Sidewalk Rehab**

- Implementation of the long-range plan for sustainable rehabilitation of sidewalks.
  - Pursue possible “stimulus” funding opportunities.
  - Include components for FY 10 (major investment) and future years (routine annual investments) in the Capital Improvement Plan.

#### **7. Safety Awareness**

- Support the important efforts of the Safety Committee to raise safety awareness to the highest possible level, enlist employees in the issues, provide ownership and empowerment Citywide, and assure compliance.

#### **8. Waterfront Phase 2**

- Design, bid and construct phase two of the Waterfront Project.
  - Approximately 75% of the budget is currently in hand.
  - Adopt a financial or phasing plan that addresses the “gap”.

#### **9. O.A.T.F Recommendations**

- Continue to explore recommendations from the Organizational Analysis Task Force. Specifically:
  - Wi-Fi service
  - Monthly billing

#### **10. Water District Joint Administration**

- Proceed with the approved Action Plan for Joint Administration with the Water District. In the near term this will require:
  - Hiring/training staff to support the provision of contract services.
  - Close collaboration with the District to assure a smooth transition.
  - Renovation to accommodate new staff.

#### **11. Begin Common Master Plan**

- Begin implementation of the Common Master Plan.
  - A new playground is partially funded with grant and local match in hand. Private contributions should be solicited.
  - Include necessary funding in the Capital Improvement Plan for future years.

#### **12. Harrison Avenue Project**

- Bring the Harrison Avenue comprehensive infrastructure project to fruition.
  - Continue pursuing grant funding.
  - Include necessary local funding in the Capital Improvement Plan.

### **13. Libby Hill actions**

- The Libby Hill Business Park requires a number of integrated actions.
  - Complete construction.
  - Develop and implement an aggressive marketing plan.
  - Develop and implement an updated Tax Increment Financing program.

### **14. Cobbassee Master Plan**

- Continue implementation of the Cobbossee Corridor Master Plan. The Cobbosee Trail is designed and awaiting the release of deferred MDOT funds. A partial local match is in hand. Place further phases in the Capital Improvement Plan.

### **15. Johnson Hall Renovation Plan**

- Continue to support implementation of the Johnson Hall Renovation Plan by the Johnson Hall Partnership. The renovation plan ties improvements, programming, organizational development and a business plan together into a comprehensive approach. A fundraising plan is in draft form that will define the abilities/obligations of each partner.

### **16. Gardiner Main Street**

- Support further organizational development of Gardiner Main Street. A draft action plan to develop organizational capacity is being considered by the Main Street Board. A report from the Board is expected to follow.

### **17. Strengthen Finance Department**

- Continue to strengthen the Finance Department.
  - Create an Employee Handbook with an overview of the City of Gardiner's benefit package.
  - Continue to incorporate more of the Unifund modules, to utilize the software to its full potential.
  - Further improve the Capital Improvement Process.
  - Assist departments to better track and account for expenditures.
  - Review and enforce compliance with accounting principals and practices.

### **18. Life Safety Inspection**

- Implement Life Safety Inspection program in the Fire Department in coordination with Code Enforcement Office.

### **19. Bundles Projects**

- Continue with Bundled Projects
  - The Alternative Transportation Plan and Green Space Master Plan require funding

## **20. Library**

- The Library serves as the cultural linchpin of our community.
  - Assist in implementing the Preserve America grant
  - Continue fundraising efforts for construction of phase two of the renovation plan.
  - Implement the innovative online audio file project allowing the downloading of MP3 files by patrons.

## **21. Upgrade Cold Storage**

- Upgrade the City's cold storage area to properly retain and maintain city records.

## **22. Enhance Policing**

- The Police Department is continuing to leverage the Detective and Community Liaison positions.
  - Analyze criminal trends occurring in Gardiner so as to more effectively take proactive measures with the Detective and other patrol officers in hopes of preventing these crimes in the future.
  - Continually look for ways to establish new community policing programs as well as enhancing our existing programs to assure common goals and expectations to address the community's needs.

## **23. Support Energy Committee**

- The Energy Committee was formed just after the adoption of the FY 09 budget. The Committee broadly represents all city services with diverse membership from all levels of the organization. The committee seeks to
  - inventory the City's current buildings and practices.
  - evaluate cost effective options that improve the City's efficient use of energy and carbon footprint.